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Press Release

Veterinarians continue to be committed to responsible and judicious use of antimicrobials

18 November 2019

Today, 18 November 2019, the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), representing European veterinarians, celebrates European Antibiotic Awareness Day and reiterates our commitment to achieve the One-Health goals on fighting antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Within the “**One Health**” context, it is important to use the medicines prudently in both humans and in animals. Infectious diseases in people and animals are often the same or very similar and the same applies for their treatment. Antimicrobials are very valuable for the treatment of infectious diseases in both humans and animals. Their improper use, however, may trigger the reaction of the disease agents, which develop mechanisms to defend themselves and become resistant against treatment. As a result, the medicine becomes less effective. That is why keeping antimicrobials effective, requires everyone’s attention to avoid their overuse or misuse in both animals and people and preserve their efficacy.

FVE is strongly committed to the “One Health” approach and has been intensively promoting responsible use, through awareness campaigns, guidelines, and policy papers. The ‘European Commission Final Overview Report - Measures to tackle Antimicrobial Resistance through the Prudent Use of Antimicrobials in Animals’ recognises this valuable contribution of the animal health sector towards improving animal health, minimising disease and therefore the need to use antibiotics. This progress has been demonstrated in numbers. The latest [ESVAC report](#) shows a decrease by more than 32% of the overall sales of veterinary antimicrobials between 2011 and 2017 and a **continuing reduction in use** of antimicrobials that are considered as **critical**, for the 31 countries across Europe that provided data during this period.

Nevertheless, looking at antimicrobial resistance rates, it is clear that we are still far from reaching our goal. The latest European Court of Auditors [report](#) concludes that ‘*while EU action has led to some progress, especially on veterinary issues, there is little evidence that the health burden of antimicrobial resistance has been reduced*’.

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As FVE we are well aware that despite all efforts made so far, we still need to enforce a true implementation of One Health in practice by joining forces with everyone involved in human and animal healthcare to achieve the goals on fighting AMR.

In respect to our sector, the next goal is to get a better insight in antibiotic use per animal species and the impact on antimicrobial resistance. Special attention will be given to support high usage countries in their efforts.

FVE aims to strengthen collaborations with human and animal healthcare stakeholders to highlight how disease prevention is crucial for reducing the need to use antimicrobials in humans and animals. In that respect we will also continue to work with [EPRUMA](#), the European Platform on Responsible Use of Medicines in Animals, to ensure that antibiotics will be used ‘*as little as possible, as much as necessary*’.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) is an umbrella organisation of veterinary organisations from 40 European countries, representing a total of around 300 000 veterinarians. The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) strives to promote animal health, animal welfare and public health across Europe.

*For further information, consult the FVE website www.fve.org
FVE Secretariat on Tel +32 2 533 70 20 or by e-mail to info@fve.org*

- [9th ESVAC report](#)
- [FVE leaflets on responsible use](#)
- [European Commission Final Overview Report - Measures to tackle Antimicrobial Resistance through the Prudent Use of Antimicrobials in Animals'](#)
- European Court of auditors report
<https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/DocItem.aspx?did=51992>