

The patient community is an essential stakeholder in the fight against antimicrobial resistance

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In 2023, the European Commission is expected to **adopt a proposal for a Council Recommendation on antimicrobial resistance (AMR)**, including recommendations to the Member States for an effective response, with a focus on human health and a global dimension.

The fight against AMR is vital for patients with chronic conditions as they are more vulnerable to healthcare-associated infections and resistant bacteria. They spend more time in healthcare facilities, sometimes requiring routine care procedures using antibiotics. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased antibiotic use, a lack of antimicrobial stewardship, and capacity problems in terms of syndromic testing.

AMR, due to its complexity, requires a multi-stakeholder approach in which patient organisations play a key role. For that, the European Patients' Forum (EPF) calls for the following key points to be included in the forthcoming proposal for a Council Recommendation on AMR:

- **Person-centred dialogue between prescribers and patients in shared decision-making** is essential when prescribing antibiotics to ensure correct use but also to avoid prescribing antibiotics to patients whose condition does not warrant it and increasing health literacy
- **Member states should develop national guidelines for antibiotic treatment, in collaboration with patient organisations,** to ensure their effectiveness in a clinical setting and to support patients in adhering to the treatment
- **Patient organisations should be involved as active partners and multipliers in public awareness and information campaigns.** They contribute effectively to raising awareness of the issue of AMR, and to improving the health literacy of the broader patient community on the correct use of antibiotics
- **Substantial investment is needed to develop faster and more accurate diagnostics** that can tell quickly and ideally at the point of care whether an infection is bacterial in origin, and what kind of bacteria is causing it, thereby identifying the appropriate antibiotic to treat it without resorting to broad-spectrum antibiotics
- **Accurate and granular data on antibiotic use in different settings should be collected** in a more systematic way to map and monitor the situation in the Member States

The Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe and the upcoming review of the EU general pharmaceuticals legislation will further provide a unique opportunity to **encourage research and development of new antibiotics** and support **sustainable and affordable access to both old and new antibiotics.**

About EPF

The European Patients' Forum (EPF) is an umbrella organisation of patient organisations across Europe and disease areas. Our 78 members include disease-specific patient groups active at the EU level and national coalitions of patients, representing 19 countries and an estimated 150 million patients across Europe. www.eu-patient.eu