RISKSUR Symposium: Roundtable discussions

Question 1

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Question: The mapping of surveillance systems in Europe showed a large heterogeneity on surveillance designs, public availability of data, funding and reporting. Can you think of practical ways that would promote increased standardisation and high quality surveillance across Europe?

Feedback

Practical ways to promote increased standardisation

General Points regarding standardisation

- Why do we need standardisation? Surveillance needs aren't standardised. Approaches are different anyway. The problems are different in different areas/countries with lots of heterogeneity in diseases and disease status.
- It is often difficult to get harmonisation within country let alone the EU.

Advantages and disadvantages of standardisation

- In EU, we have minimum requirements for surveillance for many diseases. Standardisation is good for data analysis and science, but not necessarily good for disease control.
- Standardisation does allow comparative studies. Comparing certain diseases can be useful e.g. *Salmonella*.
- If there is need to report then there should be the ability to build a consensus approach.
- Standardisation isn't necessary as long as there is transparency for approaches, data and terminology.
- Define minimum requirement, and then each MS can decide from there.
- We have minimum defined requirements for many named diseases. Should we standardise for other diseases?

Practical ways of affecting standardisation

- Need to be clear on definitions and terminology.
- Finding a 'European' way, trusting Member States and sharing data and approaches.
- Through the Risksur project – tools, approaches, terminology definitions.
- Transparency would help awareness. Transparency of data, approaches and outputs?
- Categorise or group surveillance approaches. Tailor surveillance to categories.
- Surveillance systems must be fit for purpose, so standardisation would fit for similar circumstances/disease status. BSE surveillance is a good example of standardisation of input standards.
- Be prepared to change the surveillance approach when disease status changes.
- Surveillance approach for trade requires some standards, and may well guide your approach. Further efforts to increase transparency could help standardise surveillance for disease freedom.

Output based surveillance

- Standardised outputs for surveillance, not necessarily standardised approaches.
- Define outputs, how you get there is up to the country/province.
- Knowledge transfer explaining output based surveillance.
- Peer reviewed methodology of output based surveillance approaches at member state level.
- Peer review driven by policy, commission or independent body?
- Example: EFSA – better training for safer food. Member states meet to discuss and standardise methodology through education.
- Example: Risk assessment approach as a methodology

Practical ways to promote increased High Quality Surveillance (HQS)

- Increase transparency and documentation of surveillance. Reports aren't always published.
- Governance of transparency – peer review or accreditation, but is this too bureaucratic?
- Transparency and HQS go hand in hand.
- Definition of HQS? Minimum standards?
    - The quality assurance is up to the surveillance body, does it fit their own requirements?
- Effective spread of Risksur tools (EVA and surveillance design tool)
- Training:
    - Linked with legislation and new Animal Health law.
    - Best practice guidelines.
    - Knowledge transfer at EU level.
- HQS can be done at local level.
- Dissemination and marketing of surveillance success stories will increase practical approaches and increase uptake.
- Public availability of data is useful, but not a necessity for HQS.
- Food safety approaches, outline critical control points, define standards and procedures where there are breakdowns. Apply to other areas of surveillance.
- Ring trials and lab quality approaches could be used to compare surveillance across different countries.
- All MS could have a website detailing surveillance approaches and surveillance outputs. Have a defined strategy.