

Minutes of the thirteenth meeting of iNAP Animal Health Implementation Committee

Monday 29th March 2021 (11.00 – 13.30)

Webex video conference hosted by Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

1. Approval of minutes from the last meeting

The Minutes of the last/twelfth meeting were circulated before this meeting and were approved by the committee. Chairman reminded committee members that AHIC is operating under the Transparency Code of Lobbying Act and as such meeting minutes will be published on the DAFM website (AP1). Chairman welcomed Marine Institute and ICBF as new members of AHIC and advised that Terms of Reference of the group should be presented for review at the next meeting (AP2).

2. Updates were given on the action points from the last meeting.

- AP2 - Safefood gave an update on their Safetrack survey conducted in mid Nov-mid Dec 2020 involving 800 participants on the island of Ireland to gauge attitudes, awareness and level of concern amongst consumers regarding food safety and healthy eating. Four high level questions were included in survey regarding antimicrobial use (AMU) in food animals. The main concern expressed by consumers was the effect of AMU in food animals on human health, followed by AMR and antibiotic residues in food. Chicken was identified as the food consumers are most concerned about. IFA raised concerns regarding use of prompted questions in the survey in relation to AMR and antibiotic use in farming where this matter was not being raised as an issue in unprompted surveys and thus could create unwarranted concern among consumers. Safefood expressed the view that it was important to gauge consumer awareness of AMR.
- AP3-APHA commented that no studies are currently available which provide robust correlation between use of vaccination and AMU.
- AP4-VCI gave an update on results of VCI survey on telemedicine use in vet practices. Response rate to survey ranged from 36% amongst general stakeholders to 10% amongst veterinary registrants. 40% of respondents believe telemedicine will have a greater role in veterinary practice in future while a high level of respondents believe that a physical inspection of animals is necessary for purpose of certification for food chain. 70% of vets who responded said they would not be confident using telemedicine alone to reach a diagnosis, and only 23% of responding vets said they would be happy to prescribe POMs on foot of a remote consultation. 65% of respondents said they believed prescribing using telemedicine could lead to an increase in AMR. ICOS expressed some concerns regarding the survey and requested that a copy of the survey be shared with them. IFA supported ICOS in concerns raised regarding survey questions. VCI advised that results will inform the VCI Legislation and Ethics Committee (LEC) review of Code of Professional Conduct. VCI advised that a one page document on findings from survey will be shared with the group (AP3).

- AP6 - A report on iNAP 2017-2020 has been drafted and will be circulated to the committee in due course (AP4).
- AP7 - VCI has engaged with a range of stakeholders regarding draft definitions in the context of (EU) Regulation 2019/6. This will be covered later in the meeting under agenda item 5.

3. Bord Bia Farmer Training Module (Alice McGlynn Bord Bia and Sinead Quealy Virtualvet)

Bord Bia gave an overview of the recently developed farmer training module on AMR and responsible use of antibiotics developed in collaboration between Bord Bia/DAFM/Teagasc. This module will be a requirement of the amended pig QAS firstly followed by QAS for other sectors. Topics covered include what is AMR?; the farmers role in addressing AMR including the 6Rs with regard to responsible use, and outline of preventative measures that can be taken to reduce need for AMs. The module includes reference to the various Codes of Good Practice guidelines developed by iNAP AHIC. VirtualVet gave an overview of feedback received to the module from 20 farmers piloted across a range of counties, age demographics and farming types and overall feedback was positive.

4. Update from CVRL on AMR Surveillance (Rosemarie Slowey DAFM)

The NVRL presented AMR findings from the 2020 national surveillance programme in poultry. There was a very low prevalence of Salmonella in Irish poultry in 2020 and a small number of isolates available for antibiotic susceptibility testing. Resistance in most categories of bacteria in broilers is showing a decreasing trend. Particularly significant reductions in the prevalence of ESBL/ AmpC producing *E. coli* in broilers and chicken meat since 2014 with 66% of meat samples tested in 2014 positive for ESBL compared to 17% in 2020 reflecting a parallel decrease in the levels of ESBL in broiler caecal contents. Levels of resistance in clinical isolates from Irish cattle (mainly respiratory and mastitis pathogens) are broadly comparable to other countries. Some trends (penicillin resistance in *S. Aureus* from mastitic milk samples) require further laboratory investigation. AHI asked what poultry industry had done to achieve such a drop in AMR. DAFM advised that poultry industry and Campylobacter Stakeholder Group worked since 2016 to address high level of ESBL in Irish poultry by lowering AMU. Progress achieved in poultry sector highlights positive impact of having data in driving behavioural change to reduce AMU.

5. Update on NVPS (Peter Collins DAFM)

DAFM gave a presentation outlining how the National Veterinary Prescription System (NVPS) will work, and what fields will look like on prescription for medicated feed as well as other prescription medications. The chair added that use of the NVPS will make the process of record keeping less onerous for vets and other stakeholders. ICOS asked how NVPS will affect internet sales of POMs and possible impact on the viability of existing businesses in Irish animal health market. DAFM is considering retail at a distance in the context of Article 104(2) of Regulation 2019/6 DAFM advised that the NVPS will assist in opening up competition in the market. The IFA expressed concern regarding usage and access to the data and highlighted the importance of having alternative products listed on the prescription in the interest of competition. VI added that no agreement had

been reached with DAFM and their members regarding usage of the NVPS and highlighted importance of vets seeing a prototype of the system. BB queried as to whether farmers will be able to access dashboards and reports from NVPS showing their AMU. DAFM advised that this report function will not be ready for phase 1 release of NVPS but will be added at a later stage as it recognises the value of such reports for farmers.

6.VCI considerations in Veterinary Medicines Regulation Definitions – Update (Niamh Muldoon)

Draft definitions for inclusion in Code of Professional Conduct were shared with this group at last/eleventh meeting in December. Since then VCI has met with many stakeholders and VCI acknowledged and welcomed their level of engagement. The Legislative and Ethics Committee of the VCI will finalise the draft definitions shortly and present them to the Council. VCI stated that a certain amount of discretion in application of definitions may be afforded to a PVP once a threshold of knowledge regarding animals under care is present. Specific guidance will be issued in relation to prescribing for mastitis and prescribing antiparasitics as appendices to Code of Conduct.

7.Overview of submission to VCI by the AHI Cellcheck Technical Working in response to a request from the VCI on prescribing for mastitis in context of EU 2019/6 (Simon More)

Two documents were discussed - a written submission to Oireachtas Joint Committee on Agriculture and the Marine on antibiotic stewardship in the Irish dairy industry in the context of EU Regulation on Veterinary Medicinal Products EU 2019/6, and Cellcheck TWG submission to VCI on prescribing for mastitis in the context of EU 2019/6 were circulated prior to the meeting. Both documents addressed mastitis control and improving milk quality, informed by international best practice and technical knowledge in the context of new veterinary medicines Regulations. The presentation focussed on a case study of a herd with suboptimal mastitis control. The new legislative requirements will challenge the current practices in relation to mastitis control, particularly dry cow therapy in herds with high SCCs. A detailed understanding of the farm environment, management and husbandry practices are critical in order to advise appropriately on SDCT, appropriate use of antimicrobials, and to carry out on farm investigations of mastitis issues. Measures to improve milk quality, and safeguard against AMR were highlighted. The chairman stated that this broader issue deserves more time than this meeting could afford and warranted a separate meeting to discuss. ICOS and ICMSA supported this point. An alternative forum at which this broader issue can be discussed will be arranged ahead of next iNAP meeting (AP5)

8.Colistin Statement of Intent (Caroline Garvan, DAFM)

DAFM advised that a revised statement of intent around the voluntary cessation of use of colistin in the animal health sector in Ireland will be circulated to the group later today (AP6). The HPRA stated that as the regulator of VMPs with responsibility for authorisation of products it would not be appropriate for the HPRA to express an opinion on the national use of colistin. However, while the HPRA is not in a position to sign the statement of intent, it does not object to this initiative.

9.iNAP version 2 – Update (Caroline Garvan, DAFM)

DAFM presented an overview of the action plan for iNAP2 which so far has 64 actions including those carried over from iNAP1 as well as 43 new actions. The updated action plan will be circulated following the meeting (AP7) and stakeholders will be asked to input timelines for commencement and delivery of those projects for which they are leading on (AP8). One Health actions under iNAP2 are to be agreed with colleagues in the Department of Health. It is proposed that iNAP2 will be formally launched at the end of May and a plan is currently being drafted.

An update was also given to the committee on the EU AMR One Health Network meeting which took place last week. There is much political support for AMR reduction measures in light of current pandemic and reducing antimicrobial use through disease prevention is viewed as key to addressing AMR. The draft Delegated Act on the designation of certain antimicrobials for human use only is available for public consultation. The G7 summit has identified lack of innovation and access to AMs as a challenge to addressing AMR. Combating AMR is recognised as one of the Sustainable Development Goals and AMR is viewed as the next potential global pandemic. A joint presentation given at the meeting on behalf of the Department of Health, DAFM and the Environmental Protection Agency was very well received and Ireland's One Health approach was applauded.

A new EU action plan on AMR with reduction targets is being drawn up to reflect the EU Farm to Fork Strategy, with ambitious targets for reducing AM sales by 50% by 2030. DAFM referenced that APHA following a request from DAFM has agreed to chair a working group to develop sector specific reduction targets for Ireland. TAPHA acknowledged that all stakeholders of this committee wish to make a positive impact on AMR. The Chairman thanked the APHA for taking on this task, acknowledging APHA's contribution in the past in terms of facilitating the development of Codes of Good Practice with regard to responsible use of antibiotics in animal sectors. DAFM added that setting quantitative targets for antimicrobial use (AMU) reduction should be an industry led initiative and DAFM will lend its full support to this initiative. The APHA will collaboratively engage with stakeholders to set meaningful and realistic targets for reducing AMU.

10. A.O.B.

None

11. Date of next meeting

DAFM to advise Committee about next meeting date in June (AP9).

Actions

<u>Action No.</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	DAFM will publish twelfth meeting minutes on DAFM website.
2	1	Terms of Reference of the group should be presented for review at the next meeting
3	2	VCI to share findings from survey on telemedicine with the group
4	2	Report on iNAP 2017-2020 to be circulated to the committee
5	7	Separate meeting to discuss the broader issue of milk quality and Cellcheck TWG guidance on prescribing for mastitis in context of EU 2019/6 to be identified
6	8	Revised statement of intent around the voluntary cessation of use of colistin in the animal health sector in Ireland will be circulated to the group
7	9	DAFM to issue updated iNAP 2 action plan to Committee following the meeting
8	9	Committee to submit timelines for commencement and delivery of actions under iNAP 2 to DAFM by COB 15 th April 2021.
9	11	DAFM to circulate draft minutes and next meeting date to Committee.

Attendees

Chair-Dr Martin Blake - Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) – Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine (DAFM)

<u>Representative</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
John Keogh	Animal and Plant Health Association (APHA)
David Graham	Animal Health Ireland (AHI)
Finola McCoy	Animal Health Ireland (AHI)
Alice McGlynn	Bord Bia
Jonathan Derham	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Lisa O'Connor	Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)
Gavin Ryan	Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA)
Mike Lynch	Irish Cattle Breeding Federation (ICBF)
Ray Doyle	Irish Co-Operative Organisation Society (ICOS)
John Enright	Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA)
Tomas Bourke	Irish Farmers Association (IFA)
Cornelia O'Connell	Irish Grain and Feed Association (IGFA)

Joe Ryan	Meat Industry Ireland (MII)
Linda Gordon	Safefood
Edgar Garcia Manzanilla	Teagasc
Catherine McAloon	UCD
Eoin Ryan	UCD
Áine Collins	UCD/CVERA
Simon More	UCD/CVERA
Niamh Muldoon	Veterinary Council of Ireland(VCI)
Conor Geraghty	Veterinary Ireland(VI)
Sinead Quealy	Virtualvet

Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM)

Martin Blake	Chief Veterinary Officer
Paula Barry-Walsh	Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer
Paul Corkery	Senior Superintending Veterinary Inspector
Caroline Garvan	Superintending Veterinary Inspector
Julie Bolton	Veterinary Inspector
Maire McElroy	Senior Superintending Research Officer

Rosemarie Slowey	Superintending Research Officer
Amalia Naranjo Lucena	Research Officer
Colm Forde	Principal Officer
Peter Collins	Assistant Principal