Practice Test 3

READING SUB-TEST – PART C

Antibiotic Resistance in Healthcare Settings

Paragraph 1

Antibiotics have transformed modern medicine by making it possible to treat infections that were once frequently fatal. However, their effectiveness is increasingly threatened by the emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. These microorganisms have developed the ability to survive exposure to drugs that were previously capable of destroying them. The problem is particularly serious in hospitals, where antibiotics are used extensively, and many patients have weakened immune systems, making them more vulnerable to infection.

Paragraph 2

Antibiotic resistance develops as bacteria adapt to the medicines designed to eliminate them. When antibiotics are used excessively or inappropriately, some bacteria survive treatment and continue to multiply. Over time, these surviving bacteria may develop resistance to several types of antibiotics. This process can be accelerated when antibiotics are prescribed unnecessarily or when patients fail to complete the full course of treatment recommended by healthcare professionals.

Paragraph 3

Hospitals play an important role in preventing the spread of resistant bacteria. Infection-control measures such as proper hand hygiene, sterilisation of medical equipment, and careful monitoring of hospital-acquired infections are essential. Many healthcare institutions have also introduced antibiotic stewardship programmes. These

programmes guide clinicians on appropriate prescribing practices, ensuring that antibiotics are used only when necessary and in the correct dosage.

Paragraph 4

Research indicates that infections caused by antibiotic-resistant bacteria are associated with longer hospital stays and increased healthcare costs. Patients with these infections may require alternative medications that are less effective, more toxic, or significantly more expensive. In some cases, infections that were previously considered routine can become difficult to treat and may lead to serious complications.

Paragraph 5

International health organisations have repeatedly warned that antibiotic resistance represents a major threat to global health. They emphasise that addressing this challenge requires coordinated efforts involving governments, healthcare providers, researchers, and the pharmaceutical industry. Key strategies include improving infection prevention, strengthening surveillance systems, and encouraging the development of new antimicrobial drugs.

Paragraph 6

Despite these concerns, experts suggest that the spread of antibiotic resistance can still be slowed. Measures such as responsible prescribing, improved infection-control procedures, and increased public awareness about appropriate antibiotic use may help reduce the emergence of resistant bacteria. Without such interventions, however, some infections that are currently treatable could once again become life-threatening.