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Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health Hearing on ‘managing antimicrobial resistance across the health system’

Brussels, 20 June 2022 (virtual meeting)

Aim and objectives

The Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health (EXPH) is an interdisciplinary and independent group established by the European Commission in 2012 to provide non-binding independent advice on matters related to effective, accessible and resilient health systems in the form of opinions.

The aim of this hearing was to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to share their views on the draft opinion of the Expert Panel on ‘**Managing antimicrobial resistance across the health system**’. The draft opinion was made available on the Expert Panel’s website prior to the hearing.

Panel members - speakers

Prof. Jan De Maeseneer (Chair of the hearing), Dr Heather-Lynn Rogers, Prof. Damien Gruson (Rapporteurs)

In total around 80 participants attended the hearing.

Presentation of the draft Opinion

The Chair and the Rapporteurs presented the draft opinion. Regarding AMR and its impact, they outlined: *i)* AMR as a global problem and the factors that contribute to its spread, *ii)* a framework for AMR policy interventions at health system level, *iii)* innovations and emerging technologies available to support the fight against AMR.

In their policy analysis, they focused on: *i)* a One Health approach to tackle AMR, *ii)* AMR policy in the EU and *iii)* national action plans and their effective implementations.

The draft opinion concludes with five recommendations:

- Each Member State should strengthen their systems for convening all AMR stakeholders and improve the quality of national AMR assessment.
- Complete the process of developing indicators for the surveillance, monitoring, and evaluation of AMR.
- Each Member State should ensure that there are stewardship systems in place throughout their health systems.
- Steer research and development based on foresight exercises, and rapidly integrate results in regulatory and legal frameworks.

- Leverage the knowledge on how value and belief systems of population determine the level of potential misuse of antibiotics.

These recommendations are supported by specific action points.

Open discussion: participants' views

Participants in the discussion:

- Highlighted the need of a broad commitment to prevent infections, to avoid misuse of antimicrobials and to manage appropriate disposal of unused and expired medicines.
- Pointed out the massive and inappropriate consumption of antibiotics. Although there are European guidelines available, enforcement is inadequate.
- Emphasized the importance of prevention and preparedness and the role of public awareness on prudent use of antibiotics and health literacy as a part of the solution.
- Stressed the need of patient engagement to address the threat of AMR.
- Supported increased collaboration and communication between community pharmacists, other healthcare professionals, regulators, industry, patients and the public on combatting AMR, including on improving access to vaccination.
- Stressed the importance of digitalization of medicines management, including e-prescription as a key enabler.
- Mentioned better and faster diagnostics as a critical tool to fight AMR.
- Drew attention to the importance of research and development and the EU-level and national incentives for industry to develop new antimicrobials.
- Stressed the importance of a One Health approach and acknowledged the need for multisectoral collaboration.
- Pointed out the significance of farming and animal health in addressing AMR and the need to integrate AMR considerations in agricultural policies.

In a live poll conducted during the hearing, 32% of respondents said they represented NGO/Associations, 25% government/public authority, 21% academia/think tanks, 14% industry and 7% consultancies. 77% of respondents replied that the human health is the area closest to their work, 17% indicated multisectoral, 3% animal health and 3% environmental health. In a poll asking participants to rank the Panel's recommendations in order of importance/urgency, the recommendation *to complete the process of developing indicators for the surveillance, monitoring, and evaluation of AMR* was ranked as No.1, followed by the recommendations *to ensure that there are stewardship systems in place throughout Member States health systems* and *to strengthen their systems for convening all AMR stakeholders and improve national assessment quality*.

Next steps

Participants were invited to send any additional comments by 13 July 2022 via email to SANTE-EXPERT-PANEL@ec.europa.eu.

The Panel will finalise its work on this opinion in the next months.