

A note from UHC2030 ahead of the Multi-stakeholder Hearing on Antimicrobial Resistance

Leveraging universal health coverage to address AMR

Efforts to control antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and efforts to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) are interlinked and include the same goals – affordable access for everyone, everywhere to quality health services, including for the prevention, diagnosis and appropriate treatment of (drug-resistant) infections. While achieving UHC becomes more difficult with increasing prevalence of AMR, it is through progress towards UHC and building equitable and resilient health systems for all, that we will address AMR as a public health threat.

Key Asks for the Political Declaration on Antimicrobial Resistance

1. Reaffirm the 2019 and 2023 Political Declaration of the on high-level meetings on UHC and build on commitments to leverage UHC as part of the approach for addressing antimicrobial resistance.
2. Reiterate the interlinkage that i) UHC cannot be achieved without addressing antimicrobial resistance and ii) investing in equitable and resilient health systems for universal health coverage is key to tackling antimicrobial resistance.
3. Recognize the disproportionate impact of AMR on people in vulnerable situations and the role of UHC in reducing health inequalities and reaching those who are the furthest behind.
4. Commit to investing in health systems, based on a primary health care approach, to deliver high-quality health services to people for prevention, diagnosis and appropriate treatment of infections - thereby directly improving health outcomes and reducing the inappropriate use of antimicrobials, which reduces the emergence and spread of AMR.
5. Commit to financial protection to ensure affordable access to preventive services (vaccines, WASH, IPC), timely and quality diagnosis, and appropriate quality-assured treatment of infections (including access to existing and new quality safe, efficacious, and affordable vaccines, diagnostics and antimicrobials).
6. Commit to ensuring reliable supply of high-quality and affordable antimicrobials and laboratory supplies, preventive measures, and proper diagnostics, as well as a well-trained and motivated health and care workforce working in clean and safe facilities to reduce the emergence and spread of drug-resistant infections and provide quality care for optimal health outcomes.

Key Messages

- AMR poses a dire threat to public health, risking catastrophic impacts on progress towards UHC, the sustainable development goals, and a century of medical advancements. If left unchecked, AMR endangers the environment, disrupts food production, deepens poverty, and undermines global health security.
- UHC and action to address AMR will not succeed in isolation from one another. Action is needed at local, national, regional, and global levels to ensure there is an integrated approach for making progress towards UHC and addressing AMR.
- Governments must translate commitments to strengthen universal health coverage into action (2023 Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage UHC) and build on these commitments in the 2024 Political Declaration on Antimicrobial Resistance to leverage UHC to address AMR.
- Antimicrobial resistance is driven by the misuse and overuse of antimicrobials, often as a substitute for effective good quality health care including adequate infection prevention and control practices.
- Urgent action is needed to ensure equitable access to, and appropriate use of, effective essential antibiotics for all. AMR makes the provision of health care more challenging, less effective, and more expensive.
- UHC means that everyone, everywhere, has access to the health services they need without financial hardship. While drug resistant infections can impact anyone, anywhere, AMR exacerbates pre-existing health and societal inequalities and further hinders access to affordable and life-saving treatments for vulnerable populations, including women and girls.

- Strong health systems in which people trust and that provide quality health care through a primary health care approach, promote prevention, timely diagnosis, and appropriate, quality-assured treatment of drug resistant infections.
- Strong health systems are crucial to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of newly developed antimicrobials. New medicines will not remain effective for long if they are introduced to contexts in which systems for managing infection remain weak and weak controls of appropriate antibiotic use.
- Implementing adequate financial protection measures enables individuals to access essential healthcare services, including proper medical advice, accurate diagnostics, and appropriate and effective antimicrobial treatments. By removing barriers to access, individuals are less likely to resort to purchasing medications without prescriptions or turning to unreliable informal sources, mitigating the risk of self-medication, incomplete treatments, substandard and falsified antimicrobials and the accelerated spread of antimicrobial resistance.
- UHC and AMR require political leadership and collaboration within and beyond health. Comprehensive management of antimicrobial resistance must address the interconnectedness of health issues across humans, animals, and the environment through a One Health approach while promoting health system strengthening for UHC. Global coordination, such as among the Quadripartite, are key to addressing AMR in a holistic manner.
- Embedding social participation in decision-making is critical to ensuring that measures to address AMR respond to all people's needs, including those in vulnerable situations, and to creating trust in public policies.
- Countries should strive to develop, finance, implement and monitor comprehensive multi-sectoral national action plans on AMR and establish effective multisectoral coordination mechanisms that are closely linked with national UHC plans, programmes and governance structures.

Background and key dates

At the UN High-level Meeting on AMR on 26 September 2024, member states will adopt a political declaration which will guide their collective efforts in tackling AMR moving forward. As member states negotiate the political declaration, universal health coverage must be prioritized as part of addressing AMR.

- 15 May: Multi-stakeholder Hearing on Antimicrobial Resistance will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the on-going preparatory process for the high-level meeting on AMR
- 20 May: Co-facilitators (Malta and Barbados) will present the Zero draft Political Declaration on Antimicrobial Resistance
- 22 May: Member State negotiations on the Political Declaration commence
- 2 August: Final Text to be placed under silence procedure
- 26 September: UN High-Level Meeting on AMR

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites no longer respond to antimicrobial agents. As a result of drug resistance, antibiotics and other antimicrobial agents become ineffective and infections become difficult or impossible to treat, increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness and death.

UHC2030 is the global movement to build stronger health systems for universal health coverage (UHC). It brings together diverse voices and perspectives for the common goal of achieving UHC, sustaining momentum around UHC commitments and supporting collective action and accountability. Learn more at uhc2030.org.

Additional resources

[Call for actionable steps in response to the rising threat of antimicrobial resistance \(AMR\)](#)