

22 January 2016

Dear Colleague,

**Response of the Microbiology Society to the *Public Consultation for the evaluation of the Commission's Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the Action Plan against the Rising Threats from Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) (COM (2011) 748)*.**

The Microbiology Society agrees that the objectives listed in the EU AMR Action Plan, when it was published in 2011, were all highly relevant to tackling the problem of AMR and remain highly relevant today, and for the foreseeable future. Many members of the Society are actively engaged in fundamental and applied microbiological science to address the important challenge posed by antimicrobial resistance. The Society felt that a brief response to this consultation by letter was most appropriate, given the detailed nature and length of the questionnaire and the predominantly UK focus of our policy work.

In the UK there has been extensive action from the Government and non-government organisations, to begin to address the challenge of AMR. We are uncertain of the effect attributable to the EU Action Plan compared with UK policy reports and actions, such as the 2011 UK Chief Medical Officer's report<sup>1</sup>, the UK Government 5 Year Strategy for AMR<sup>2</sup>, and the independent Review on Antimicrobial Resistance<sup>3</sup> being led by Sir Jim O'Neill. Nevertheless, tackling AMR requires an international response; it is appreciated that both the EU AMR Action Plan and the World Health Organization Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance<sup>4</sup> have an important role to play in stimulating and facilitating an international response, as well as in countries that are currently developing or do not yet have national AMR action plans. EU research funding contributions are also appreciated as being important to help facilitate AMR research.

AMR is a priority area of the Microbiology Society's charitable work. The Society has produced documents and is involved in a range of activities, which may be helpful in informing the continued implementation of the EU AMR Action Plan. The Society has previously highlighted the importance of, and needs regarding, fundamental and applied microbiological research on AMR in our response<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health (2013). *Chief Medical Officer annual report 2011: volume 2*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officer-annual-report-volume-2>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health (2013). *UK 5 Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy 2013 to 2018*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-5-year-antimicrobial-resistance-strategy-2013-to-2018>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Review on Antimicrobial Resistance. <http://amr-review.org/>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Global action plan on antimicrobial resistance. [http://www.who.int/drugresistance/global\\_action\\_plan/en/](http://www.who.int/drugresistance/global_action_plan/en/). World Health Organization. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Microbiology Society (2013). Consultation response to UK House of Commons Science and Technology Committee inquiry: *Ensuring access to working antimicrobials*. <http://www.microbiologysociety.org/download.cfm/docid/63D6D355-0C38-4DF8-94FEDCAA98B61FF4>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

to the UK House of Commons Science and Technology Committee's inquiry on antimicrobial resistance<sup>6</sup>, and in our policy document "*Microbiology and the challenge of sexually transmitted infections: are we up to it?*"<sup>7</sup>.

The Society is a founding member of the Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance (LeSPAR)<sup>8</sup>, a partnership of seven learned societies representing around 75,000 scientists. LeSPAR aims to provide a single, unified voice and mobilise the UK's collective research community in order to enhance understanding and knowledge sharing between academia, industry, and clinicians. LeSPAR recently held three interdisciplinary networking workshops for academic and industry AMR researchers representing different career stages and disciplines, including chemistry, mathematics, engineering, biochemistry and microbiology. A summary report<sup>9</sup> of the workshop discussion sessions is available, which identifies opportunities and needs regarding AMR research, in particularly around funding, interdisciplinary research and gaps in our knowledge regarding AMR in the environment.

The Society is also running the Small World Initiative<sup>10</sup> in the UK and Ireland, which gives the general public, students and educators in the UK and Ireland the opportunity to work with scientists as part of a global initiative to discover new antibiotics from soil bacteria.

The Microbiology Society<sup>11</sup> is a membership organisation for scientists who work in all areas of microbiology. It is the largest learned microbiological society in Europe with a worldwide membership based in universities, industry, hospitals, research institutes and schools. The Society publishes key academic journals, organises international scientific conferences and provides an international forum for communication among microbiologists and supports their professional development. The Society promotes the understanding of microbiology to a diverse range of stakeholders, including policy-makers, students, teachers, journalists and the wider public, through a comprehensive framework of communication activities and resources.

We would be happy to engage further with the EU AMR Action Plan and have a broad range of expertise in AMR within our membership who could provide expert advice as required.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Pat Goodwin, Chair of the Microbiology Society Policy Committee

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<sup>6</sup> House of Commons Science and Technology Committee (2014). *Ensuring access to working antimicrobials*. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmsctech/509/50902.htm>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Microbiology Society (2013). *Microbiology and the challenge of sexually transmitted infections: are we up to it?* <http://www.microbiologysociety.org/policy/position-statements.cfm/publication/2013-sexually-transmitted-infections>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance. <http://www.microbiologysociety.org/policy/campaigns.cfm/learned-society-partnership-on-antimicrobial-resistance>. Microbiology Society. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance. *Antimicrobial resistance: environments, evolution and transmission networking workshops for researchers: workshop series summary*. <http://www.microbiologysociety.org/download.cfm/docid/093ECEA0-B367-4CCE-94E2F36157C5B640>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Small World Initiative. <http://www.microbiologysociety.org/outreach/small-world-initiative/index.cfm>. Last accessed: 21 January 2016.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.microbiologysociety.org/>