Main results and findings

The characteristics of the Sentinel Surveillance of Antibiotic Resistance in Switzerland (SEARCH) can be summarised as follows:

- The Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner has reviewed and approved the project.
- The SEARCH data centre is located at the Institute for Infectious Diseases (IFIK), University of Bern.
- 22 Swiss clinical microbiology laboratories will be sending resistance data to the data centre.
- SEARCH will represent 60% of annual Swiss hospital days and at least 30% of all practicing medical doctors in Switzerland. A public SEARCH Web site will be accessible at www.search.ifik.unibe.ch. The database will be further linked with the European databases EARSS (European Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System) and ESAC (European Surveillance of Antimicrobial Consumption).
- In future SEARCH will provide comprehensive knowledge about the epidemiology of antibiotic resistance and antibiotic consumption in Switzerland and a base for research projects on the epidemiology (including molecular epidemiology) of antibiotic resistance. Through SEARCH it will be possible to issue recommendations to policy makers and praxis about actions necessary to control emerging and existing resistance problems. Information of this kind is a prerequisite for the control of antibiotic resistance through knowledge transfer and intervention programmes on a local, national and international scale.
Outlook for the SEARCH project
- The extension of the project duration to December 2007, approved by SNSF/NRP 49, will allow:
  - completion of the SEARCH system and the start of the productive phase in terms of research and intervention programmes;
  - completion of the linkage of the 22 laboratories;
  - the opening of the public Web site;
  - sending of resistance data to EARSS;
  - publishing of first comprehensive analyses of SEARCH data in an international journal;
  - initiation of further research projects on antibiotic resistance;
  - starting of a bacteraemia surveillance project within Swiss-NOSO;
  - continuing standardisation and quality control of SEARCH data (working group).
- Steps have been taken to establish SEARCH as a permanent structure and to secure financial resources and a proposal for financial support.

Publications of the NRP 49 project
To be expected in 2007 and thereafter.