

Antimicrobial Prescribing Behaviour Involving Subclinical Bacteriuria

Amy Hii¹

¹ University of Melbourne

Positive bacterial urine cultures from patients with no urinary clinical signs are considered subclinical bacteriuria. Treatment guidelines do not recommend antimicrobial therapy for these asymptomatic patients.¹

Ten general practice veterinary clinics in Victoria were provided access to free urine C&S for dogs and cats as part of an intervention study in 2022. Clinical histories were analysed together with the C&S results to identify cases of subclinical bacteriuria.

A total of 480 C&S submissions were received during the study period, with 6% (29/480) identified as subclinical bacteriuria. Almost half (12/29, 41%) were treated empirically with antimicrobials, with amoxicillin-clavulanic acid (7/12, 58%) being the most prescribed. Of the 59% where antimicrobials were not used empirically and after receiving C&S results, only 35% (6/17) did not treat the patient with antimicrobials while the remaining 65% (11/17) started antimicrobial therapy. *E. coli* was the most commonly isolated organism (20/29, 69%) followed by *Enterococcus faecalis* (4/29, 14%).

While removing cost of C&S generally produced a positive outcome, such as more appropriate use of antimicrobials, findings from this study reveal that guideline compliance for treatment of subclinical bacteriuria is poor. Interventions to improve the uptake of guidelines are needed.

References

1. Weese JS, Blondeau J, Boothe D et al. International Society for Companion Animal Infectious Diseases (ISCAID) guidelines for the diagnosis and management of bacterial urinary tract infections in dogs and cats. *The Veterinary Journal* 2019;247:8–25.