



National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

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NACCHO Joins AMR Challenge to Further Progress Against Antimicrobial Resistance, Celebrates U.S. Antibiotics Awareness Week

Washington, DC, November 13, 2018 — The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO), representing nearly 3,000 local health departments, is celebrating U.S. Antibiotics Awareness Week with a commitment to support the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Challenge led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The challenge is a global, cross-sector initiative to address the growing threat of antibiotic/antimicrobial resistance (AR/AMR) through the principle of One Health, an approach that recognizes the health of humans is connected to the health of animals and the environment.

Each year in the U.S., over two million people become infected with bacteria resistant to antibiotics, leading to an estimated 23,000 deaths annually. Local health departments, which are on the front lines of public health, are uniquely positioned to respond to this threat – and some are already engaged in the work. “With the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance occurring both globally and locally, the Long Beach Health Department wants to do its part to help stop the spread by making certain high-priority resistant organisms reportable. This allows us to track the spread, detect outbreaks more quickly, and respond more effectively,” shared Anissa Davis, MD, MPH, City Health Officer for the Long Beach (CA) Department of Health and Human Services.”

With proper support, more local health departments can collect and analyze data to identify outbreaks, monitor trends, and target prevention efforts; investigate reportable diseases and unusual resistance; and promote containment strategies to reduce the spread of disease. Further,

coordinated efforts with healthcare partners have a greater impact on preventing AR/AMR than independent, individual facility efforts alone, and local health departments are in an ideal position to manage this coordination to protect communities. “In Long Beach, we view the fight against the spread of multi-drug resistant organisms (MDROs) as a team effort – it wouldn’t be possible without the participation of our skilled nursing facilities and acute care hospitals,” noted Dr. Davis. “We meet with our healthcare facilities quarterly to educate on MDROs, discuss challenges and successes, and present best practices.”

Despite local health departments’ strong desire to further combat AR/AMR, insufficient resources remain a barrier to their capacity to advance this issue. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, Congress appropriated \$168 million to support CDC’s [Antibiotic Resistance Solutions Initiative](#) to bolster efforts toward better preventing, detecting, responding to, and innovating efforts against resistant bacteria. While CDC has invested these funds in every state, local health departments remain equally valuable, necessary, and critical partners that also require funding to directly address AMR within their unique communities. Increased funding to local health departments would allow them to establish antibiotic stewardship programs that are robust enough to make a difference in their communities.

“As a partner of the AMR Challenge, NACCHO aims to increase awareness and engagement of local health departments in activities related to preventing and controlling antimicrobial resistance; promote the critical role of local health departments in protecting their communities from antimicrobial resistance-related threats; and facilitate opportunities for local health departments to identify local-level commitments in support of the AMR Challenge,” said Lori Tremmel Freeman, Chief Executive Officer at NACCHO. “Through surveillance, education, antimicrobial stewardship, partnerships, and other approaches, local health departments can be leaders in the fight against AR/AMR. NACCHO calls on federal policymakers to invest the appropriate resources to ensure sufficient funding at the local level so that communities can be fully protected.”

[Learn more](#) about NACCHO’s efforts to address AR/AMR and healthcare-associated infections.

About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.