

Antibiotic resistance monitoring: the Spanish programme. The VAV Network. Red de Vigilancia de Resistencias Antibioticas en Bacterias de Origen Veterinario

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Antimicrobial resistance is a problem in modern public health and antimicrobial use and especially misuse, the most important selecting force for bacterial antibiotic resistance. As this resistance must be monitored we have designed the Spanish network 'Red de Vigilancia de Resistencias Antibioticas en Bacterias de Origen Veterinario'. This network covers the three critical points of veterinary responsibility, bacteria from sick animals, bacteria from healthy animals and bacteria from food animals. Key bacteria, antimicrobials and animal species have been defined for each of these groups along with laboratory methods for testing antimicrobial susceptibility and for data analysis and reporting. Surveillance of sick animals was first implemented using *Escherichia coli* as the sentinel bacterium. Surveillance of *E. coli* and *Enterococcus faecium* from healthy pigs was implemented in 1998. In July 1999, data collection on *Salmonella* spp. was initiated in poultry slaughterhouses. Additionally, the prevalence of vancomycin resistant *E. faecium* was also monitored. This network has specific topics of interest related to methods of determining resistance, analysis and reporting of data, methods of use for veterinary practitioners and collaboration with public health authorities.

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