



## **Title: The strategic landscape across the UK**

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- Hello, my name's Naomi Bull and I'm going to be delivering this short presentation on the strategic antimicrobial resistance landscape across the UK. So a little bit about me, I'm currently working at the veterinary medicines directorate, where I'm the head of the policy and communications team sitting within the wider anti-microbial resistance policy and surveillance team. My current role at the VMD involves leading on policy for AMR and that's as it relates to new medicines and also across different issues, including coordination of commitments under the UK's AMR national action plan which we'll be talking about later in the presentation. This presentation has been edited by the team at our RCVS knowledge and I'm very grateful to my colleague, Fraser Broadfoot as well as Grace O'Gorman at NOAH for their very helpful review and comments.

What are we going to cover in this session? Well, by the end you should have a much greater understanding of what the UK's AMR strategy involves and you'll be able to define the role of the VMD in delivering that. Identify the two key documents which underpin it and also outlined some of our key ambitions contained within the strategy.

I'll start by saying a little bit about what the VMD actually does. While we're a part of the UK civil service, and within that, we're a regulatory and policy lead body, where we're responsible for issues concerning the authorization, manufacture and use of that new medicines in the UK. We're actually an Executive Agency of DEFRA, the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs. And this means that we contribute to their objectives as well as protecting public health and meeting high standards of animal welfare. In addition to delivering those specialised functions that are separate to their core role. So what is the role of the VMD then in developing and delivering AMR policy? Well, we act as policy lead on all AMR issues related to animal health and we provide policy advice on AMR to DEFRA as well as other government departments and organisations. We're responsible for coordinating implementation of the animal health specific aspects of the cross-government five-year AMR national action plan. Which we're going to talk more about on the next slide. And in order to achieve this we work closely with a wide range of other government Departments and Agencies and that includes Defra, but also Public Health England, Food Standards Agency, Environment Agency, Department of Health and Social Care, APHA and Cefas. In addition to that, we also work closely with the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

And now we're coming on to talk about the UK's AMR strategy and this is an ambitious programme to slow the development and spread of AMR, and it takes a 'One Health' approach. This means that it spans people, animals, agriculture and the wider environment. Now the strategy is underpinned by two key documents, the first is the five-year national action plan and the second is the 20 year vision. Five-year national action plan, we've mentioned that a couple of times already in this presentation and this is a document that sets out a series of commitments which we aim to achieve between 2019 and 2024. However, the government recognises that no country could tackle AMR in

the life of a single five-year plan. And that's where the 20 year vision comes in because the 20 year vision sets in our longer term ambition for containing and controlling AMR by 2040. So the five-year action plan supports that vision and it sits within the context of that longer term ambition on AMR. But let's take a look in greater detail.

Now at the first of those two key documents we identified and that's the UK's five-year national action plan. This document has three key threads, reducing need and exposure, optimising use and also investment. Under reducing need and exposure, there are specific commitments to lower the burden of animal infection and ensure better food safety. Under optimising use, there are specific reference to animals and agriculture including improving lab capacity and surveillance in animals. And these of course are key areas where vets can help deliver on the action plan, as vets play a critical role in optimising use of antimicrobials and lowering the burden of animal infection. Under investment, all of the areas of focus really have direct relevance for animal health.

Now having identified these key threads in the plan, there are a number of levers that are available to address content areas, and these include raising awareness, building capacity. They include measurement and surveillance programmes, funding and financial incentives, elements of policy and regulation and also championing and piloting measures. Finally, there are some key enablers identified which are required for us to achieve success in delivering on this national action plan. And these include some of the high level strategic goals with an international focus, such as alignment with the sustainable development goals, global coordination and coalition building.

As the national action plan is implemented, we measure progress against key ambitions that I've highlighted here relate specifically to the use in food producing animals. The first ambition, which is to reduce use of antibiotics in food producing animals by 25% between 2016 and 2020, is very close to being achieved. And the graph at the bottom, shows the impressive decrease in sales of antibiotics for using food producing animals since 2015. I just want to highlight that this 25% target is based on the targets that the sectors themselves have already agreed in their sector specific targets. So it's not government imposed. The second ambition I'm highlighting here which is to define new objectives for individual and more sectors by 2021, that's now been achieved because the target's taskforce is published. The latest sector specific targets leading up to 2024 in line with the national action plan and its goals.

As I mentioned earlier, the national action plan supports the UK's 20 year vision for containing controlling AMR by 2040. And that's the second of those key documents that we talked about. Within this vision, the UK sets out nine ambitions for change and these cover humans, animals and the environment in a holistic 'One Health' approach. This includes protecting animal health and welfare whilst minimising infection and demonstrating appropriate use of antimicrobials. It also considers awareness raising and supporting global efforts, to be continuing to be a good global partner and this is actually a key part of UK's strategy since AMR of course doesn't respect geographical borders. Because of this, the government is committed to working alongside global partners to encourage responsible antibiotic use. And we do this in a number of ways. Some of our work involves engagement activities and that's in support of the United nations tripartite and the Global Action Plan for AMR. We're also involved in capacity building activities through the UK's FAO Reference Centre for AMR and that's a joint initiative across three Executive Agencies of DEFRA, including ourselves as well as APHA and Cefas.

The Reference Centre was officially launched in October, 2018, and it has a vision to safeguard animal and human health from the threat of AMR, with a primary focus on low and middle income countries. The Centre does this through providing scientific and policy expertise, at AMR in

terrestrial and aquatic animals and their environments. And it has a strong affiliation with UK AIDS Fleming fund. A number of partner countries have been involved to date, including Bangladesh, Ghana, Ethiopia and Nigeria. We're also participating in the Codex Alimentarius intergovernmental Task Force on AMR, and this is tasked with developing science-based guidance on the management of AMR in food. The TFAMR aims to ensure that members have the necessary guidance to enable care and management of AMR along the whole food chain, including limiting unnecessary use of antibiotics in food producing animals and crop production.

So in summary, UK's AMR strategy is an ambitious programme to slow the development and spread of AMR and it takes a 'One Health' approach, encompassing humans, animals and the environment. There are two key documents which are underpinned on this strategy and those are the five-year national action plan running from 2019 to 2024 and the longer term 20 year vision running up to 2040. These documents detail a series of ambitions across a range policy areas. The VMD are responsible for coordinating implementation of the animal health specific aspects of those ambitions. If you're interested in reading more about the UK's AMR strategy, here's some links to all the documents that I've mentioned in this presentation. And thanks very much for listening.

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