

Surveillance of antimicrobial resistance could be more challenging outside of the EU

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In a new report from the Microbiology Society, experts from around the UK explain the desperate need for long-term and ambitious funding for surveillance and research into antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The next pandemic is likely to be associated with antimicrobial resistance, they say, and improved [surveillance](#) systems to monitor the evolution of AMR over time will be critical to avoid a surge in drug-resistant infections.

"In Ireland, the task of setting up an efficient AMR surveillance system is likely to be directed by the EU. The UK, however, will need to develop its own strategy, which may prove more challenging out of the EU and will require the appropriate funding and direction" the report says. "Monitoring and identifying AMR is essential in order to identify outbreaks, trace transmission chains, and identify how AMR is evolving and what factors contribute to its evolution, and for local, national and international surveillance efforts. Further being able to detect the rise of AMR and its spread will help safeguard our economies from future pandemics."

The report further explains the urgent need for improved communication and education about AMR, which is described as a "slow-motion pandemic." Current momentum around infectious disease research should be used to raise awareness and understanding of AMR. With this opportunity comes a threat, however. According to the report, there is a risk of AMR messaging being diluted by the current information around the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report highlights the threat AMR poses to society and contains six key recommendations from the microbiology community. These recommendations focus on research, surveillance and collaboration, and how new interventions can be developed to tackle the threat of AMR.

Tackling the issue of AMR aligns with many of the SDGs; specifically, those related to poverty (SDG 1), human health (SDG 3), food security and agriculture (SDG 2), clean sanitation (SDG 6) and economic growth (SDG 8). Microbiology is at the forefront of developing novel antimicrobial compounds, vaccine research, providing [sustainable solutions](#) for treating livestock and crop diseases, unravelling disease transmission patterns across ecosystems and informing which antimicrobials should be prescribed when. Therefore, the microbiology community is pivotal for AMR research and can have a major influence in this area, which can contribute to delivering the SDGs.

The current landscape of AMR research in the UK and Ireland is highly active and expansive. However, the challenge is significant, and some aspects of the research must be augmented in order to provide new solutions to infections caused by antimicrobial-resistant organisms. Whilst basic research is fundamental to understanding the how and why, the field also needs to be more applied, aiming to translate findings into new interventions through enhanced interactions with other disciplines and industrial partners.

More information: The full report, including case studies and opinion pieces from key experts in the field is free to read at: [microbiologysociety.org/public ... e-policy-report.html](https://microbiologysociety.org/public...e-policy-report.html)

Provided by Microbiology Society

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