

European Hospitals and the AMR Challenge

From Control to Prevention: How University
Hospitals Can Prevent, Prepare, and Protect
Against Infections and Antimicrobial
Resistance

EUHA Position Paper

Executive Summary

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) threatens public health and the sustainability of European health systems. EU leaders have pledged to step up action, and university hospitals are committed to playing a key role in facing this shared challenge. This paper adds evidence, ideas and momentum to these efforts.

The European University Hospitals Alliance (EUHA), a network of Europe's leading university hospitals, recognises the need to take greater responsibility for addressing AMR, to deliver teaching and training, and to engage with partners in health and social care. EUHA members are enhancing infection prevention and control, surveillance and monitoring, and working with the wider health system to accelerate progress. Political support, along with advances in hospital and digital infrastructure, can help Europe to go further, faster.

This paper was developed through a detailed survey of experts at EUHA university hospitals, complemented with in-depth interviews with clinicians, scientists and patient organisations. The research, conducted between June and September 2025 and supported by input from EUHA and partners, informed the development of (a) concrete commitments by university hospitals and (b) proposals for policies that would support this effort.

Real-World Impact

- AMR costs lives: 100 deaths per day in the EU/EEA¹
- AMR costs money: €11.7 billion per year in healthcare costs and economic losses in the EU/EEA²
- AMR will reduce global GDP: losses could reach 3.8% of GDP in 2050³
- AMR causes hospitalisation: 568 million extra days in European hospitals every year
- AMR affects food production: livestock, aquaculture and the environment

¹ Revised estimates of burden of disease for AMR. ECDC. Retrieved, 3 September, 2025. https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Annex_1_burden_estimate_by_antibiotic_resistance_bacterium.pdf

² Embracing a One Health Framework to Fight AMR. OECD (2023). Retrieved, 3 September, 2025. https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2023/09/embracing-a-one-health-framework-to-fight-antimicrobial-resistance_39e8cd70/ce44c755-en.pdf

³ Drug-resistant infections: a threat to our economic future. World Bank (2017). Retrieved, 3 September, 2025. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/323311493396993758/pdf/final-report.pdf>

Conclusion, Commitments & Recommendations

AMR demands a concerted response. It is time for a new collaboration between hospitals and policymakers, with each doing all in their power to prevent, prepare and protect against infections and antimicrobial resistance – and to support one another in this shared public health project.

What Will Hospitals Do?

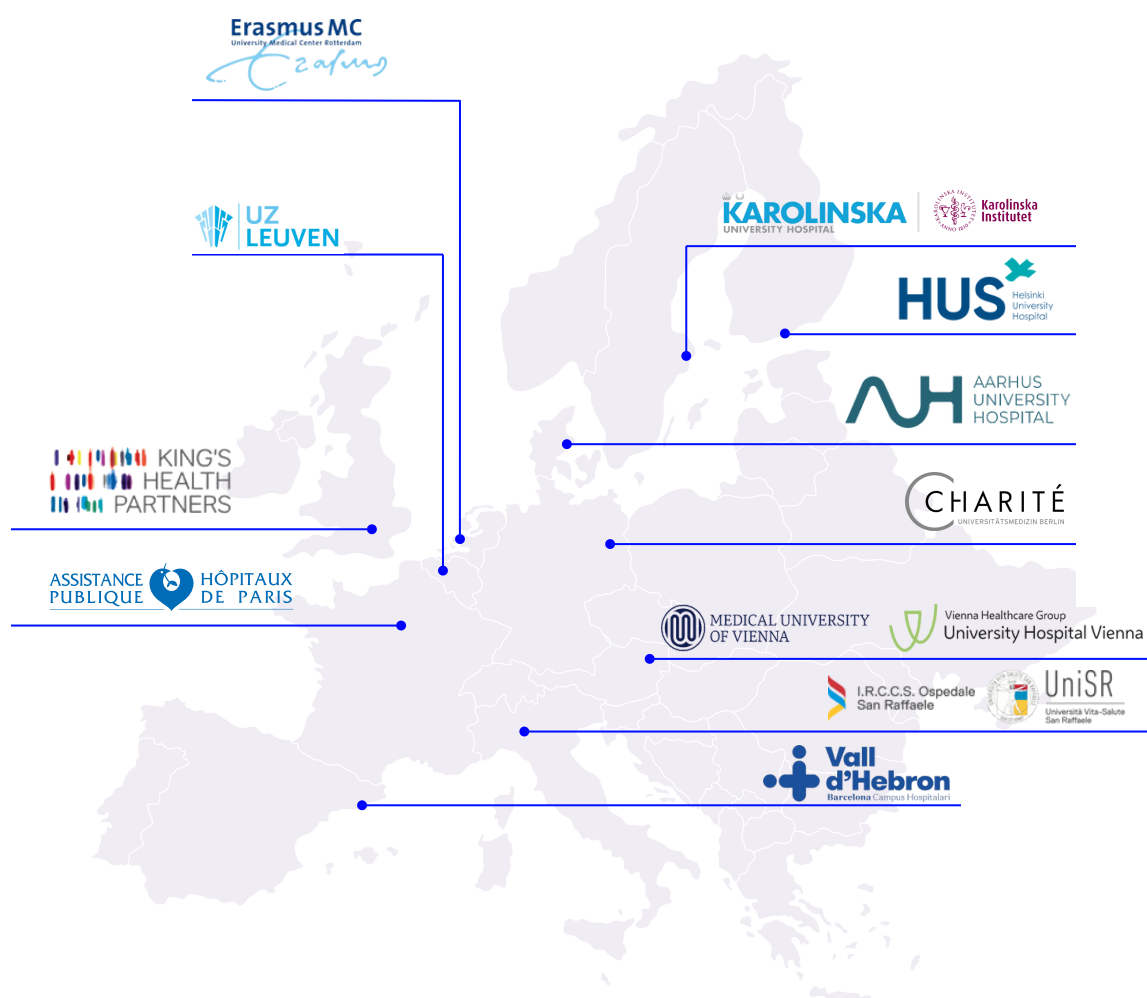
- Collect and share good practices within networks of university hospitals by 2030
- Prioritise the highest standards of antibiotic stewardship and embed this in teaching activities
- Train health and social stakeholders to play their part in fighting AMR
- Optimise hospital design with input from IPC teams
- Enhance infection prevention policies, including risk assessment for AMR, outbreak management and isolation precautions
- Embrace the latest technologies, including digital tools and AI
- Enhance laboratory capacity for rapid diagnostic tests and genotyping
- Encourage vaccination, screen at-risk patients and support vaccine research
- Engage with the public to raise awareness of AMR and empower them to become active partners.

What Can Policymakers Do?

- Integrate hospital perspectives in policies on pandemic preparedness & crisis planning
- Invest in research and innovation to generate and disseminate best practices
- Support the development of improved diagnostics, as well as new vaccines and vaccine acceptance
- Implement standards on stewardship & monitoring
- Develop and implement guidelines on safer hospital design
- Ensure an environment where researching AMR is attractive for academia
- Keep AMR on the health policy agenda, integrating it into other health strategies where relevant
- Prioritise efforts to ensure high adherence to vaccination programmes, to contain infection rates and thus maintain low use of antimicrobials.

About EUHA

The European University Hospital Alliance, founded in 2017, is formed of 11 leading European university hospitals. University hospitals play an essential role in healthcare systems and society, taking care of the most complex patients, performing research, pioneering healthcare and innovation, and training the next generation of healthcare professionals.



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