

S057

1-hour Symposium

What is responsible use of antibiotics?

[View of high-resistance countries](#)

M.A. Borg¹

¹, Msida, Malta

Antibiotic use is widely regarded as a key driver for antimicrobial resistance (AMR). It is therefore not surprising that surveillance undertaken by the European Centre for Disease Control indicates that the European countries which report higher prevalence of AMR also tend to be those showing greater consumption of antibiotics. This applies both quantitatively as well as qualitatively; indeed high resistance countries invariably use more wide-spectrum antibiotics.

Antibiotic stewardship (AS) is widely advocated as an important intervention to reduce AMR development. Therefore AS logically takes on even more importance in high resistance countries. However, such programmes need to understand and appreciate what drives high antibiotic prescribing in these countries, where cultural factors have been proposed as major contributors. It therefore follows that, if AS be is to be made more effective in high resistance countries, campaigns and strategies need to take into account not only the evidence base from medical research but, equally, behavioural science and change management. "Copy and paste" approaches, using methodologies reported as effective in low resistance countries having different cultural backgrounds, are unlikely to succeed. Instead, success will only be achieved if interventions are both informed by knowledge of the behavioural factors influencing prescribing and also are conducive with the local cultural background.