



## News Release

### Stop bugging doctors and instead raise cash to cure health crisis

*For use during World Antibiotic Awareness Week (12-18 November 2018)*

Quit quibbling with your GP about getting antibiotics for a cough, cold or sore throat and instead donate the price of a prescription to help beat deadly superbugs.

That's the message from British-based charity **Antibiotic Research UK** (ANTRUK) at the start of World Antibiotic Awareness Week (12-18 November 2018) – as they bid to find an alternative to a future where people could die of something as simple as an infected scratch.

Misuse and overuse of antibiotics (a fifth are still prescribed unnecessarily by UK GPs for conditions like cold and flu) means that bacteria in our bodies are becoming resistant to these so-called wonder drugs. This can prove hazardous and even fatal, particularly for patients fighting serious infection in hospital or for over 1.3 million people who get regular infections like cystitis per year.

The response of Government has been inaction and the pharmaceutical companies won't develop alternatives because they say there is no money in it. All of which has prompted ANTRUK Chief Executive Professor Colin Garner to call on the public to create a "groundswell of disgust" and get something done about it.

"We all have a responsibility to health now and for our children and grandchildren" said Professor Garner, "if those who pay donate the £8.80 they may have paid out for a needless antibiotic prescription for flu, to research into new medications we will have the funds to save lives. I think it is also a way of pricking the conscious of decision-makers and a pharmaceutical industry who presumably thinks it is okay that 700,000 people per year globally currently die of antibiotic resistant infections."

Run by the World Health Organization (WHO), World Antibiotic Awareness Week “aims to increase global awareness of antibiotic resistance (AMR) and to encourage best practices among the general public, health workers and policy makers to avoid the further emergence and spread of antibiotic resistance” (visit [http://www.who.int/who-campaigns/world-antibiotic-awareness-week?fbclid=IwAR2aFcrJ3Cj0igJSsm4lPoBzHjx4DloT\\_QwUYtczVoDJ0HqAkySuxdpKs8U](http://www.who.int/who-campaigns/world-antibiotic-awareness-week?fbclid=IwAR2aFcrJ3Cj0igJSsm4lPoBzHjx4DloT_QwUYtczVoDJ0HqAkySuxdpKs8U)).

The week will also see a raft of fundraising events organised by ANTRUK as part of their Great British Tea Party drive, to fund research into new antibiotic treatments to help educate about a potential health disaster that could kill 50 million people across the planet by 2050, plus support families living with antibiotic resistant infections such as MRSA. Venues range from Manchester University to the Royal College of Medicines’ prestigious “Collaborating to fight Antimicrobial Resistance” event in London, York Hospital and a gathering at Burythorpe Village Hall (North Yorkshire).

This year’s activities are doubling-up as birthday celebrations marking the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of penicillin and ANTRUK has been working with nurse Sarah Whitlow, the granddaughter of Sir Alexander Fleming. Sarah said: “As early as 1945, my grandfather foresaw the day when his miracle medication would no longer work. A lack of investment into alternative medication and the abuse of his discovery has meant that this day has finally arrived. Please dip into your pockets, organise a Great British Tea Party but most of all make a noise about antibiotic resistance. If we don’t, millions of people will die. It is as simple and straightforward as that.”

To donate the price of a prescription to ANTRUK visit <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/2680#/DonationDetails>

Find out more about the Great British Tea Party events and organise one yourself by ordering a free fundraising pack from: <https://www.antibioticresearch.org.uk/great-british-tea-party/>

- Ends -

### **For further information**

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