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Abstract Title

A One Health response to the threat of Antimicrobial Resistance in Malta

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Abstract

Issue

Excessive and inappropriate antibiotic use has resulted in the rapid development of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), a major global public health threat. Emergence and spread of microbes resistant to antimicrobial agents places medical advances in jeopardy, especially with Multi Drug Resistant Organisms becoming more common and spreading in hospitals with increasing frequency.

Locally major challenges and legislative lacunas exist in both human and animal sectors, a culture of over-prescribing antibiotics, and their easy availability. The World Health Organisation's Global Action Plan on AMR and the European Union Action Plan on AMR recommend all countries have a National Action Plan.

The development of a National Strategy for the Prevention and Containment of AMR followed literature review, expert advice and public consultation. Its framework for action builds on strengths and addresses identified deficits. The complexity of AMR requires a comprehensive, collaborative, multidisciplinary and intersectoral One Health Approach. Bringing together human, animal and environment sectors, ensuring ownership by all relevant stakeholders has been paramount to the development and successful implementation of the Strategy.

Results

The AMR strategy coordinates activities to change practices. Many actions are interrelated, with specific actions in one area contributing to the achievement of multiple objectives. Working with other sectors will facilitate this.

Lessons

The National Committee for the Prevention and Containment of AMR is the National intersectoral coordination mechanism to monitor implementation. Main priority action areas include reviewing relevant legislation to strengthen governance, implementing effective One Health stewardship practices and improving infection prevention and control.

Key Message 1

The complexity of AMR requires a comprehensive collaborative, multidisciplinary and intersectoral One Health Approach

Key Message 2

Ownership from all relevant stakeholders is paramount to AMR strategy development and successful implementation