

Australian Society for Antimicrobials

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28 July 2023

Christina Bareja

Acting Director | Antimicrobial Resistance Policy Section

Communicable Diseases Branch

Office of Health Protection and Response Division | Chief Medical Officer Group

Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care

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RE: Contract for Services for Operating the Australian Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AGAR) Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Program 2021 – 2024, Deliverable Report 28 July 2023

Dear Christina

As per the contract for services between the Commonwealth of Australia as represented by the Department of Health and the Australian Society for Antimicrobials (ASA) in relation to services for operating the 2021 to 2024 Australian Staphylococcal Sepsis Outcome Programs (ASSOP), Australian Enterococcal Sepsis Outcome Programs (AESOP), and Gram-negative Sepsis Outcome Programs (GNSOP), please find enclosed the following attachments as per the deliverable due on 28 July 2023:

- Final 2022 ASSOP, AESOP and GNSOP data analysis reports
- 2022 Programs Financial Budget and Expenditure
- A project plan for the 2023 AGAR programs including an indicative budget and comment on status of ethics applications, and compliance with privacy, data governance and ethical obligations as required
- Progress report against activity for the period 1 January to 30 June 2023

Please note there were no changes in the AGAR programs' aims and data analyses as described in the contract.

Final 2022 ASSOP, AESOP and GNSOP data analysis reports

In 2022, 14,552 blood stream infections were included in the three programs, representing a 10.5% increase compared to the previous year which included 13,172

infections. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all participants in providing the data and isolates in a timely manner. Of the 34 AGAR laboratories servicing 56 hospitals enrolled in the 2022 programs, 33 laboratories servicing 55 hospitals were able to participate. Unfortunately, due to staffing issues, data from the Cairns Base Hospital were not available.

In 2022 we welcomed the Prince of Wales and Gosford hospitals located in NSW, and the Mater Hospital in Townsville, Qld to the AGAR programs. In addition to providing data collected from the major adult teaching hospitals, AGAR provides antimicrobial resistance data from private hospitals, regional hospitals located in the north-west Australia, and most Australian paediatric teaching hospitals.

Each report includes a summary page highlighting the key findings of the program and provides a comprehensive analysis of the data requested by the Department of Health.

Financial statement covering 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

As the Department is aware the AGAR finances are managed by ASA. The 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 financial statement and accounts is currently being prepared by the Society's Business Manager Mr. Jacson Chung and will be submitted to the Society's auditors in the next month. If required, I will send you the auditor's report when it becomes available and has been accepted by the ASA Committee and the AGAR Executive Committee.

For your information I have attached the 2022 programs financial budget and expenditure report. Page 18 of the report provides a financial summary of each item. As from 28 July 2023, of the \$827,531 (GST excluded) provided to fund the 2022 programs, \$835,757 has been expended, leaving a deficit of \$8,226. It is anticipated the final deficit for the 2022 programs will be recovered from the surplus from the 2021 programs (\$2,030) and funds from the 2023 programs.

Project plan for 2023-24

In 2023, with the return of the Cairns Base Hospital, AGAR increased its participation to 34 laboratories servicing 54 hospitals.

The inclusion of the Cairns Base Hospital will further enhance antimicrobial resistance surveillance in regional Australia.

Progress Report for 2023

On acceptance of the three final reports, I will arrange for the reports to be uploaded onto the AGAR website (<https://agargroup.org.au/>).

I anticipate a draft of the 2022 ASSOP, AESOP and GNSOP CDI manuscripts will be available before 25 August 2023.

Once again, we look forward to working with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care in producing the 2022 amalgamated report.

Finally, I would like to thank you and your team for your ongoing support for AGAR. Antimicrobial resistance continues to be one of the most significant risks to our health. Enhanced surveillance programs such as AGAR play a critical role in identifying, monitoring, and reporting on rates of resistant bacteria with the highest risk of causing harm to humans. The AGAR data is used to inform clinical and public health policy and practice. While antimicrobial resistance continues to be a challenge to delivery of safe and effective health care, the data and information provided by AGAR is a substantial resource to inform effective responses to reduce the impact of antimicrobial resistance.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Coombs'.

Professor Geoffrey Coombs
Chair, AGAR
President Australian Society for Antimicrobials
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On behalf of the AGAR Executive Committee