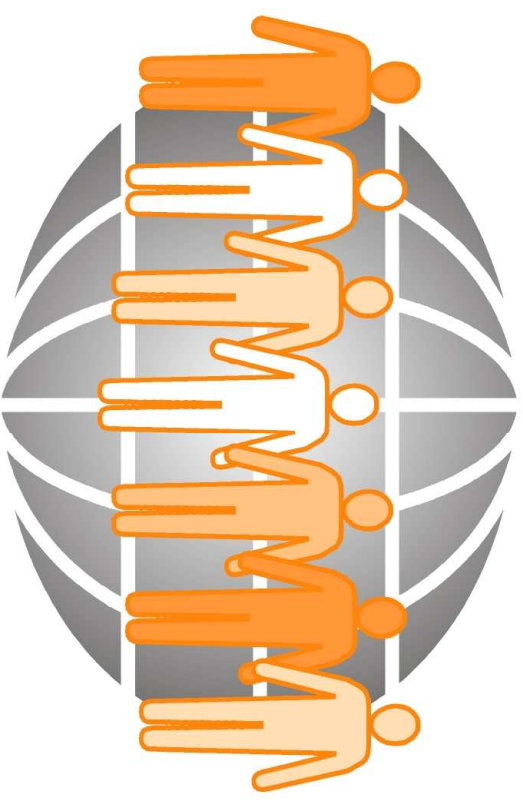


Joint WHO/NGO briefing at the WHA on:



**Saving lives, saving money:
achieving rational use of medicines in health services**

May 15th, 12:30-14:00
Venue: Salle IX at UN Palais



Programme

Chair: His Excellency **Dr. Jigme Singey**, Minister of Health, Thimphu, Bhutan *Co-chair:* **Dr. Palitha Abeyskoon**, Advisor to Sri Lankan Government and WHO expert *Co-chair:* **Dr. Ravi Narayan**, People's Health Movement

Organizing Committee: Department of Medicines Policy and Standards in association with Consumers International, Health Action International, World Council of Churches/Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network and React: action on antibiotic resistance.

The aim is to share experiences from around the world on systematic, coordinated, health system approaches to achieve rational use of medicines, and to discuss how the new Resolution on rational use of medicines will contribute to the process.

Saving lives, saving money: achieving rational use of medicines in health services

Programme

a key role in irrational use. Implementation of the WHO Ethical Criteria, and enactment and enforcement of legislation are needed if advances are to be made in rational drug use, in the interest of public health. Recent examples from Asia, Latin America and Europe will be presented.

Presenters: Teresa Alves and Barbara Mintzes, Health Action International

- **Opening Remarks by the Chair**

- **Introduction: What the new proposed resolution would mean for Member States?**

A short introduction to the session will be given highlighting the objectives and the implications of the proposed resolution on rational use of medicines which advocates cross-cutting health systems approach to promoting rational use of medicines.

Presenter: Kathleen Holloway, Department of Medicines Policy and Standards, WHO Geneva

- **Irrational use of antibiotics - the misuse of a miracle**

The talk will highlight the burden of antibiotic resistance (health related and economical consequences) driven by irrational use of antibiotics, spread of bacteria and poor health care hygiene practice. Examples will be given on how political support has been mobilized in Sweden and Europe, to meet the need of a multidisciplinary approach.

Presenters: Otto Cars, React: Action on Antibiotic Resistance and STRAMA

- **Improving Public Health? Drug Promotion & Rational Use of Medicines**

What are the implications for public health of the widespread promotion of medicines to health professionals and -increasingly- to the public? The recent experience with safety withdrawals of heavily advertised drugs is sobering. The regulation of drug promotion is the responsibility of national regulatory agencies. However, many countries do not have a functioning system of drug regulation and few allocate adequate resources to regulation of drug promotion. Unethical drug promotion plays

- **Rational use of medicines: economic implications - savings on drug expenditure**

The talk will highlight several case studies from private and public health institutions in Africa. The cases studies will describe savings made on drug expenditure as a result of strategies implemented to promote rational use of medicines. How the health systems supported or undermined the solutions found will be discussed.

Presenters: Eva Ormbaka, World Council of Churches - Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network

- **National approach to promote rational use of medicine: the experience of Oman**

The talk will present the weaknesses of an ad-hoc and piece-meal approach to promoting rational use of medicines and how the country developed a national programme and became systematic in promoting rational use of medicines at different levels of health care system. This approach combined appropriate interventions, created appropriate human resources, developed the required technical guidelines and frameworks. All these efforts were coordinated through establishing a dedicated unit within the Ministry of Health and an on-going planning, monitoring and evaluation system. The presentation will also highlight the lessons learnt and the successes of this national approach in terms of maximising the usefulness of medicines and minimizing the negative effect of irrational use of medicines both in terms of health outcomes as well as financial losses.

Presenters: Jaffer Batool, Director of the Directorate of Rational Drug Use, Ministry of Health Oman

- **Discussion and concluding remarks by Panel**