

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Doctors. November was a busy month too, it was full of activities, meetings, events to attend etc.

I would like to highlight the World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW) which was celebrated on 18-24 November, 2023 at IOI Grand Exhibition & Convention Centre on 18 November. The theme for this year remained the same as 2022, "Preventing antimicrobial resistance together".

The event was attended by the Minister of Health, Dr Zaliha Mustafa, DG of Health, Deputy DGs of Health, Deputy DG of Department of Veterinary Services amongst other dignitaries and the public. The WHO Representative to Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam & Singapore, Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe gave a speech highlighting that anti microbial resistance (AMR) is a global threat that everyone must be aware of, and take action upon it.

Addressing AMR in humans, animals and the environment requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach, often described as "One Health". This approach recognises that the health of people, animals and the environment is interconnected.



YBMK giving a speech



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Key Strategies to Address AMR Across Sectors



In Humans

- **Rational Use of Antibiotics**
Prescribe antibiotics only when necessary and ensure the correct dosage and duration.
- **Awareness and Education**
Educate healthcare providers and the public about the responsible use of antibiotics and the dangers of misuse.
- **Infection Prevention and Control**
Implement strict hygiene and infection control measures in health care settings.
- **Surveillance and Reporting**
Monitor and report antibiotic use and resistance patterns.
- **Research and Development**
Encourage the development of new antibiotics, vaccines and diagnostic tools.



With a panellist for the public



With Prof Tan Sri Dr Jemilah Mahmood

In Animals

- **Responsible Use of Antibiotics in Veterinary Medicine**
Use antibiotics in animals only under veterinary guidance.
- **Preventive Measures**
Improve animal husbandry and biosecurity measures to reduce the need for antibiotics.
- **Alternatives to Antibiotics**
Explore and use alternatives like probiotics, prebiotics and vaccines in animal health.
- **Surveillance**
Monitor and report antibiotic use and resistance in veterinary medicine.
- **Education and Training**
Educate veterinarians, farmers, and animal caretakers on responsible antibiotic use.

In the Environment

- **Controlled Waste Disposal**
Implement safe disposal practices for antibiotics and pharmaceutical waste.
- **Wastewater Treatment**
Improve wastewater treatment processes to reduce antibiotic residues entering the environment.
- **Agricultural Practices**
Manage and control the use of antibiotics in agriculture and aquaculture.
- **Environmental Surveillance**
Monitor environmental sources (e.g. water bodies) for the presence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
- **Integrated Policies**
Develop policies that consider environmental aspects of antibiotic use & resistance.

Cross-sectional Strategies

- **Global and National Action Plans**
Implement comprehensive action plans that involve all relevant sectors.
- **Public-Private Partnerships**
Collaborate with pharmaceutical companies, the agricultural sector, and environmental agencies.
- **International Collaboration**
Work with international bodies (e.g. WHO, FAO and OEI) to tackle AMR globally.
- **Community Engagement**
Involve communities in awareness and education campaigns.
- **One Health Approach**
Promote interdisciplinary research and policy-making that encompasses human, animal, and environmental health.

Confronting AMR Together

Tackling AMR requires a concerted effort from governments, healthcare providers, veterinarians, farmers, environmental scientists and the public. Continuous monitoring, research, and adaptation of strategies are necessary to keep pace with the evolving nature of microbial resistance.

So Doctors, please do not throw expired medication into the dustbin and please advise your patients to take their antibiotics strictly according to the correct dose and timing. Any unfinished medication needs proper disposal. Do contact the local authorities on this matter and advise your patients on this matter too.

Everyone needs to do their part to protect the world from antimicrobial resistance!