



**WVA's Statement on Antimicrobial Resistance
World Health Organization, 64th Regional Committee Meeting for Europe
15-18 September 2014**

Agenda item: Policy and technical topics, progress report, category 5 Preparedness, surveillance and response, Implementation of the European strategic action plan on antibiotic resistance (EUR/RC61/R6).

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The World Veterinary Association (WVA) is the oldest continuously active global veterinary organization which unites and represents over 80 member associations of veterinarians working in different areas of veterinary medicine across the globe. During its one hundred and fifty year history it has served as a forum for exchange of scientific information, professional dialogue within the veterinary community and development of consensus policy statements on issues relevant to the veterinary profession and its objectives.

The issue of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is high on the WVA agenda as the continued emergence of AMR poses a real and significant threat to both human and animal health and wellbeing.

The science of AMR is complex and complicated. As well, the politics behind addressing the issue is equally as complex. Tradition has seen every sector engaged in the debate trying to find a reason to blame someone else for the problem. The WVA submits that it is time to get past assigning blame, move out of our silos and try and find a means of cross sector collaboration. Every sector in animal and human health has a role to play. It is imperative that we identify the areas we might engage in to insure the integrity and availability of necessary antimicrobial therapeutic agents for both animals and humans.

In 2011, the World Veterinary Association published a revised policy paper called "WVA Position on Responsible Use of Antimicrobials". This document highlights twelve global principals for the veterinary community in addressing responsible use of antimicrobials in veterinary practice. In summary these principles are:

- In case of animal disease, the animals should be examined by a veterinarian who makes a diagnosis and recommends an effective treatment program.
- Antimicrobials used for therapy are health management tools that are licensed to be used for the purposes of: disease treatment, control and prevention.
- Codes of good veterinary practice, quality assurance programs, herd health control, surveillance programs and education should promote the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials
- Antimicrobials should be used only with veterinary involvement.
- The availability of effective antimicrobials should be based on risk assessment analysis that considers the OIE list of Antimicrobials of Veterinary Importance.
- Therapeutic antimicrobials should be used when it is known or suspected that an infectious agent is present which will be susceptible to therapy. The veterinarians must use their professional judgment in the proper selection of therapy, balancing risks and benefits to humans and animals.
- Bacteriological diagnosis with antimicrobial sensitivity testing should be part of informed professional judgment when antimicrobial therapy is needed.

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- Label instructions should be carefully followed.
- Antimicrobials used for therapy should be used for as long as needed, over as short a dosage period as possible and at the appropriate dosage regimen.
- Records should be kept of all antimicrobial administration.
- Coordinated susceptibility monitoring and surveillance should be conducted and the results provided to the prescribing veterinarian and other relevant parties.
- Efficacious, scientifically proven, alternatives to antimicrobials are needed as an important part of good husbandry practices.

The WVA believes that by adhering to these principals the animal health community can insure antimicrobials are used responsibly while at the same time being cognizant of global health issues.