

Special Contribution

Report of a Workshop on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) at the University of Jordan, December 12–14, 2024

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The School of Pharmacy at the University of Jordan, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), organized a three-day workshop as part of World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW). The workshop was dedicated to addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a pressing global health challenge. Held from December 12–14, 2024, the workshop emphasized innovation, education, and collaboration to combat this global health challenge.

The workshop was designed with several key objectives in mind. It aimed to raise awareness among pharmacy students about the challenges and risks of AMR and its far-reaching implications for public health. The workshop also aimed to equip participants with problem-solving skills by introducing methodologies like design thinking, fostering creativity, and practical solutions. A significant goal was to foster the development of actionable interventions that promote responsible antibiotic use, particularly in community pharmacy settings. Moreover, the event emphasized the importance of strengthening collaboration among academia, healthcare organizations, and regulatory bodies to address AMR comprehensively and effectively.

Key activities included educational presentations by distinguished experts offering valuable insights into various aspects of AMR. Dr. Uday Ibrahim, Head of the Health Emergencies Team in Jordan at WHO, discussed the organization's role in addressing AMR both nationally and globally. Dr. Esraa A. Zoubi, Advisor to the Director-General for Drug Registration and Pricing at the Jordan FDA, provided a detailed presentation on policies and strategies for regulating antibiotic prescription and dispensing in Jordan. Dr. Ala'a F. Al-Shaikh, a WHO representative, offered insights into global strategies to combat AMR and promote the rational use of antibiotics. Complementing these discussions, Dania Mobayed from WHO shared expertise on public health approaches to AMR, emphasizing its impact on healthcare systems. Lora Alsawalha, also from WHO, highlighted the importance of community engagement and interdisciplinary collaboration in tackling AMR. Additionally, Dr. Mahmoud Alkawareek, Associate Professor of Microbiology in the School of Pharmacy at the University of Jordan, delivered a comprehensive overview of AMR, detailing its current status and the critical role future pharmacists must play in combating this global health challenge.

The workshop included interactive activities designed to foster creativity and collaboration among participants. Mrs. Linda El Kurd from the Challenger Team led engaging design thinking sessions, where students participated in brainstorming and problem-solving exercises using innovative techniques to address AMR. These sessions encouraged critical thinking and the development of practical, innovative solutions. Building on this foundation, participants worked in teams during the project development phase to design interventions aimed at raising awareness and promoting adherence to antibiotic stewardship practices. The resulting projects were carefully evaluated by WHO representatives, faculty members, and professional trainers, who praised the students for their creativity and the practical potential of their ideas. The WHO further demonstrated its commitment to fostering innovation by announcing plans to select a winning team from the participants and support them with funding and expert guidance to implement their ideas.

Engagement with leadership during the workshop underscored the importance of addressing AMR at both institutional and national levels. Dr. Nathir Obeidat, President of the University of Jordan, emphasized the urgent need for AMR-related legislation and the critical role of incorporating awareness into healthcare education to prepare future professionals for this challenge. Similarly, Dr. Rula Darwish, Dean of the School of Pharmacy, highlighted the pivotal role of pharmacy students in combating AMR. She highlighted their unique knowledge and skills as essential for promoting responsible antibiotic use and

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effecting meaningful change within their communities.

The workshop concluded with a panel discussion that resulted in actionable recommendations to address AMR more effectively. These recommendations emphasized the need to develop advanced curricula and specialized training programs that focus on AMR, equipping future healthcare professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills. The panel emphasized promoting AMR research and fostering collaborations with national and international organizations to harness collective expertise. Additionally, supporting community-based initiatives aimed at improving antibiotic prescribing practices was identified as a crucial step toward mitigating the impact of AMR and promoting responsible antimicrobial use.

The workshop successfully achieved its goals of equipping students with the knowledge and tools needed to address AMR while fostering meaningful collaboration among stakeholders. WHO representatives reaffirmed their commitment to supporting students by guiding them in refining their projects for real-world implementation. Additionally, the university's newly established AMR Committee will play a pivotal role in overseeing the follow-up and execution of the workshop's recommendations. These efforts include collecting and analyzing data on local antibiotic usage patterns, developing innovative interventions to enhance community pharmacy practices, and encouraging multidisciplinary research and collaboration to combat AMR effectively.

In conclusion, this workshop reaffirmed the University of Jordan's strong commitment to combating AMR through education, innovation, and collaboration. By equipping future pharmacists with the essential skills and knowledge to tackle this global health challenge, the university is actively contributing to the foundation of a healthier, more informed society, ready to make a positive impact.

References:

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