

The rational use of medicines means that patients receive medicines appropriate to their clinical needs, in doses that meet their individual requirements, for an adequate period of time, and at the lowest cost to them and their community. Activities to promote rational use of medicines need to be fully integrated in the health system across various national health programmes, sectors and stakeholders.

The irrational use of medicines and other health technologies is widespread. It not only undermines the potential usefulness of medicines and health technologies but also results in negative therapeutic and economic outcomes.

In developing countries, more than 50% of people who do receive medicines are prescribed medicines incorrectly; of these more than half fail to take them correctly.

The problem of antibiotic resistance is a major clinical and public health problem resulting in treatment failures and huge spending on new generation antibiotics.

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