WORLD ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS WEEK IN WCO, MALDIVES

(13th – 19th November 2017)

This year’s World Antibiotic Awareness Week (13-19 November 2017), was celebrated under the theme “Think Twice, Seek advice” (from a qualified healthcare professional before taking antibiotics.)

During World Antibiotic Awareness Week, WCO Maldives together with Maldives Food and Drug Authority (MFDA) and committees of AMR Program arranged a series of activities to raise awareness of the global threat antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and appropriate antibiotic prescribing and use among general public, media, and health care personnel.

Activities done prior to the WAAW week

1. Inspection of pharmacies to scrutinize pharmacies selling antibiotics without prescription

Staff of the MFDA carried out a spot inspection on pharmacies in the Capital City Male’ and nearby city Hullumale on 24th August 2017, aimed to advocate the proper use of antibiotics and to scrutinize whether pharmacies sell antibiotics without prescription. A total of 74 pharmacies were inspected from 19:00 to 21:00 hrs, 20 pharmacies sold antibiotics without a prescription. It was also noticed that many pharmacists had sold 1-2 tablets without giving the full dosage. Antibiotics were also sold for old prescriptions. Actions were taken against these pharmacies.

2. Developed awareness materials posters and badges

200 posters of each of the 4 different AMR posters published in the WHO website were printed.

2000 badges, where 4 Badges with AMR awareness message English and Dhivehi translation were developed

250 umbrellas with AMR messages were developed

3. Awareness session for Media

Medicine and therapeutic Goods Division (MTG) staffs conducted an awareness session for the media to raise awareness among journalists.

4. Training session for MFDA Staffs

A presentation of Antimicrobial resistance was given to Medicine and therapeutic Goods Division (MTG), Food Control Division (FCD), National Health Laboratory (NHL) staffs by Aishath Jaleela, Director (Pharmaceuticals)

Staffs were trained to conduct awareness sessions among the divisions of Ministry of Health where the following divisions were allocated to each of MFDA Divisions

FCD conducted awareness sessions for Bureau, PIH, QAID, HPA, WHO

NHL conducted awareness sessions for Councils and Registrar, RAHS, Budget, Admin

HR/Training.
5. **Distribution of Video clips, Posters of AMR**

Animated Video clips of AMR and the remaining AMR Posters of the last year were distributed to below mentioned islands via RAHS. These were disseminated to the respective schools, pharmacies and health facilities of the atolls to create awareness among education and health sector.

A teleconference was done to inform the Atoll focal points about the activities done and to conduct activities in the Atoll.

Disseminated Posters in offices, fish market, parks and public places, Health facilities (Clinics, Pharmacies) in Capital

6. **Interdivision prop competition**

Received over 150 props from three divisions of MFDA. Three Judges were elected among the members of National AMR Committee to adjudicate the props based on the creativity, neatness, message and impact of the prop. Achievement award was given for the best Division. Appreciation award was given to the divisions to appreciate the hard work done by the staffs, ensure equality and encourage the continued participation of staffs in next year’s competition.

**EVENTS ORGANISED during WAAW week**

Monday 13th November, the inaugural of world antibiotic awareness week started with all staffs of Ministry of Health wearing blue and grey color.

Badges with different messages of antibiotic awareness week were distributed and worn by all the staffs.

The floors of Divisions of MFDA were heavily decorated with blue and silver paper, balloons with messages of antimicrobial resistance.

Chair and Vice Chair of National AMR Committee gave information about Awareness week activities through “Magey Raaje program” on TVM.

1) **Launching of National Action Plan for containment of AMR 2017-2022 by Minister and WHO representative to Maldives**

Ceremony to Launch National Action Plan for containment of AMR 2017-2022, conducted at Hotel Jen commenced with the recitation of Holy Quran by Hawwa Zahadath, Student from Al Madrasathul Arabiyathul Islamiyya.

Chair of National AMR committee, Dr Ali Abdulla Latheef, formally welcomed all the dignitaries, members of the AMR Program. He mentioned the significance of Antimicrobial Resistance, the urgent need to aware public and professionals of the highly concerned issue.
Global Perspective of AMR was given by WHO Representative to Maldives, Dr. Arvind Mathur, Outlined the key requirements to achieve the objectives national action plan, where attention was drawn to the fact that all the sectors together to work in order to combat AMR

A video clip regarding the current status of AMR in Maldives was played.

Winners of prop competition were given trophies and certificate by Minister of Health, Honorable Abdulla Nazim followed by Ministers Address

2) **Awareness through social media**

Posted variety Informative messages, posters, video clips related to AMR in Facebook, MOH news website, Twitter and WHO Maldives Twitter and Website throughout the week. These were shared by many promoting antibiotic awareness through social media

3) **Information about AMR by doctors**

Senior doctors provided information on different programs of media channels. Dr Ibrahim Shujau in “Habaru feetha” in Raaje TV, Dr Abdul Malik and Dr Shaheed in Atoll Radio, Informed public regarding the threat of antibiotic resistance, importance of appropriate antibiotic prescribing and use.

4) **Presentation of Health Professionals with AMR Messages**

Uploaded a presentation where health professionals with their statements regarding Antimicrobial resistance

5) **Awareness sessions**

a) **Awareness sessions for pharmacists**

MTG staffs conducted awareness program for pharmacist working in Male’ from 12th – 16th November 2017.

A total of 92 pharmacies participated in the program.

b) **Awareness sessions for offices**

Awareness sessions for offices were carried out in Dhiraagu, MIRA, POLICE. Information on what staffs can do in their professional and personal life to reduce the improper consumption of antibiotics and keep antibiotics working were educated.

c) **Created Awareness in Public areas**

Staffs of MFDA went to parks to create awareness through props made in the competition and leaflets. Photos with props were taken and staff was encouraged to share a message, picture, or video on their social media