Template Position Statement

**Use of topical antimicrobial agents**

This is a template position statement that can be used to inform the stance taken on the topical application of antimicrobial agents.

Consider who in your facility/Local Health District/Specialty Health Network this correspondence would have the most impact coming from. Ideally it should be someone with authority and credibility with the target audience. Examples of who this letter can be sent from:

* Chair of Drug and Therapeutics Committee
* Chair of Antimicrobial Stewardship Committee
* Head of Surgery
* Head of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology Department

*<Insert facility/Local Health District/Specialty Health Network letterhead>*

**POSITION STATEMENT**

**Use of topical antimicrobials**

Exposure to antimicrobials increases the risk of multi-resistant organisms in the individual patient, as well as the healthcare environment. Antimicrobials should only be used where there is clear evidence that the benefit outweighs potential harm to patients.

**POSITION**

* Antimicrobial agents should not be used as irrigations, pastes or washes for surgical prophylaxis as there is limited high–quality data available to support this application
* Topical antibiotic agents should not be applied to the skin postoperatively for the prevention of surgical site infections (for example, chloramphenicol ointment)

The above scenarios constitute off-label use of a medicine. The [*Approval Process of Medicines for Use in NSW Public Hospitals* Policy Directive](http://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=PD2016_033) outlines the process for use of off-label or unregistered medicines. Prescribers wanting to use an antimicrobial for an off-label indication are required to provide supporting evidence on the benefit and safety of the antimicrobial in that setting to the *<Insert Local Health District/Specialty Health Network name>* Drug and Therapeutics Committee *<and Antimicrobial Stewardship Committee>.*

*<Approved by - date>*

*<Signature>*

*<Name>*

*<Position>*