European Antibiotic Awareness Day:

ESCMID is setting up infection control committee and conducts prescription survey

- European Committee on Infection Control (EUCIC) is recruiting representatives from European countries to create national committees
- ESCMID Study Group for Antibiotic Policies (ESGAP) calls for junior doctors to participate in antibiotic prescription survey for vital research
- The European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (EUCAST), organized by ESCMID and ECDC, has united all European countries behind common antimicrobial breakpoints and methods for susceptibility testing. The website (www.eucast.org) has more than 50,000 visitors per month

13 November 2015, Basel: The European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Disease (ESCMID) – an organization that explores the risks and best practices in infectious disease – takes the opportunity ahead of the European Antibiotic Awareness Day (EAAD) on 18 November to highlight two of the society’s more recent projects in the fight against antimicrobial resistance.

ESCMID has over the past years been very active in the area of antimicrobial resistance. Not only is antibiotic resistance a central topic at its annual congress ECCMID, several of its study groups focus on developing strategies and policies to tackle the problem and the society supports many European and international initiatives. Most noteworthy, is its role in setting up the European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (EUCAST), which determines breakpoints for bacteria and fungi for existing and new antimicrobial agents.

Earlier this year, ESCMID introduced the European Committee on Infection Control (EUCIC), which aims to increase harmonization of infection control and prevention measures across Europe using education, training goals, guidelines and political awareness. Already, it has over 50% of European countries accounted for (including Sweden, Spain, Germany, United Kingdom and Italy) and is now calling for national representation to come forward from each of the remaining countries.

EUCIC is further calling on professionals from European countries to help set-up national committees, the major goal of which is to provide the Advisory Board with relevant networks within each country. EUCIC’s objective is to create a new infection, control and prevention (IPC) network based on extensive partnerships among European national representatives and the most relevant societies in the field of infection control, infectious diseases and clinical microbiology.
EUCIC Chair Prof. Evelina Tacconelli, Universitätsklinikum Tübingen, in Germany, added: “It’s a really exciting time with the new group having formed, and we are now actively seeking out representatives from the remaining European nations to start projects in collaboration with international stakeholders, as well as other ESCMID groups working on infection control and preventive measures. Ultimately, this group and these collaborations will contribute to harmonize infection control across Europe through increased educational and training tools and new guidance documents.”

The ESCMID Study Group for Antibiotic Policies (ESGAP) is currently finishing a European-wide survey on the “teaching on prudent antibiotic prescribing” among final-year medical students. More than 10,000 have participated, and the results will be announced at ECCMID 2016. The study group is now calling on junior doctors throughout Europe to take part in a study on “antibiotic prescribing and resistance”. Evaluating these cross-country trends will provide the information necessary to improve clinical practice and help mitigate the growth of antimicrobial resistance. ESGAP Chair Prof. Bojana Beovic of the Ljubljana University Medical Centre, who is leading the project, says the group currently has around 800 responses. “However, we would like to use the antibiotic awareness day to increase collaborations across Europe and welcome new input from clinicians fighting antibiotic resistance”.

ESGAP Secretary Prof. Céline Pulcini, from Nancy University Hospital (France), who helped spearhead the EAAD initiative, commented: “EAAD provides a focus for national campaigns on prudent antibiotic use, for the engagement of professionals and for communication capacity development. EAAD also provides support to European countries by developing evidence-based key messages and materials for different target audiences, including messages and template materials for prescribers”

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ESCMID is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of infectious diseases in Europe and beyond. The society promotes and supports research, education and training and shares good medical practice in the infection disciplines to build capacity throughout the world. www.escmid.org.
To read more about ESCMID's initiatives in the fight against antimicrobial resistance, please look at ESCMID's dedicated website: www.escmid.org/fightingresistance

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