Minute
National Interdepartmental AMR Consultative Committee
First Meeting, 4th March 2015

Attendance: ***Location:***

Hawkins House, Room 942,

Chairs:

Dr. Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) (Chair)
Mr. Martin Blake, Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) (Co-Chair)

Committee Members:

Dr. Robert Cunney, Clinical Lead, HSE HCAI & AMR Clinical Programme
Dr. Niamh O'Sullivan, Chair, HSE /RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on HCAI
Dr. Karen Burns, HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre (o.b.o. Dr. Darina O'Flanagan, Director)
Dr. Kevin Kelleher, HSE (o.b.o. Dr. Stephanie O'Keeffe, National Director, Health and Wellbeing Directorate HSE)
Dr. John Egan, Superintending Senior Research Officer, Central Veterinary Research Laboratory
Mr. Bill Cashman, President, Veterinary Council of Ireland
Mr. John O'Rourke, President, Veterinary Ireland
Mr. John Comer, President, Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association
Mr Pat O'Mahony, CEO, Health Products Regulatory Authority
Dr. Margaret O'Sullivan, Chair, National Zoonoses Committee
Dr. Pamela Byrne, CEO, Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Department of Health:

Dr. Eibhlín Connolly DCM, Patient Safety & Quality Unit
Ms. Eithne Barron, Patient Safety & Quality Unit
Ms. Antoinette Treacy, Patient Safety & Quality Unit

Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine:

Ms. Hazel Sheridan, Senior Superintending Veterinary Inspector
Ms. Caroline Garvan, Veterinary Inspector
Ms. Breda Meehan, Veterinary Medicines Division

Apologies:

Ms Laura Burke, Director General Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Mr. Eddie Downey, President, Irish Farmers' Association

1) Welcome & Introduction

The CMO welcomed all and acknowledged everyone's commitment from the outset to the 'One Health' concept and the challenge of addressing AMR. Dr. Holohan outlined the background to the establishment of the Ministerial-approved Committee and the importance of the agenda in bringing the human and animal health sectors together to collectively address this rising threat. Considerable work has already been undertaken in both sectors in recent years, but largely in isolation. The Committee would provide support and add value to each sector's work on tackling AMR.

A Discussion Document prepared by both Departments had been circulated prior to the meeting. The document set out the rationale for the establishment of the Committee and outlined proposed Terms of Reference and priorities for the group's work.

Despite significant achievements, specific concerns in the health sector include the increase in resistance of Gram-negative organisms and the lack of progress in research and development of new antimicrobials. The CVO noted that tackling AMR required a coordinated and planned approach to bring together, in this forum, the disparate work being carried out across both sectors. Mr. Blake noted further that it was important that the Committee's work to address the matter needed to be evidence-based.

2) Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for agreement

It was emphasised and agreed that this group is a forum at national level to share experiences in addressing AMR and that it is not an executive committee with 'actions' to pursue. The group's function is to add value to the ongoing work in tackling AMR and to complement such work across the two sectors.

The draft ToR were discussed and a number of amendments suggested. It was agreed that the amendments would be circulated by e-mail to the Committee members for their observations and final approval.

3) Current position on AMR & issues of concern

Two presentations were made to the group:

- ***A) Presentation by Dr. Rob Cunney, National Clinical Lead on HCAI and AMR: 'AMR in Human Medicine'***

Dr. Cunney outlined the background to the work ongoing in the human health sector. Of particular concern are organisms such as CRE and VRE. The increase in the spread of resistant strains from the community to hospital settings was also a cause for concern. Three areas being focused on by the HSE to address AMR are hand hygiene, device-related infection and antibiotic stewardship. Some progress was seen in 2014 in reporting of certain infection rates.

- ***B) Presentation by Ms. Caroline Garvan, Veterinary Inspector Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine: 'AMR – International Developments and Initiatives by Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine'***

Ms. Garvan outlined the challenges of AMR from the veterinary perspective. The initiatives at EU level were discussed including a 2015 Joint Interagency Report summarising data reviewing consumption of antimicrobials and AMR trends across the human and animal sectors across EU Member States. At National level, the Department's actions in 2014 including usage data collection, continued surveillance of zooonotic and commensal animal pathogens and initiatives to increase awareness of AMR were discussed. Finally Ms Garvan outlined DAFM plans for 2015 mentioning a continued focus on strategies to promoting prudent use, such as through education and training, in a collaborative way with stakeholders, and also continued AMR surveillance at animal and food level.

4) Discussion on priorities for future actions

There was a wide-ranging discussion on possible priorities for future action. It was agreed that coordination of communications on AMR was a priority. It was also agreed that there was a requirement for the Committee to promote education and awareness around AMR, in particular on the farming side regarding crossover of risk from animals to humans. The

Committee's openness to liaison with other Government Departments on education and awareness where appropriate, was agreed and noted.

Several Committee members identified surveillance as a potential priority; reference was made in particular to surveillance approaches to food importation in the Scandinavian countries. The Danish approach to the problem of multi-drug resistant organisms in imported food was discussed, as a possible consideration for monitoring of Irish food imports. The FSAI has established a committee to report on AMR in the food chain and it was noted that Animal Health Ireland and other groups are working with industry to address AMR in domestic herds; the regulatory side continues to engage with industry at European level. Progress in all such initiatives can be reported back to the Committee at intervals.

It was clarified that this Committee has no executive function and that decision-making which may inform future legislation resides with Government Departments; development of legislation is not a function of the group.

Regarding surveillance it was noted that the amount of work required to bring together all relevant resources was difficult to determine; it was suggested that the Committee ask its relevant surveillance personnel to liaise with each other to scope out surveillance proposals.

It was suggested that a possible future joint conference on AMR could invite Danish representatives to share their experience of addressing and controlling AMR. It was also suggested that a conference to tie in with European Antibiotic Awareness Day in November 2015 with a 'One Health' focus on antibiotic awareness might be appropriate. Consideration of holding such an event in 2016 instead was suggested.

Conclusions

The Chair proposed priorities for practical action over the next 12 months and beyond:

- *Review AMR surveillance requirements and the possibility of a 'DANMAP' model of reporting, inclusive of the two sectors*
- *Develop practical communications plans, targeted appropriately for different groups*
- *Build a bibliography of useful material to share*
- *Consideration of holding a conference was discussed; it was suggested as a possibility in 2016/2017 once the group is more established*
- *The two Departments will develop a short paper for discussion setting out the Committee's priorities for future action and revert to the Committee within two months*

AOB

Additional Members of Committee

Consideration of inviting the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI), as it covers both sectors, to membership of the Committee was raised; however it was noted that community pharmacy does not have a significant role in animal dispensing.

The Department of Health reported that it will include a Patient Representative on the Committee.

Date and time of next meeting

It was agreed that the Committee should meet more often than twice in its first year and that progress made against the group's ToR could be measured annually.

A further meeting has been provisionally scheduled for Thursday 11th June 2015, hosted and chaired by DAFM; location and time to be confirmed.

Patient Safety & Quality Unit
6th March 2015