



Memorandum of understanding between the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) and the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) in respect of fighting antimicrobial resistance and preserving antimicrobials efficacy

Preamble

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (hereafter referred to as FVE) and the Standing Committee of European Doctors (hereafter referring as CPME) have come together to collaborate and to jointly act for fighting antimicrobial resistance and preserving antimicrobials efficacy at a pan-European level. FVE and CPME (hereafter referred as “partners”) having recognised that antimicrobial resistance is a true One Health issue, strive their forces together and commit themselves in future cooperation.

FVE was founded in 1975. Today, it represents 46 national veterinary organizations across 38 European countries and 4 vibrant Sections, each of which represents key groups within our profession: Practitioners (UEVP), Hygienists (UEVH), Veterinary State Officers (EASVO) and Veterinarians in Education, Research and Industry (EVERI). FVE supports veterinarians to make the biggest possible contribution to animals’ and people’s health and welfare and works to better understand and manage how people and animals interact.

CPME represents the National Medical Associations of 27 countries in Europe and works closely with the National Medical Associations of countries that have applied for EU membership as well as specialized European medical associations. CPME aims to promote the highest standards of medical training and medical practice in order to achieve the highest quality of health care for all patients in Europe. CPME is also concerned with the promotion of public health, the relationship between patients and doctors and the free movement of doctors within the European Union. CPME offers broad expertise in matters related to medicine and the medical profession.

The recent “Action plan against the rising threats from Antimicrobial Resistance” (Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council¹), address that: “In order to succeed, a holistic approach is needed. AMR is a major European and global societal problem, involving many different sectors e.g. medicine, veterinary medicine, animal husbandry, agriculture, environment and trade. It cannot be successfully tackled through isolated, sectoral efforts. Food and direct contact with animals may serve as a vehicle for the transmission of AMR from animals to humans emphasizing the link between human and veterinary medicine in line with the “One Health” initiative. The fact that resistance may spread from country to country when people and animals travel or when food, feed and other possible vehicles of AMR are traded, stresses the need for coordinated efforts across borders.” European Commission calls for joint actions and urges experts in both fields to take the lead. Therefore,

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_en.pdf

it is of particular importance for the EU to promote enhanced cooperation between doctors, veterinarians, EU Institutions and involved agencies, like ECDC, EMA and EFSA².

Antimicrobial resistance is a global 'One-Health' problem. World Health Organisation (WHO) has raised awareness of the risk³ and has introduced a "Policy package to combat antimicrobial resistance⁴". The need for taking joint actions to combat drug resistance both in medical and veterinary field is clearly mentioned in there. WHO closely collaborates with other global organisations, like FAO, WTO, OIE, and urge for working together for combating antimicrobials resistance.

The present Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter MoU) sets out a framework for cooperation of the two partners, taking into account all the above mentioned, as well as the conclusions of the FVE conference⁵ on "Antimicrobials: a true One Health issue - Challenges and opportunities in the medical and veterinary field."

Key principles

The key principles, which the cooperation under this MoU would be founded on, are:

- The partners recognise that antimicrobial resistance is a One-health issue that compromises both human and animal health, does not discriminate animal from human beings and does not respect borders. It is highly desirable that both European doctors and veterinarians take the opportunity to play an active role as a spearhead in containing AMR rather than to leave the field to non-medical professions.
- The partners recognise the need for taking action immediately in order to preserve existing antimicrobials efficacy, in order to ensure adequate future treatment for both humans and animals. Thus, both doctors and veterinarians should play a key role in designing and guiding the processes aiming at containing AMR.
- The partners recognise that additional research and development of new human and veterinary medicinal compounds are absolutely necessary, in order to be prepared to efficiently combat resistant strains in the future.
- The partners support the need for enhanced cooperation and interaction between the two fields on a pan-European level, in order to ensure that well-coordinated efforts both in medical and veterinary field will lead to successful results. Measures to be taken, in order to ensure prudent use of antimicrobials, shall always be based on science evidence and on assessment of the impact they will have both on containing AMR, as on the patients.
- The partners recognise that the fight against antimicrobial resistance is a joint responsibility. All partners including doctors, veterinarians, European and National Authorities, patients, farmers and the society as a whole, shall take their responsibility and work together for the common good.

² European Centre for disease control (ECDC), European Medicines Agency (EMA), European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

³ <http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2011/en/index.html>

⁴ <http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2011/policybriefs/en/index.html>

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http://www.fve.org/news/press_releases/docs/2011_006%20fve%20seminar%20conclusions%2022%20_11_2011.pdf

Framework of cooperation

The partners agree to realise the above mentioned principles by taking the following steps.

1. The partners will jointly work with EU Institutions and Agencies in order to assist policy makers by providing their expertise, with a view to ensure that measures and/or actions taken will embrace both medical and veterinary field through an equal and collaborative approach.
2. One key area of action in the prevention and control of antimicrobial resistance is the development of strategies that promote optimal antimicrobial prescribing. The partners will work together on harmonisation of prescription practices throughout Europe in medical and especially in the veterinary field. The partners will particularly urge for prescription of antimicrobials becoming mandatory in all EU countries and provided exclusively by a medical doctor, dentist or veterinarian.
3. The partners will launch and run common campaigns, conferences and/or events for raising awareness of public, focusing on and stressing the importance of the One-health approach.
4. The partners will collaboratively advocate and promote the importance of continuous education and training on responsible use of medicines and sustainable practices for both medical and veterinary practitioners. The partners agree that in some instances preventative measures are preferable to treatment with antibiotics.
5. The partners will collaboratively advocate the importance of promoting research and development of new compounds both for humans and animals.
6. The partners agree that this MoU may be reviewed regularly.
7. It is agreed that there will be occasions whereby it will not be possible to endorse a joint position. In such circumstances, both organisations commit to respect the views of the other party, and to ensure that this does not undermine the spirit or continued application of this MoU.