

Statement from the Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance in response to World Health Organization Global Action Plan on AMR

26 May 2015

The Microbiology Society is a member of the [Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance](#) (LeSPAR), a partnership of learned societies representing 75,000 scientists that has come together to lead the fight against antimicrobial resistance. The other members of LeSPAR are the Royal Society of Chemistry, Biochemical Society, Society for Applied Microbiology, British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy and Royal Society of Biology. LeSPAR published a statement in response to the approval of the World Health Organization [Global Action Plan on AMR](#).

LeSPAR statement:

The Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance welcomes the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

We think that implementation of the WHO Action Plan on both a national and international level can have a positive impact on tackling the problems associated with AMR and will require the coordinated commitment of funding, expertise, and manpower.

Public Engagement

The first objective of the Global Action Plan is to improve awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance through effective communication, education, and training. As a group of UK-based learned societies with a combined worldwide membership of over 75,000, we are already working hard to ensure that antimicrobial resistance has a high profile both within our scientific communities and with the general public. Activities include public engagement events, scientific meetings, and facilitated professional networking.

Promoting research

We support the call for investment in research that is fundamental to understanding AMR and capable of eliciting new strategies to prevent, diagnose, and treat microbial infection. There is also a need to encourage and support skilled scientists to apply themselves to the relevant research questions.

We are pleased to be working with the UK AMR Funders Forum to ensure a coordinated approach to AMR research that will address the knowledge gaps identified in WHO Objective 2 – Strengthen the knowledge and evidence base through surveillance and research – in the Global Action Plan.

For example, we are running a series of professional networking events to bring together scientists across disciplines focusing on AMR in the environment.

In addition, we are promoting a ‘one health’ approach, i.e. interdisciplinary work to support health and wellbeing in humans and animals while also protecting the environment.

Financial investment

A [recent report](#) by The Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, which was commissioned by UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, recommends sustainable, stable, and supportive financial investment to allow for research that has a meaningful impact on AMR.

We agree with the WHO that if governments adopt the position that antimicrobial medicines are a public good, this could encourage commensurate public investment in promoting their rational use.

The lack of new antibiotic classes developed in recent years may be attributed to the fact that since these pharmaceuticals often represent drugs of last resort they may not recoup the development cost through sales – a view also shared by [The Review on Antimicrobial Resistance](#). So, we additionally look to governments to address the dearth of R&D into new drugs and to support investigations into the repurposing of drugs to treat resistant infections.

A global problem

It is important to acknowledge that AMR is a global problem requiring both local and global action.

In particular, the global standardisation of monitoring and surveillance of resistant infections is desperately needed.