



Joint Action
Antimicrobial Resistance and
Healthcare-Associated Infections

Press Release

EU-JAMRAI members and co-authors call for greater medicine supply chain transparency

Publication date: 27th January 2021

Medicine shortages are a common problem that have been exacerbated by COVID-19 due to increased demand of some medicines and supply disruptions due to lockdowns and border closures. Shortages of antibiotics are particularly disruptive. As important antibiotics continue to be unavailable, doctors change prescribing habits, potentially away from evidence-informed prescribing guidelines and to broad-spectrum antibiotics.

Greater transparency of suppliers is needed to ensure sustainable supply. Many countries treat factory information as a business secret, and therefore it is not made publicly available or even shared between regulators. When countries are notified of a supply disruption, it is too late to find a solution if all companies are dependent upon the same raw material supplier. This is a common problem since the world supply of active pharmaceutical ingredients is highly concentrated in a few countries. A lockdown in one geographic region can have significant implications for the world's medicine supply. Transparency is needed to understand supply chain resilience.

New Zealand has already taken steps, openly publishing the name and location of raw material and finished product factories for its marketed medicines. If more countries followed New Zealand's lead, national medicines agencies and procurers would have better data for decision-making. For example, they could better judge the cost-effectiveness of stimulating local production versus a more diversified geographic supply. Without transparency, most countries will be unable to design proactive solutions, meaning that shortages will continue, putting patients' lives at risk.

Read the full call to action in the Bulletin of the World Health Organization here:

https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/bulletin/online-first/blt.20.267724.pdf?sfvrsn=ea1c5d04_5

About EU-JAMRAI

EU-JAMRAI is a European Union Joint Action on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and Healthcare-Associated Infections (HCAI) that brings together 44 partners and more than 40 stakeholders. Its mission is to foster synergies among UE Member States by developing and implementing effective One Health policies to fight the rising threat of AMR and to reduce HCAI. EU-JAMRAI is co-funded by their partners and the Health Programme of the European Union. <https://eu-jamrai.eu>

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This document arises from the Joint Action on Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare-Associated Infections (EU-JAMRAI), which has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Health Program (2014-2020) under the Grant Agreement N°761296. Sole responsibility lies with the author and the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.

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Co-funded by the
Health Programme
of the European Union