

**"Antimicrobials: handle with care"
ESIP views on antimicrobial resistance
in light of the first
World Antimicrobial Awareness Week**

Brussels – 18 November 2020

On the occasion of the first **World Antimicrobial Awareness Week**, the European Social Insurance Platform (ESIP), representing statutory social insurances across the EU, in the UK and in Switzerland, voices its position on antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Antimicrobial resistance is a growing global public health threat: 30 000 patients in the EU die annually as a result of infections caused by resistant bacteria, while antibiotic consumption in the EU almost doubled between 2010 and 2014. While the European Commission is launching discussions on ways to tackle AMR and to address the lack of new antimicrobials, in the context of its upcoming Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe, **ESIP supports the awareness-raising initiative of the Tripartite Organisations of the United Nations to improve communication and encourage best practices to counter the emergence of antimicrobial-resistant infections.**

In its recent [position paper](#), ESIP highlighted the importance of tackling the spread of AMR by **improving infection prevention and control as well as increasing the development and availability of new effective antimicrobials.**

Focusing on new antimicrobials alone is not sufficient. First and foremost, **ESIP calls to increase prevention**, by promoting prudent prescribing, exact dispensing and rational use, as well as increased surveillance and effective use of vaccines. In this regard, the EU should provide support for the development of national action plans and awareness-raising campaigns to fight AMR.

ESIP also recognises the need to develop new antimicrobials, while ensuring the availability of old but still effective products. We suggest therefore a number of new and alternative incentives to develop antimicrobials with added therapeutic value.

Most importantly, we express our concerns on the possible use of Regulation (EC) No 141/200 on orphan medicinal products as a blueprint for new legislation on antibiotics and vaccines. The recent review on the functioning of this Regulation revealed that it triggered a number of market failures, with new products entering the market at prices unaffordable for patients and unsustainable for healthcare systems. This is why we believe that **the EU should introduce a new EU legislation specifically for antimicrobials.**

ESIP supports and embraces the slogan "**Antimicrobials: handle with care**" leading the United Nations' awareness campaign and welcomes the opportunity to exchange further with EU decision-makers on ways to tackle this important threat.

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