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Knowledge and use of antibiotics by community members in the Asante Akim North District, Ghana: a mixed-methods approach

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Background. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a pressing One Health challenge. This study employed a mixed-methods approach to assess antibiotic knowledge and use among community members in the Asante Akim North District, Ghana.

Methods. Using a mixed methods design, we triangulated findings from anthropological and socio-epidemiological approaches. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 1,114 participants, complemented by 11 semi-structured interviews. In addition, participant observation was carried out over one year in a semi-rural town and one month in a rural village, alongside free discussions and semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed respectively using STATA 17 and NVivo 14. Quantitative and qualitative results were merged at analysis level.

Results. Most community members knew the term antibiotics (61.7%) and showed substantial knowledge. We observed low antibiotic use (2.3%) during the four weeks before data collection with varied usage modes. Community members used antibiotics based on local knowledge and practical reasoning shaped by lived experience. Few had heard of AMR (34%), and none reported direct experience. The lack of knowledge on AMR suggests it is not a lived reality.

Conclusion. Substantial existing knowledge on antibiotics among community members was observed and should be considered for the development of AMR interventions. Future studies should explore other factors related to AMR beyond individual responsibility of community members.

Keywords

Antibiotic use; community knowledge; mixed methods

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Professional Status of the Speaker

PhD Student

Junior Scientist Status

Yes, I am a Junior Scientist.

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