

Promoting Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Countermeasures in the Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2022 Recommendation Background

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AMR Alliance Japan

In February 2022, British medical journal *The Lancet* reported that in 2019, an estimated 1.27 million deaths worldwide were directly caused by antimicrobial resistance (AMR). This was higher than the number of deaths from HIV and AIDS or malaria. In Japan, it is estimated that about 8,000 lives are lost every year due to AMR bacteria. However, this figure is based on just two strains of AMR bacteria, and the true scale of damage from AMR is thought to be enormous.

Starting in 2016, the Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform has clearly outlined the importance of AMR control every year, with mention of “strengthening efforts to promote AMR control and expanding systems for research, testing, and treatment.”

AMR infections are a threat that is equivalent to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and discussions based on their tentative status as a priority infectious disease are accelerating. AMR Alliance Japan has high expectations for the Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2022 to advance measures for managing AMR-related risks and recommends it include the following:

To promote countermeasures for antimicrobial resistance (AMR) with a One Health approach, reinforce each system for surveillance, testing, human resource development, and the secure supply of antimicrobials; rapidly establish a system of incentives for ensuring sustainable innovation in antimicrobial R&D; and serve in a leading role in global cooperation.

Taking a closer look at R&D, “Pharma Industry Vision 2021” was released in September 2021 and said steps will be taken to “consider the introduction of pull incentives like those other countries plan to introduce.” Furthermore, the FY2022 MHLW science research program began accepting applications for “studies on institutional design that will contribute to antimicrobial development or contribute to regulating antimicrobial usage to combat AMR.” In addition, based on experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Study Group on Securing Usable Medicines and Other Therapeutics for Infectious Diseases was established to prepare for outbreaks of novel infectious diseases, AMR was included on the tentative list of priority infectious diseases, and AMR countermeasures are now being considered. The “Global Health Strategy Interim Summary Report” presented by the Cabinet Secretariat Office of Healthcare Policy also discusses AMR as an independent topic.

The G7 Finance Ministers’ Statement on Actions to Support Antibiotic Development of December 13, 2021 states that “COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of strengthening preparedness for global health threats, including the ‘silent pandemic’ of antimicrobial resistance (AMR),” and as G7 president in 2023, it is important for us to fulfill our

responsibilities in the global community based on an understanding that infectious disease control cannot be fully accomplished by Japan alone.

About AMR Alliance Japan: Established in November 2018, AMR Alliance Japan is an independent platform for multi-stakeholder discussion on AMR control. As of May 2022, its members include MSD K.K., the Children and Healthcare Project, Shionogi & Co., Ltd., Sumitomo Pharma Co., Ltd., the Japanese Society of Antimicrobials for Animals, Nippon Becton Dickinson Co., Ltd., the Japan Medical Association, the Japanese Society for Medical Mycology, the Japanese Society of Pharmaceutical Health Care and Sciences, the Japanese Society of Chemotherapy, the Japanese Society for Infection Prevention and Control, the Japanese Association for Infectious Diseases, the Japanese Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases, the Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, the Japanese Society of Therapeutic Drug Monitoring, the Japan Society of Hospital Pharmacists, the Pharmaceutical Society of Japan, the Japan Pharmaceutical Association, the Japanese Society for Clinical Microbiology, bioMérieux Japan Ltd., Himeji City, and Pfizer Japan Inc. Health and Global Policy Institute (HGPI) serves as its secretariat.