



EFN Policy Statement on AMR One Health Approach

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) welcomes the publication of the [Commission's proposal](#) for a Council Recommendation on stepping up EU actions to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in a One Health approach.

AMR is far from being only a human health problem. In fact, it is a challenge that binds together multiple sectors, disciplines, and communities at varying levels of society. A One Health approach to combatting AMR brings together public health, veterinary and environmental sectors. AMR One Health Approach is a vital for frontline nurses' activities.

Developing and implementing solutions in the One Health approach is a complex endeavour, as it requires a high level of cooperation, communication and coordination across disciplines and care pathways. However, nurses' have a proven track record of positively impacting on reducing AMR as part of their role in medicinal product prescribing coupled with their expertise as advanced practice nurses (APN). Nurses' holistic approach to patient centred care provides opportunities to review complex co-morbidities particularly in older patients and streamlining polypharmacy including managing non-beneficial or potentially harmful multiple medicines including leading the implementation of best practice regarding AMR. Education about healthcare-associated infections and how to prevent HCAI is an important part of avoiding unnecessary antibiotic treatment.

The EFN recognises that complacency, poor prescribing practice, and the overprescribing of antibiotics are major factors in the emergence and challenges of AMR and patient safety. Nurses' leadership and informed clinical decisions are central to ensuring safe and appropriate prescribing throughout the prescribing cycle. In addition, nurses are recognised for their expertise in supporting patients with medication compliance, monitoring prescription decisions, reducing prescribing errors and engaging in medication reconciliation actions.

Furthermore, cross-sectoral education and cooperation between nurses, pharmacists, doctors, veterinarians, dentists, and other healthcare professionals, in line with the One Health approach, is particularly important in the context of antimicrobial resistance.

Nurses have significant experience in stewardship interventions at all levels of care which is indispensable to fight the spread of AMR. There is a need to elaborate the core elements of

European antibiotic stewardship programmes in order to translate them into practical and achievable policies at national and healthcare delivery level. However, nursing workforce shortages and heavy workloads across the health sector challenge stewardship capacity building with workforce pressure influencing prescribing practices.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR), particularly antibiotic resistance, still stays one of the greatest global health threats affecting the health of people across the world. Although AMR reached the highest levels of political attention of leaders at G7 and G20, there is still a need for concerted action and implementation of plans.

Therefore, the EFN calls on the European Institutions and Member States to ensure that frontline nurses' perspectives are taken into account in the following key areas:

- Decisive political action is needed to ensure the prudent use of antibiotics and to improve infection prevention and control. The member states are encouraged to introduce National action plans targeting AMR with nurses included in decision making.
- The European Union needs a common approach to antibiotic stewardship programmes, that will be adapted to healthcare delivery settings, taking into account the local context with emphasis on nurse prescribing.
- Each healthcare facility should be encouraged to establish and provide necessary funding, resources, and training for AMR stewardship programmes including antimicrobial surveillance
- Improved awareness of One Health approach across healthcare professionals and public health, veterinary and environmental sectors must be promoted. The access to clean water and sanitation are baselines of effective hygiene and prevention of infection diseases.
- Prevention of overuse of antibiotics in agriculture and environmental contamination leading to antimicrobial resistance must be a priority.
- Nursing education and training curricula must be equipped with up to date and reliable information on the One Health approach, interprofessional cooperation and responsible prescribing practices, so that nurses have the appropriate knowledge and skills focusing on infection prevention and prudent use of antimicrobials.
- Nurses and nursing students should be supported in developing skills how to prevent infections, how to treat infections and how to manage patient expectations regarding antibiotic prescribing.
- To support continued progress, it is vital that nurses have adequate time with patients to assess whether antibiotics are necessary. Nurses have the competencies to prevent infections by providing safe, efficient high-quality care.

- The public should be informed about the correct use of antibiotics, their effectiveness, and the societal impact of misuse, as well as prevention of infections through increased hygiene.
- Training for nurses regarding patient education about the correct use of antimicrobials, should be encouraged at a national and healthcare delivery level.

Regular multidisciplinary meetings should be held in order to access and monitor AMR and to develop coordinated approach to the problem, focusing on adequate antimicrobial prescribing practices and patient education on infection prevention and appropriate use of antibiotics.

Further readings:

- WHO/ECDC report: antimicrobial resistance threatens patient safety in European Region
<https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/14-04-2023-who-ecdc-report--antimicrobial-resistance-threatens-patient-safety-in-european-region>
- Antimicrobial resistance surveillance in Europe 2023–2021 data
<https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/9789289058537>
- EFN Position Statement on HCAI
<https://efn.eu/wp-content/uploads/EFNPositionStatementonCouncilRecommendationsonPatientSafetyandHCAI-EN-final042009.pdf>
- One Health Initiative (who.int)
<https://www.who.int/teams/one-health-initiative>
- Our Work | Antimicrobial resistance (who.int)
<https://www.who.int/our-work/antimicrobial-resistance>
- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) (europa.eu)
<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/antimicrobial-resistance>
- European Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Network (EARS–Net) (europa.eu)
<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/about-us/networks/disease-networks-and-laboratory-networks/ears-net-data>
- European Surveillance of Antimicrobial Consumption Network (ESAC–Net) (europa.eu)
<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/about-us/partnerships-and-networks/disease-and-laboratory-networks/esac-net>

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