Guide for implementing prescribing audits step by step

Before Starting

IT requirements

- Define the method to select the patients with the antibiotic(s) to be evaluated:
  - **For hospitals where a CDSS is available:** define the alert criteria — which antibiotic(s), from how many days onwards, in which department (adult or paediatric), daily alerts or just 1–2 times a week? Etc.
  - **For hospitals without a CDSS**: consider implementing a CDSS suitable to your electronic prescribing system; assess the feasibility of manually extracting antibiotic prescriptions.

ABS team

- Define who is going to lead the project.
- Determine who will manage the alerts and carry out the assessment: clinical pharmacists? IDS? Others?
- If a CDSS like PharmaClass® is used:
  - How many pharmacists can work daily on the project? Which kind of experience do they have in terms of ABS? Who is going to replace them in case of absence?
  - How many IDS can work in collaboration with the pharmacists? Are they available daily to assess alerts which need a specific consultation?
- Define how to contact the attending physician (by phone or by writing on the electronic patient file?), etc.

Goals

- Define the main goal of the project: monitoring? Education and awareness-raising? Other?
- Temporary or long-term activity? If the activity is extended beyond the pilot phase, what criteria will this be based on?

Antibiotic(s) and setting

- Determine which antibiotic(s) to assess.
- Determine decision-making algorithm(s) (see appendix)
- Identify the departments in which the assessment will take place.

Data

- Define what to collect:
  - Which kind of data are you interested in beyond quality of prescription? Are there specific quality indicators you can define ahead and measure throughout the programme?

- What data do you need to collect during the project for your assessment (indication for antibiotics, wards, patient's age, lab values, etc.)?

Resources

- Determine the necessary resources: which activities can be carried out with the existing team, and which require additional resources?
- Define the duration of the project based on the available resources.

Endorsement

- Obtain approval from the medical management and department heads.

During the project

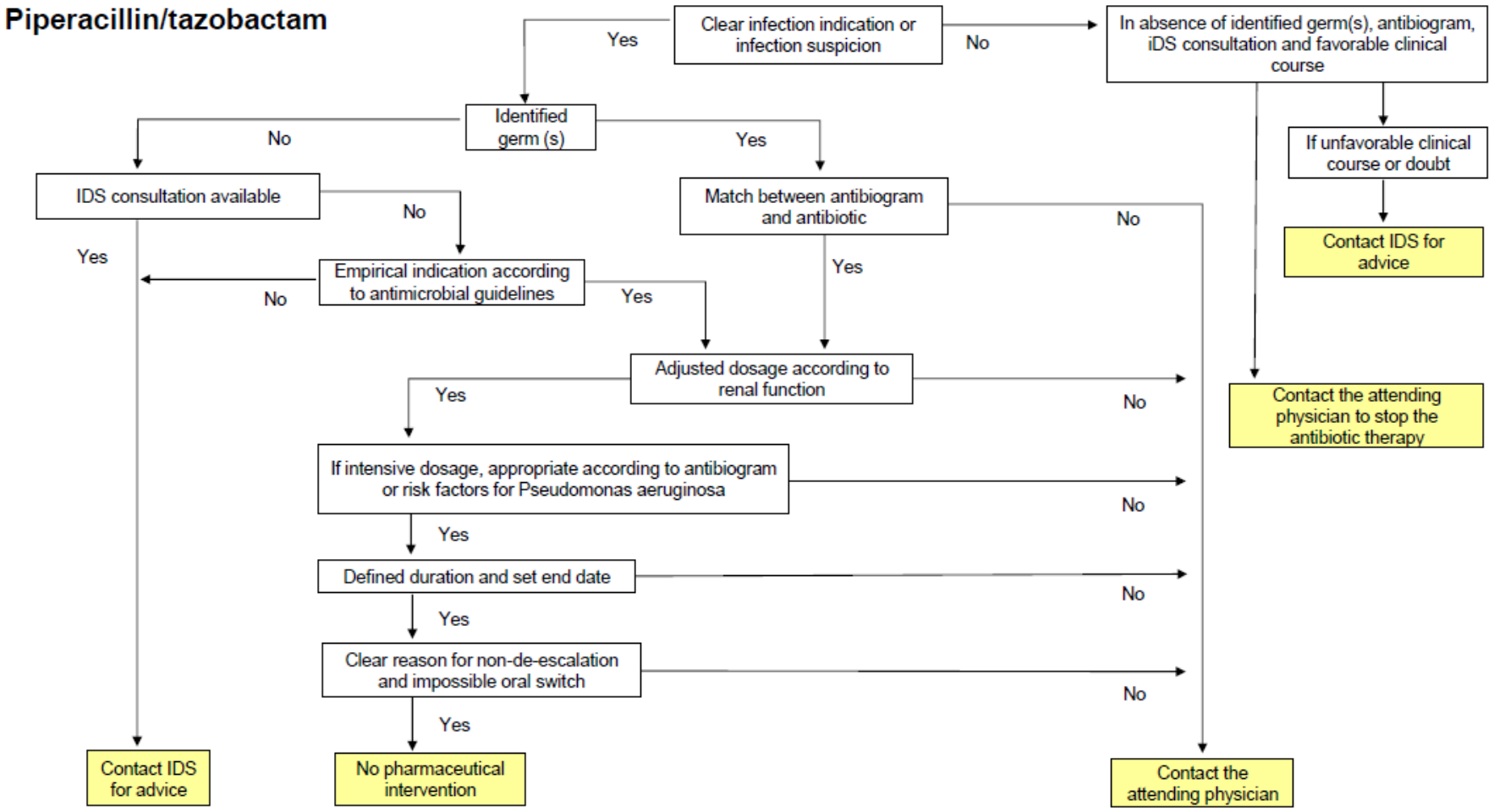
- Document all activities:
  - Time required to process alerts
  - Facilitators and barriers
  - Etc.
- Schedule regular meetings of the project team in order to adjust the course of action.

At the end

Analysis and report

- Analyse the results.
- Identify the medical teams who need more teaching or awareness about antibiotic prescriptions and identify champions.
- Write a report.
- Disseminate and discuss results with the medical management and department heads.
- Identify next steps to improve antibiotic prescriptions based on the results.

Appendix: Algorithms



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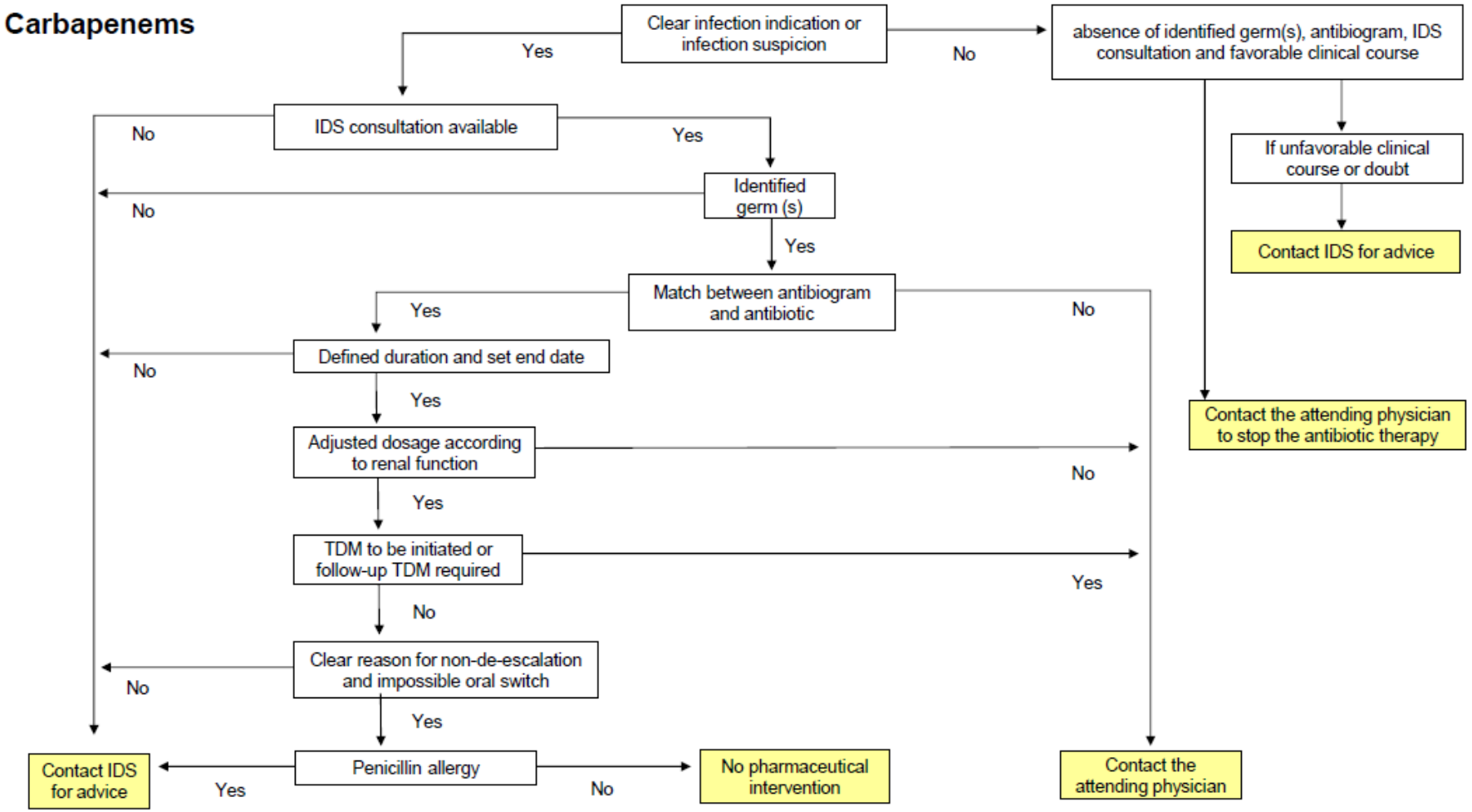
Carbapenems



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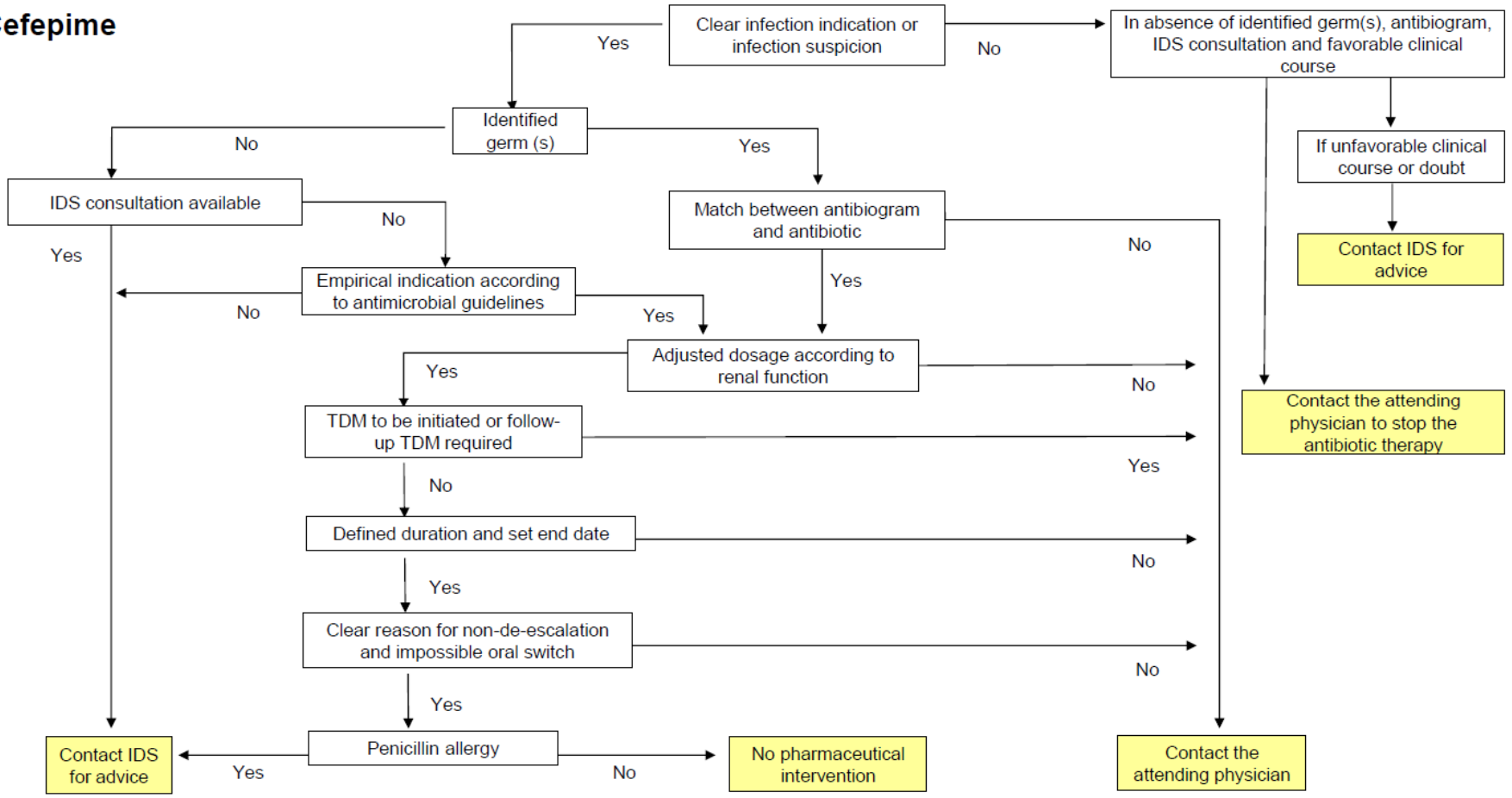
Cefepime



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Broad-spectrum antibiotic

