

KDCA Re-Designated as WHO Collaborating Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance and One Health Research

Key Highlights:

- This re-designation reaffirms KDCA's global leadership in antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance capabilities.
- It also paves the way for expanded international cooperation in monitoring antimicrobial use and conducting genomic analysis of resistant bacteria.

Osong, 12 August 2025 – The National Institute of Health (NIH) under the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA) has been re-designated by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance and One Health Research. This renewed designation enables the NIH to provide expanded technical support to countries around the world and further solidify its role as a global leader in AMR surveillance.

There are currently 37 WHO Collaborating Centres for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance across 21 countries. These centres work in close coordination to implement the WHO's Global Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance and Use

Surveillance System (GLASS). Their efforts include developing surveillance manuals, enhancing laboratory capacities, offering education and training, and supporting external quality assessments (EQA).

* GLASS (Global Antimicrobial Resistance and Use Surveillance System) is a WHO-led initiative that standardizes the collection and analysis of data on antimicrobial resistance and use (AMU) across countries, allowing for international comparisons.

Since joining GLASS in 2016, KDCA has developed and operated Kor-GLASS—the national antimicrobial resistance surveillance system in Korea—in full alignment with WHO standards. Kor-GLASS has been recognized as a model program that effectively upholds the four key principles of WHO GLASS: representativeness, specialization, harmonization, and localization. This recognition was a major factor behind the initial designation as a WHO Collaborating Centre for AMR reference and One Health Research in 2021.

Over the past four years, the WHO Collaborating Centre has provided extensive technical support and engaged in collaborative research globally. A standout example is its partnership with the National Center for Communicable Diseases in Mongolia. At the request of the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO), technical laboratory support was initiated in 2023, including training on the diagnosis and testing of antimicrobial-resistant bacteria, instruction in the use of automated lab equipment, and the implementation of external quality assessments (EQA). These efforts are helping Mongolia establish a foundation for an independent AMR surveillance system and have been highly commended

by international experts.

Furthermore, the WHO Collaborating Centre has played an active role in global forums dedicated to developing integrated AMR surveillance systems spanning the human, animal, and environmental sectors. It has also continued to strengthen cooperation with neighboring countries such as Japan and Thailand, and to work closely with WHO headquarters. Through this collaborative work, the WHO Collaborating Centre contributes to the development of AMR response strategies grounded in the One Health approach.

With this re-designation, the WHO Collaborating Centre is now operating under its official title: **WHO Collaborating Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance and One Health Research (Centre No. KOR-114, June 2025 – June 2029).**

Looking ahead, the WHO Collaborating Centre plans to leverage its renewed status to expand its technical laboratory support to at least three additional countries and broaden its scope to include advanced capabilities such as AMU surveillance and whole genome sequencing (WGS) analysis. These expanded roles are expected to enhance global capacity for a more precise and strategic AMR response.

Dr. Hyunyoung Park, Director General of the National Institute of Health, remarked, “Building on our accumulated expertise and technological capacity, we will continue to collaborate with neighboring countries and pursue our vision of becoming a research-driven institute that leads the global response to antimicrobial resistance.”

Dr. Seungkwan Lim, Commissioner of the KDCA, added, “This re-designation is a testament to our agency’s technical excellence and international trust. We remain committed to fulfilling our role as a central agency leading global efforts to combat AMR.”