WHO Executive Board 148 (EB148)

FDI statement on Item 9 Antimicrobial resistance (EB148/11)

On behalf of FDI World Dental Federation, the official representative body of over one million dentists, we congratulate WHO's efforts to spearhead the global response to AMR.

Whilst applauding the significant progress achieved in tackling AMR highlighted in the Director-General's report, we remain concerned by the slow progress in many countries of the multisectoral AMR working groups. It is imperative that financial and technical resources be dedicated to multisectoral coordination so these working groups can function and develop their own AMR national action plans.

With dentists prescribing up to 10% of all antibiotics worldwide, they must be involved in tackling AMR. To this end, we strongly urge Member States to consult with national dental associations when developing national strategies and action plans, as well as guidelines and prescribing policies on antibiotic use for dentists.

We welcome WHO's notable progress in implementing the Global Action Plan on AMR and offer our support on Objective 1 through effective communication and education. FDI recently published a white paper highlighting the role of dental teams in reducing AMR. The paper includes an online library of resources, featuring WHO guidelines, which aims to sustain political commitment and action on AMR. The white paper is complemented by a Massive Open Online Course to support healthcare professionals to combat AMR by preventing dental infections, optimizing antibiotic use and raising public awareness.

The DG's 23 December report on Oral health noted that oral health services were among the most affected essential health services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of access to timely dental care during lockdown periods led to a dramatic increase in antibiotic prescribing rates – with a 25 per cent increase seen in England alone. Access to dental treatment, rather than antibiotics, must be a priority to support in efforts to control AMR.

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