

AMR Consumer Research Report

Area of research interest: [Antimicrobial resistance](#)

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Background

As part of the UK national action plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), the Food Standards Agency (FSA) is working to improve the scientific evidence base around consumer perceptions and understanding. A consumer survey was carried out in 2016 and 2019, and replicated in 2021, to understand current views and awareness, and to identify any changes over time.

Approach

A series of questions were run in an online omnibus, broadly matching the surveys run in 2016 and 2019, in order to understand changes in awareness and attitudes over time. A sample of 2,555 UK residents aged 16-75, representative of the UK adult online population, took part in the survey. The sample was boosted in Scotland in order to provide sufficient sample data to Food Standards Scotland.

Results

- Less than a third of respondents had heard of the term antimicrobial resistance (26%), and only 11% had heard of the acronym 'AMR'.
- Public awareness of antimicrobial resistance has significantly increased by 10%, from 16% in 2016, however awareness of 'AMR' remained unchanged at around a tenth (11%).
- Very few respondents were able to articulate the difference between antimicrobial and antibiotic resistance.
- Around two thirds (65%) of respondents said they were concerned about antimicrobial resistance from people taking too many antibiotics, decreasing from 71% in 2019 and 72% in 2016. Levels of concern about antimicrobial resistance within the food chain is lower at 58%, and have fallen since 2016 (from 62%) but have moderately increased since 2019 (from 55%).
- Almost two fifths (39%) of respondents felt the 'overuse of antimicrobials / antibiotics by doctors and patients' was the biggest contributor to an increase in human infections with antimicrobial / antibiotic resistant bacteria.
- Respondents were marginally less concerned about the risk of antimicrobial resistance from food imported from the EU (51%) or produced in the UK (48%), than they were about food imported from countries outside of the EU (58%). However, this difference is seen in equivalent questions on food poisoning, suggesting general concerns regarding the safety

of food from other countries outside the EU, rather than specific AMR concerns.

Report

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