

Minister of Social Security Sanni Grahn-Laasonen

29.5.2024 77th World Health Assembly: Agenda item 11.8. Antimicrobial resistance: accelerating national and global responses

Finland's National Statement

Chair,

Director-General,

Finland aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and its Member States.

Antimicrobial resistance is an urgent global health threat and a silent killer around the world.

AMR poses a real threat to human and animal health globally. We need actions on two fronts: those preventing the selection of resistant microbes, and those preventing the spread of resistant microbes.

The more antimicrobials are used, the more there is selection pressure for resistant microbes. The more these resistant microbes spread, the more there is need to use ever more effective antimicrobials, and the more difficult it becomes to treat the infections. This is a vicious circle, which needs to be broken.

Infection prevention and control is the key in taking action against AMR. Finland welcomes, in particular, the first of the four urgent strategic priorities of the WHO in the human health sector: Prevention of all infections.

We also consider water, sanitation, and hygiene measures extremely important, both at health care facilities and in communities. Furthermore, we emphasize access to primary health services including, SRHR and vaccinations.

When dealing with antimicrobial resistance we should pay attention also to gender mainstreaming. For example, women may be at increased risk during pregnancy and childbirth especially in healthcare settings without safe or hygienic conditions whereas men are at particular risk of AMR when treating urinary tract infections. Therefore, access to quality health services, including sexual and reproductive health and rights is fundamentally important. Women are often the primary care givers in the households and they represent majority of health care workers. Thus, gender matters.

AMR measures require global, regional and national level actions in the One Health spirit, whole-of-society approach and the meaningful engagement of women and girls. Finland is highly committed to support global efforts on tackling AMR and the high-level AMR meeting in September.

Thank you.