



**PARTICIPANTS**

**CHICA-Canada  
Standards &  
Guidelines Committee**

**Chair:  
Dr. Anne Matlow  
Director Infection  
Control  
Hospital for Sick  
Children  
Toronto, Ontario**

**CHICA-CANADA POSITION STATEMENT**

**ANTIBACTERIAL PRODUCTS IN THE COMMUNITY**

Public concern about the emergence of antibiotic resistant organisms (AROs) has created a perceived need for new household products and devices (e.g. toys, hand soaps, towels, animal care products, etc.) that incorporate antibacterial agents. There is little evidence to suggest that these agents reduce infections in the home. Antibacterial agents alter the mix of naturally occurring bacteria killing susceptible organisms and potentially leaving the resistant ones to survive and multiply. Furthermore, the incorporation of low levels of antibacterial agents, which do not kill the organisms, may promote the development of resistant genes.

Apart from the environmental concerns, most of these new products are expensive and play on the public's fears of contracting an infectious disease from an antibiotic resistant organism. In fact, the most common household illnesses are viral in nature, to which antibacterial agents are ineffective. The focus should continue to be on frequent handwashing, safe food preparation, good personal hygiene, and basic home cleanliness.

Original: November 2002  
Last revision: March 2005