



XIV EUROPEAN PATIENTS' RIGHTS DAY

**ONE health approach, MULTIPLE answers:
Citizens' engagement & stakeholders' actions to tackle antimicrobial resistance
and sustain EU progress**

**DIGITAL CONFERENCE
18th & 19th November 2020**

Final remarks 19th November 2020

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Some final remarks / **Key messages and recommendations:**

1. When we talk about AMR **we are talking about paradoxes no more acceptable:**
 - a. one of the ten most urgent threats for the Global Health but totally underestimated among the populations;
 - b. more dangerous than car accidents & cancer but not enough prioritized in the EU and National public health policies.
 - c. Interlinked with Covid-19 pandemic but almost ignored by the media.
 - d. One Health approach or still silos approach because even if the private and public actors dealing with AMR are in the condition to open a dialogue with 3 different constituency, citizens as patients, as consumers, as environmentalist ambientalist, we do not find any overall initiative able to put all together these different but complementary actors from the civic society.

e. Huge impact on human health but research and innovation as well as the development of - and access to - affordable and quality antimicrobials is still lacking. And the last but not least paradox is the one suggested us yesterday by one of the speaker: in the next few years, if nothing will change in the context, some private actors (SMEs) struggling against AMR will probably no more in the condition to survive and so they will be added among the long list of the AMR victims.

2. Considering the huge discrepancy between the severity of the situation and the low level of awareness of European citizens, **talking on AMR would be desirable to avoid the return to the situation prior to Covid-19.**

3. AMR is a key **cross-border health issue for Europe**, bacteria as said yesterday are democratic as that they do not have any borders. So it is a common issue that need to be addressed together.

So:

- we are glad to have involved the MEPs of two Interest Groups active on health issues in the European Parliament: the interest group “European Patients’ Rights & Cross-Border Healthcare”, and the “Interest Group on Antimicrobial Resistance”. We are indeed persuaded that the European Parliament can play a key role in boosting actions on AMR at European level and ensuring that the Commission and Member States deliver on their commitments and implement effective policy responses to the AMR threat. We will continue to have an open dialogue with them on these issues.
- we welcome the "**AMR Patient Alliance**" promoted by IAPO, with which my organization has already accepted to cooperate with the aim of enlarging its

constituency. In fact, starting from patients, it is crucial to increase awareness of all citizens, for this reason we need to move, as a second step, towards a citizen AMR alliance, as suggested by the title of the daily focus and first of all by the One Health Approach.

- As AMR is a principal barrier to healthy aging, another message is linked with the need to ensure that the priorities and **needs of older people are a central pillar of AMR National Plans.**
- We all agree that **vaccines and innovative antimicrobials are necessary tools to help in the fight against AMR**, limiting infectious disease and antibiotic use. In this regard, we urgently need to **develop targeted communication strategies to increase AMR risk perception.** For instance, to inform about correct personal hygiene habits to prevent infections and increase the citizens' awareness of the value of the life-course vaccination approach. Awareness raising needs to start in schools and local communities, including in the internal and rural areas.
- To do this, we cannot limit ourselves to promoting certain initiatives, even if worthy, ~~such as those presented yesterday in my introductory speech,~~ which were all characterized by the **restricted involvement of "Brussels based" actors.** Instead, **we must focus on the leadership/protagonism of local communities across Europe and strengthen citizens' participation** in the choices and policies that concern us by making it clear that a true European Union cannot ignore its ability to involve citizens of all Member States. And in this regard, let me say hello ~~greet~~ those who in these two days have joined us from 15 EU Countries plus others within Europe (Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Ukraine) plus US and Canada. Thank you!

Follow up and possible next step:

In continuity with our commitment on the topic and as a follow up of this EPRD, we **can identify at least the following 3 next steps, focused on advocacy, training, and monitoring.**

- **Advocacy initiative:** Active Citizenship Network, together with IAPO, other PAGs, and relevant international experts is working on the draft of a “Global Patient Consensus Statement and Call to Action on Antimicrobial Resistance”. The document will be hosted in our monthly newsletter, completely dedicated to AMR. Please take the opportunity to contribute by providing your comments and feel free to endorse it. It will be addressed to the EU Institutions and relevant stakeholder.
- **Training initiative:** ACN is willing to organize a European training seminar on the theme of the Antimicrobial Resistance open to the leaders of civic and patient associations coming from EU Member States and beyond. The aim is to respond to the needs to be more up-to-date and prepared in the face of this phenomenon; to better identify, recognize and tackle the main factors that can negatively influence antimicrobial resistance in the EU Member States; and to be better equipped to protect patients’ rights and promote policies, at EU and local level.
- **Monitoring EU policy:** our attention is directed towards the Union’s programme of action in the field of health for the next years . We agree that the Programme aims to “increase protection against global health threats”, “reduce inequalities in accessing health care” and “advocate prudent and efficient use of medicines such as antimicrobials”. ~~However, at the same time we agree that the Programme, as stated in the document adopted by the European Parliament last 13 November 2020, should, among other things, “promote research and the~~

~~development of new medicinal products, with particular attention to be given to antimicrobials and vaccines to tackle AMR and vaccine preventable diseases, promote incentives to boost the production capacity for antimicrobials, personalized treatment and vaccination, and foster the digital transformation of healthcare products and platforms for monitoring and collecting information on medicines”.~~

Our expectation is, on the one hand, to identify concrete and adequate forms of patient & citizen engagement for the development of the Programme and, on the other hand, to monitor how the resources will be used, at EU and national level, starting from updated AMR National Plans.

- Finally, please let me remind that this conference was kindly hosted by the Italian MEP Brando Benifei, S&D group, and realized with the support of MDS, Pfizer, Teva, Boehringer Ingelheim, and Copma, which I want to thank.
- At the same time, please let me thank the European Joint Action on Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare-Associated Infections for their scientific support, and our media partners: “Health Europe” and the peer-reviewed journal “Advances in Health and Behavior”.
- Thanks again Brian and very appreciated the contribution by all the panelist: thank you so much.
- As always, thank you to the staff of ACN (Daniela, Bianca, Manuela, Elisa, Maira, Giulia, Federico) and to our communication office.
- We will soon send out our newsletter, comprehensive of all the documents and output of this two days conference.
- Thank you all again and stay safe. Goodbye from Rome.