

UK Government invests £5 million in GARDP to boost antibiotic development and access

Geneva, 22 May 2023 – The UK government has renewed its support to GARDP by investing an additional £5 million in 2023/2024 to help develop new treatments for some of the most harmful and deadly bacterial infections, and making them available to all those who need them. The announcement was made by UK Health Minister Will Quince during the World Health Assembly.

The £5 million two-year investment made by the government's Global AMR Innovation Fund (GAMRIF) will support the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP) to develop new treatments for drug-resistant infections identified by the World Health Organization as posing the greatest threat to health.

"Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a major threat to global health and has led to millions of tragic deaths per year, but the Global AMR Innovation Fund is supporting cutting-edge research and develop vital new treatments to prevent death and disease across the world," said Minister Quince. "This funding will provide a much-needed boost to protect people from diseases such as drug-resistant gonorrhoea, life-threatening sepsis in newborn babies and serious bacterial infections."

The UK Department of Health and Social Care has now invested a total of £20.5 million in GARDP's programmes since 2018, including developing new and improved treatments for neonatal sepsis – a leading cause of death in newborns – as well as hospital-acquired bacterial infections.

Drug-resistant infections killed nearly 1.3 million people worldwide in 2019, more than HIV and malaria. And one in five of these deaths were in children under the age of five.

The funding will also help develop a novel oral treatment for gonorrhoea, a sexually transmitted infection that has been identified by the World Health Organization as urgently requiring new antibiotics.

"We commend the UK's leadership in countering antibiotic resistance, which affects all of us," said Manica Balasegaram, GARDP's Executive Director. "GAMRIF's investment to date has helped GARDP build its R&D portfolio, which targets five of the six pathogens responsible for the majority of the nearly 1.3 million deaths caused by antibiotic resistance each year. We are focusing on late-stage development and access so that new antibiotics are not just developed for adult populations in high-income countries, but are accessible in high-burden populations and countries, including children and babies."

The partnership between the UK and GARDP is based on the shared understanding that developing new treatments and ensuring responsible access for all in need are inseparable. Funded by UK aid, this work supports research and development to reduce the threat of antimicrobial resistance globally, particularly in high burden populations and countries.

About GARDP

The Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP) is a Swiss not-for-profit organization developing new treatments for drug-resistant infections that pose the greatest threat to health. GARDP was created in 2016 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) and legally founded in 2018 to ensure that everyone who needs antibiotics receives effective and affordable treatment, no matter where they live. It aims to develop new treatments to fight drug-resistant infections, with a focus on sexually transmitted infections, sepsis in newborns and infections in hospitalized adults and children. GARDP is funded by the governments of Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the Canton of Geneva, as well as the European Union, Wellcome Trust and private foundations. GARDP is registered under the legal name GARDP Foundation. www.gardp.org

About the Global AMR Innovation Fund (GAMRIF)

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) is the UK Government department which is responsible for helping people to live more independent, healthier lives for longer. The partnership with GARDP is funded by DHSC's Global Antimicrobial Resistance Innovation Fund (GAMRIF). GAMRIF was established to provide seed funding for innovative research and development, specifically in neglected and underinvested areas, in the field of AMR. GAMRIF is a UK Aid investment, which means all projects funded must support research primarily and directly for the benefit of people in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The Fund takes a "One Health" approach, seeking to invest in potential solutions to reduce the threat of AMR in humans, animals, fish and the environment. The Fund seeks to leverage additional global funding through interaction with international government bodies, public-private partnerships, product development partnerships, global funding mechanisms and global fora.