

HOPE contribution

to address the problems caused by antibiotic resistance

and to keep antibiotics working

The Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a responsibility for all the health system.

Most courses of antibiotics are consumed in the community (outside hospitals and other healthcare facilities), but antibiotic use in hospitals and other health and social care facilities is also a major driver of the emergence of multidrug-resistant bacteria responsible for healthcare-associated infections.

The spread of multidrug-resistant bacteria in hospitals and other health and social care facilities has become a public health threat. One significant driver for the selection of multidrug-resistant bacteria responsible for healthcare-associated infections in hospitalised patients is the extensive use of antibiotics (selective pressure), including the use of specific, mostly reserve or last-line antibiotics in hospitals. Patients receiving antibiotics are more likely to become colonised with multidrug-resistant bacteria and therefore are at greater risk of developing subsequent infections with these bacteria than patients who do not receive antibiotics. Additionally, antibiotic pressure due to high levels of antibiotic use in hospitals can be a risk factor for the acquisition of multidrug-resistant bacteria¹.

Antibiotic resistant infections are one of the biggest challenges for hospitals and healthcare services to deliver safe and effective healthcare. Antibiotic resistance leads to higher medical costs, prolonged hospital and other health and social care facilities stays, and increased mortality.

At hospital and health and social care facilities level, we believe in:

- Combating and preventing infections through a range of interventions like hand hygiene and the use of quality indicators to assess performance,
- Promoting awareness and knowledge-raising among health and social care professionals and the general public,
- Supporting staff through the development of guidelines and training and promoting the responsible use of antibiotics through antibiotic stewardship programmes built on evidence-based recommendations,
- Contributing to the implementation of interventions across all health and social sectors by establishing networks including hospitals, ambulatory care, nursing homes, laboratories and public health institutions,

¹ Summary of the latest data on antibiotic consumption in the European Union, ESAC-Net surveillance data, November 2017, https://ecdc.europa.eu/sites/portal/files/documents/Final_2017_EAAD_ESAC-Net_Summary-edited%20-%20FINALwith%20erratum.pdf

- Strengthening the surveillance systems that monitor AMR, antibiotic use and healthcare associated infections, which allow early detection of resistance and effective interventions;
- Supporting research and development, by increasing basic research, epidemiological research as well as the development of and access to new antimicrobials, treatment alternatives and rapid diagnostic tools.

AMR is a complex and multi-faceted cross-border threat to health that cannot be tackled by individual countries alone. The EU can help in the battle against AMR, which includes making full use of legislative and soft powers in a comprehensive and joined-up effort. Already existing initiatives at European level (e.g., dissemination of the European Antibiotic Awareness Day communication toolkit for professionals in hospitals and other healthcare settings) shall be supported with sufficient funding and resources.

This is why HOPE endorsed the **Joint Statement and Call to Action on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)**, supporting and improving the implementation of the EU One Health Action Plan against AMR.

This document has been delivered at the European Commission's Health Policy Platform on 27 November 2017 and has been endorsed by over 40 organisations from different sectors since. The Action Plan explicitly takes a multi-sectoral approach, and it embraces the needed global vision by linking EU efforts with those of international actors (incl. WHO, OECD, UN, G20, G7, TATFAR, OIE, FAO) and aiming to include AMR in trade agreements. It also mentions possibilities for funding Member States actions against AMR and seeks to boost research and innovation in areas such as the development of new antimicrobials and alternative products, vaccines and diagnostic tests for treatment of infectious diseases in humans².

² Joint Statement and Call to Action on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), supporting and improving the implementation of the EU One Health Action Plan against AMR <https://epha.org/joint-statement-and-call-to-action-on-amr-endorsed-by-over-40-organisations-further-signatures-welcome/>