

# Key Area 4

**Improve awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance through effective communication, education and training**

## **Objective 13**

Raise awareness of AMR among general public, students and target population

## **Objective 14**

Engage patients in adopting infection control measures and proper use of antimicrobials

## **Objective 15**

Include AMR and related topics in school curricula and continuous training of human health and veterinary professionals



79. In order to deliver **Key Areas 2 and 3**, specific actions are required to maintain and raise awareness of appropriate antimicrobial use and infection control measures. To address the needs of different population subgroups, health messages have to be tailored to the needs and gaps identified in different audience groups to drive greater ownership and actions. Furthermore, effectiveness of the actions need to be objectively ascertained.



**Objective 13 - Raise awareness of antimicrobial resistance among general public, students and target population**

80. Currently, various government departments and local organisations actively participate in raising public awareness of AMR. For example, DH launches mass media campaigns from time to time to promote hand hygiene and awareness of AMR. DH has also organised promotional activities on the annual Hand Hygiene Awareness Day (5 May) since 2011, and annual World Antibiotic Awareness Week (18-24 November) since 2012 and has engaged doctors, public hospitals and clinics, private hospitals and long-term care facilities.
81. DH, HA, AFCD and FEHD have jointly produced different health promotional materials to remind the public the significance of AMR and the importance of infection control measures like hand hygiene. These materials came in a variety of formats, including pamphlets, posters and videos and were available at various locations, including government websites, hospitals, clinics and government offices.
82. The Education Bureau (EDB) has incorporated the concept of AMR into the liberal studies curriculum in high schools. DH has been developing and disseminating health education materials on AMR to primary students, for example through Educational Television Programmes.
83. Since 2017, DH has conducted surveys targeting the general public, medical practitioners and nursing students to gauge their understanding of antibiotics and AMR, as well as their consumption and the prescription behaviour of antibiotics. These surveys revealed that while the majority of respondents had a good understanding of the problem of AMR and the importance of proper antimicrobial use, there was still a significant number of people who misunderstood the indicated use of antimicrobials. Results of the surveys<sup>40</sup> were used to inform planning and implementation of interventions under the Action Plan.

## Strategic Interventions

### **13.1 Develop and implement targeted evidence-based health promotion programme for specific audience including students and personnel working in healthcare, animal health, food animal production and food hygiene settings**

- To continue to monitor KAP towards AMR and antimicrobial use among general public and target populations by regular survey. Findings of the survey will provide trend data to ascertain the cost-effectiveness of the health promotion programmes
- To develop and review key messages base on the KAP survey results to raise public awareness and call for action on AMR
- DH, AFCD and FEHD to continue to support and participate in the annual World Antibiotic Awareness Campaign and DH and HA to support the Hand Hygiene Day while the cost-effectiveness of these activities is objectively evaluated
- DH, HA, AFCD and FEHD to continue to develop and disseminate information on AMR and related topics through existing health promotion channels, healthcare service providers and platforms commonly used by target populations including patients, food animal farmers, private veterinarians and food business operators while the cost-effectiveness of these activities is objectively evaluated
- AFCD to continue to provide regular education and training to food animal farmers on topics related to antimicrobial use and AMR and will continue to keep in view of international practices and consensus related to antibiotic-free labelling

### **13.2 Include AMR and related topics to students**

- To continue the inclusion of topics on AMR in high school curriculum
- To continue the development and dissemination of education materials on AMR to primary students
- To implement surveys on the target audience, to ascertain effectiveness of the intervention

**Objective 14 - Engage patients in adopting infection control measures and proper use of antimicrobials**

84. Effective engagement of patients for their support in adopting infection control measures and proper use of antimicrobials are essential to the success in combating AMR. As described above in para. 61, DH and HA have been organising different health promotion and awareness programmes for patients on infection control measures and AMR. Of note, dispensaries under DH and HA have started to provide health information on proper antimicrobial use on drug prescription bag of antimicrobials and proton pump inhibitors.
85. In recent years, WHO has advocated to promote hand hygiene through “patient empowerment” which means by giving relevant knowledge and skills to the patients, they may have greater control over decisions and actions affecting their health in an environment. By involving patients to remind health care workers the importance of hand hygiene, it is believed that the compliance of hand hygiene among health care professionals can be further enhanced<sup>25,41</sup>. Health promotion materials will be provided based on latest scientific evidence and results of KAP surveys.
86. To this end, DH and HA have continued to provide accessible hand hygiene facilities and products in clinics and public hospitals to facilitate hand hygiene practices by patients. The provision of these facilities and products at the point-of-care are also crucial in ensuring hand hygiene compliance.

## Strategic Interventions

### **14.1 Strengthen health information provision and better engaging patients**

- To develop and provide evidence-based health promotion materials in hospital wards, clinics and pharmacies
- To provide, review and update health information on personal hygiene measures on antibiotic drug prescription bags
- To encourage provision of health information on personal hygiene measures on antimicrobial drug prescription bags from private medical practitioners and community pharmacies
- To continue patient education on appropriate use of antimicrobials through easily accessible channels including social media platforms

### **14.2 Provide supportive environment to facilitate hand hygiene practices by patients**

- To provide accessible hand hygiene facilities and products at various points-of-care in healthcare settings

## **Objective 15 - Include AMR and related topics in school curricula and continuous training of human health and veterinary professionals**

87. Undergraduate nursing, medical and dental courses have included AMR in their core curriculum. CHP and HA infection control teams have been organising trainings to update healthcare workers on infection control, including topics on AMR. These trainings were delivered through forums, conferences, seminars, workshops and the Training Portal on Infection Control and Infectious Diseases. Private hospitals are also providing in-house training for their staff while HA is providing infection control courses for new intakes and refresher courses for healthcare workers.
88. AFCD has been providing advice and education to all livestock farmers on the proper usage of antimicrobials, the withdrawal period on drugs and the prohibition on the possession and use of prohibited chemicals.
89. CFS has incorporated the topic of AMR as one of the components in the hygiene supervisor training courses organised by the FEHD under the Hygiene Manager and Hygiene Supervisor Scheme with effect since 2017. Concurrently, CFS has also informed other institutes under the above scheme to include the AMR topic in training materials for recognised Hygiene Manager and Hygiene Supervisor courses.

### **Strategic Interventions**

#### **15.1 Include prescribing competencies and infection control practices as core component of professional education and continuous development**

- To continue to include AMR and related topics in undergraduate curricula for human health (medical, nursing, dental and pharmacy) and animal health professionals and encourage continuous professional development

#### **15.2 Strengthen infection control and food safety training for healthcare workers, veterinarians and workers along food supply chain**

- Refer to **Objectives 9, 10 and 11** for details