



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health**

Professor Geoffrey Coombs  
Chair, Australian Group on Antimicrobial Resistance  
Chair of Public Health  
School of Veterinary and Life Sciences  
Murdoch University  
90 South Street  
MURDOCH WA 6150

[geoff@asainc.net.au](mailto:geoff@asainc.net.au)

Dear Professor Coombs

I have recently commenced in the role of Assistant Secretary of the Environmental Health and Health Protection Policy Branch and am responsible for overseeing antimicrobial resistance policy for the Department.

I am writing to follow up earlier conversations you have had with Dr Rebecca Newton about the future of the Antimicrobial Use and Resistance in Australia (AURA) Surveillance System, now that the contract between the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) – which contracts the Australian Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AGAR) to provide data – and the Department has ended.

As you are aware, Australia's National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy: 2020 & Beyond, endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments on 13 March 2020, highlights national surveillance of antimicrobial resistance and usage as a key objective. Under this objective, the creation of "*a national One Health surveillance system that integrates human, animal, food and environmental usage and resistance data*" is a priority. Accordingly, the Australian Government expects to begin the transition to a One Health model of antimicrobial resistance and usage surveillance from mid-2021.

In the interim, it is important that the AURA Surveillance System continue to operate. As previously discussed with Dr Newton on 11 June 2020, I can confirm that from 1 July to 31 December 2020, the Department will manage a short-term contract with the Commission to manage AGAR as per previous years. Then, from 1 January to 30 June 2021, the Department will directly engage AGAR and the other individual surveillance partner programs. Funding for 2020-21 is expected to be similar to that provided in 2019-20.

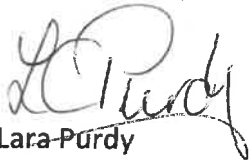
Ms Tanja Farmer ([tania.farmer@health.gov.au](mailto:tania.farmer@health.gov.au)) and the AMR Section ([amr@health.gov.au](mailto:amr@health.gov.au)) will continue communication with the AGAR Scientific Officer regarding the specific details of the contractual arrangements post-31 December 2020.

Arrangements beyond 30 June 2021 are subject to budget considerations and progress in establishing a One Health antimicrobial use and resistance surveillance system.

Finally, I wish to thank the AGAR for its continued work and collaboration as part of the AURA Surveillance System. The Group's continually developing surveillance activity on some of the most serious resistant microbes is an invaluable component in the national system and I look forward to the Group's continued partnership in the national surveillance of antimicrobial resistance in the future.

I will arrange a meeting with yourself and the other program partners shortly to further discuss the transition to a One Health model. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please call Ms Farmer on (02) 6289 3458 or myself on (02) 6289 3680.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Purdy', written in a cursive style.

Lara Purdy

Assistant Secretary

Environmental Health and Health Protection Policy Branch

24 July 2020