

World Health Assembly 77

Statement by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

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Agenda item 11.8: Antimicrobial resistance: accelerating national and global responses

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, welcomes the strong references to immunisation in the WHA Resolution on “antimicrobial resistance: accelerating national and global responses”.

Antimicrobial resistance is an urgent global public health threat requiring sustained political attention, and the use of all effective measures, to tackle. However, a key intervention to prevent and reduce AMR – immunisation – is frequently under-valued and under-utilised.

Immunisation helps prevent AMR by preventing commonly acquired bacterial infections, thereby reducing the need for, and overuse of, antibiotics. Vaccines also help prevent viral infections, a main driver of extensive unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions, as demonstrated in WHO's recent analyses of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite this, the contribution that immunisation can make to preventing and mitigating AMR remains largely unrecognised, and most national AMR action plans have yet to include immunisation.

To maximise the potential benefits of immunisation for AMR, Gavi calls upon Member States to:

1. Integrate vaccines into National AMR Action Plans, and ensure alignment with national immunisation strategies.
2. Strengthen AMR surveillance systems to generate more accurate data on AMR and the contributory factors to AMR, such as the preventive role of vaccines.
3. Include civil society organisations on health decision making to address barriers to immunisation access, raise awareness on the linkages between immunisation and AMR, and promote behaviour change initiatives to tackle AMR.