Global monitoring of country progress in addressing AMR - call for responses

WHO has developed a monitoring framework that includes monitoring the implementation of national action plans on AMR. As part of this a global monitoring questionnaire has been developed jointly by WHO, FAO and OIE as part of the tripartite work on AMR. The questionnaire asks countries to assess their progress with multisectoral working on AMR and with developing and implementing a national AMR action plan, including human and animal health and the agriculture and environment sectors. Country responses will be used to guide follow-up actions and identify areas where assistance and support is required. The process is aligned to the Joint External Evaluation process.

This is the first year of this approach to monitoring and it aims to gather baseline data and test the process and questionnaire. The online questionnaire has been sent to country governments by the WHO AMR Secretariat through the regional and country offices. FAO and OIE are alerting their local representatives to encourage multisectoral participation in the response. Responses are requested by 17 January 2017 please and the results will be released online during the World Health Assembly and by the governing bodies of FAO and OIE in 2017.

World Antiobiotic Awareness Week

This week, Nov 14-20, is World Antiobiotic Awareness Week. Many countries around the world are marking the week with events and campaigns, including a WHO-hosted event in New York “Advocating for Appropriate Antibiotic Use” This will be a moderated discussion during which speakers will address the challenges of antibiotic resistance and the risks faced particularly by mothers and children. To attend this event, click here.

Available on the campaign site, are new materials to help all with their campaigns: infographs and posters targeting human health and animal health. In addition, there are videos, a sample radio spot, a fact sheet, an online quiz, personal stories, press releases, twitter chats, etc. To coincide with World Antiobiotic Awareness Week, WHO is supporting a very successful campaign by Public Health England: The Antibiotic Guardian campaign. The concept is simple and effective: The campaign invites the public, students and educators, farmers, the veterinary and medical communities and professional organizations, to become Antibiotic Guardians and calls everyone to action by choosing one simple pledge. In addition to supporting the English campaign, WHO is launching a Russian-language version of the website to reach a greater part of the European region. Read about the effectiveness of the campaign in this BioMed Central article. In addition, the 2nd annual report of the Central Asian and Eastern European Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance network (CAESAR) will be launched during awareness week.

Finally, a personal stories campaign has been launched. One tells the story of Matthew, a father of 4 young children in Australia, who was 39 years old when what started as a sore throat (Streptococcus) turned into a life-threatening, drug-resistant infection. His body went into toxic shock and, to save his life, doctors had to amputate his arms and legs. Matthew beat the odds and survived. “Effectively my limbs were dying from the ends and producing a lot of toxins that were killing my body. That’s why my limbs had to be removed to keep me alive and that’s the type of thing that happens if we haven’t got the ability to stem infection”. Read more of Matthew’s story and others’ real-life stories here. Photo credit: Jenny Cuerel

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WHO recommends 29 ways to stop surgical infections and avoid superbugs

The Global Guidelines for the Prevention of Surgical Site Infection include a list of 29 concrete recommendations distilled by 20 of the world’s leading experts from 26 reviews of the latest evidence. The recommendations, also published in The Lancet Infectious Diseases, are designed to address the increasing burden of health care-associated infections on both patients and health care systems globally. The guidelines are available here.

First cases of serious, drug-resistant fungal infection found in U.S.

Within five months of health officials asking hospitals and physicians to be on the lookout for Candida auris, an antibiotic-resistant fungus, 13 cases have been identified in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). C. auris is often resistant to multiple antifungal drugs with some isolates resistant to all three major drug classes. It appears to spread in healthcare settings: such high levels of resistance and healthcare transmission are not usual for other Candida species. “We need to act now to better understand, contain and stop the spread of this drug-resistant fungus,” said CDC Director Tom Frieden. “This is an emerging threat, and we need to protect vulnerable patients and others.” Most of the C. auris strains from U.S. patients showed some drug resistance, making treatment more difficult. More information here. For information about C. auris click here.

New WHO IPC guidelines to support AMR prevention and NAPs

It is no coincidence that WHO has launched new infection prevention and control (IPC) recommendations during World Antibiotic Awareness Week. Strong, effective and evidence-based IPC programmes and practices play a critical role in the prevention of AMR. This week sees the publication of the first WHO Guidelines on the Core Components of IPC programmes at the national and acute healthcare facility level. The guidelines are the culmination of an effort that has brought together scientists, academics, policy makers and patient representatives to systematically consider the scientific evidence and field experiences on what makes IPC programmes work effectively. AMR regional focal persons were a key part of the work.

The ultimate aim of the guidelines is to support countries and facilities to develop or strengthen IPC programmes and AMR National Action Plans. Building upon previous WHO guidance, the guidelines address eight areas: IPC programmes; evidence-based guidelines; education and training; surveillance; multimodal strategies; monitoring, audit and feedback; workload, staffing and bed occupancy; and, the built environment, materials and equipment. These are covered by 11 recommendations and three Good Practice Statements. The guidelines and resources can be accessed here.

Finally, a manuscript addressing the background, evidence and recommendations has been submitted to the open-access, peer-reviewed journal - (ARIC), emphasising the interconnection between AMR and IPC.

7th STAG meeting

The 7th meeting of the Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on AMR met 2-3 Nov. Its’ objectives and expected outcomes included: to make recommendations on the global action plan on AMR implementation post the high-level meeting on AMR held at the United Nations General Assembly on 21 September 2016; to advise on options for a global development and stewardship framework in response to operative paragraph 4(7) of resolution WHA68; to discuss the monitoring framework for the global action plan and advise on next steps; and to start the renewal process of the STAG and determine the duration of membership for each STAG member. The meeting was open to observers from permanent missions, civil society, academia and other stakeholder groups. The report will be available on the AMR website shortly. Pictured are members of the STAG-AMR and WHO AMR Secretariat.
GLASS Updates

Enrolment update: 37 countries have expressed interest in enrolling in GLASS, of which 26 are fully enrolled.

The 1st WHO Collaborating Centres network meeting will take place 13-14 Dec. The network will support surveillance of AMR and quality assessment in each WHO region.

The 2nd meeting of the GLASS Collaborative platform will take place 15-16 Dec bringing together WHO Collaborating Centres, partner technical institutions and international AMR surveillance networks to discuss further developments in GLASS.

Editor’s Picks

Free online course tackles the issues behind AMR in the food chain
Aimed at anyone with an interest in antibiotics, food and farming, the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in the Food Chain course will offer the opportunity to learn more about what antibiotics are, how they work and how bacteria become resistant to their effects.

New method developed to measure antimicrobial consumption
WHO, in consultation with key national and regional partners, has developed a methodology for monitoring antimicrobial consumption and will be piloting surveys in 20 countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. The surveys will fill critical knowledge gaps on national and global consumption trends and will allow the identification of overuse of antimicrobial medicines, but also, and just as importantly, limited access and under-use of these medicines. More here.

Joint WIPO/WTO/WHO Symposium underlines need for global cooperation in addressing AMR

The importance of global cooperation in fostering innovation of, and access to, new antibiotics as well as the appropriate use of antibiotics was highlighted at this joint symposium. In their introductory remarks the Directors-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the WHO Special Representative for AMR reaffirmed their commitment to working together and reinforced the necessity for multilateral partners. AMR was described as in the process of transitioning from a technical health issue to one perceived as a much broader social threat, as the world learns of the profound implications of AMR for modern medicine, sustainable agriculture, environment, and sustainable food production. Ms. Hala Audi, Head of the UK Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, gave the keynote address: Amongst the measures Ms. Audi highlighted were the need for investment to stimulate new research, in addition to prioritizing target pathogens.

Discussion panels focused on: Fostering access and appropriate use; Business models for antibiotic innovation; and Trade policy in support of antimicrobial access and stewardship. The symposium highlighted that AMR is a problem that crosses many disciplines and that innovation in the broadest sense must form part of the solution, both in terms of science and governing structures. Held on 25 October, it was hosted by WIPO in partnership with WHO and WTO. More here.

ReAct Toolbox workshop for use in developing NAPs

At the end of October, ReAct - Action on Antibiotic Resistance - held a Toolbox workshop, which brought together national AMR focal points and representatives from 10 African countries (Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe). Training focused on how to navigate and make use of the ReAct Toolbox and its resources for the process of developing and implementing national action plans on AMR. WHO has endorsed the ReAct Toolbox as a useful reference for policy makers, civil society and technical experts engaged in the development of national action plans and their implementation.
Resources

- Antimicrobial resistance: aide-memoire. Click [here](#).
- Antimicrobial resistance for policy makers. Click [here](#).
- Antimicrobial resistance: A manual for developing national action plans and supporting documents and tools. Click [here](#).
- Antimicrobial resistance: updated fact sheet. Click [here](#).
- Global Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System (GLASS). For information on criteria and procedures for enrolment in GLASS and for the GLASS manual, click [here](#).
- For information on infection prevention and control, click [here](#).
- For the campaign site for World Antibiotic Awareness Week, click [here](#).

Please let us know of your upcoming events for inclusion in the newsletter. We also welcome your suggestions and comments. For all communications, and if you would like to subscribe to the newsletter, please contact the Secretariat at whoamrsecretariat@who.int. Responsibility for newsletter contents rests with the AMR Secretariat Director: Marc Sprenger.

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