

Integrated Approach to Address AMR

What is the issue?

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- The problem of AMR is advancing rapidly across the globe.
- India needs an integrated health approach to address AMR.

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What is AMR?

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- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is the broader term for resistance in different types of microorganisms, encompassing resistance to antibacterial, antiviral, anti-parasitic and antifungal drugs.
- It occurs when microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites change in ways that render the medications used to cure the infections ineffective.
- These resistant microorganisms are often referred to as “superbugs”.
- This is a major concern because a resistant infection may kill, can spread to others, and imposes huge costs to individuals and society.

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What should India’s approach be?

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- **Increased access to health services** - In the areas of both prevention and treatment it will boost overall population health and diminishes the spread of infectious bacteria.

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- This is especially important for poor or marginalised populations, many of whom lack adequate sanitation and hygiene and are at greater risk of bacterial infections.

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- **Quality health services** - This will result in the more rational use of antibiotics, which can decrease healthcare-associated bacterial infections.

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- Advances in antibiotic stewardship and infection control including the provision of adequate water, sanitation and hygiene can reduce infections occurring in health facilities.

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- **Affordable healthcare policies** - Stringent treatment guidelines and revised incentive schemes have significant potential to advance both the Universal Health Coverage and AMR agendas.

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- Such policies will reduce out-of-pocket expenditure, and help increase access to antimicrobial drugs.

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- **Public Awareness** - Dissemination of high-quality information and advice to public and health workers on the rational use of antibiotics will help them to treat ailments more efficiently and optimally.

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Source: Business Line

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