



## News Release

### Doctors endure a torrent of antibiotics abuse

Medics are being verbally threatened and warned they'll get an online panning for refusing to prescribe antibiotics; with over 80% also having their judgement questioned by sneaky patients who see another doctor when they are denied the drugs.

So says a new survey released today by charity **Antibiotic Research UK (ANTRUK)** and medical publishers **MGP**, which also states that close-on 80% of respondents think patients are ignorant of how big a danger deadly antibiotic resistant infections are.

And while the study firmly shows that the public is largely unaware about a health crisis that could kill 10 million people by 2050, it also shows that:

- Only a third of medics have a full knowledge of the problem
- Almost a quarter of respondents don't want to or can't find space to put up information about antibiotic resistance
- Nearly 20% of prescribers found official guidelines on the issue not useful or completely useless and,
- Close-on 10% ignored World Health Organisation warnings that antibiotic resistance is as big a problem as cancer – and thought it wasn't anything to worry about.

“Antibiotics were the miracle medication of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but overuse and a complete inability to develop new antibiotics has rendered them increasingly redundant and left us with a situation where hospital operations are cancelled and the threat of dying from a

scratch is real” said Professor Colin Garner, Chief Executive of ANTRUK. “And yet is this so surprising when the public and even members of the health profession are lazily ignoring all the warnings? Genuinely, we are sleep-walking into the biggest healthcare problem humanity has ever faced.”

The survey, which was sent out by MGP who have been promoting best practice in healthcare for over 25 years, quizzed more than 300 medics.

Antibiotics were issued to patients with chest problems, ear infections and urinary tract infections mostly – even though a quarter of prescribers weren't sure whether the drugs would actually work! Around 42% of respondents didn't believe that patients needed to finish their course of drugs.

Largely thanks to last year's NHS England campaign “Keep Antibiotics Working”, over 70% of those responding displayed information on antibiotics resistance and encouraged their patients not to demand the drugs.

Those answering the survey believed that better education was the key to combating antibiotic resistance, with 60% craving more public information materials.

For their part, ANTRUK has launched a patient information service for those living with antibiotic resistant infections and is running a fundraising campaign called The Great British Tea Party to raise cash to plough into research into new medications.

“It is obvious from this survey that the received wisdom is that antibiotics are a silver bullet to cure everything – which they are not” concluded Colin Garner. “It also says much about the lack of respect for family doctors, that people ignore their years of training and experience and instead covertly obtain drugs from other sources. I am also deeply disturbed that any medic should have scant knowledge of antibiotic resistance and actually believe it is not a problem. That is terrifying.”

Ivor Eisenstadt, Managing Director of MGP commented: “We are delighted to be supporting ANTRUK, the only charity in the world focused entirely on fighting antibiotic resistance.

Thank you to all of our MGP *Guidelines* audience members who responded to the survey, it really is appreciated and will help inform the valuable work that ANTRUK is doing.

The UK Special Envoy on Antimicrobial Resistance and formerly Chief Medical Officer for England, Dame Sally Davies, has warned that *‘if antibiotics lose their effectiveness it would spell the end of modern medicine’* and that *‘we really are facing, if we don’t take action now, a dreadful post-antibiotic apocalypse.’* This is a crucial ‘best practice’ issue for us all.”

The Great British Tea Party encourages communities to come together over a warming cup of tea and discuss antibiotic resistance. Money raised from tea and cake sales is deployed into funding new research to find the new medications to replace our antiquated antibiotics. To join the campaign, go to <https://www.antibioticresearch.org.uk/support-us/great-british-tea-party/>

- Ends -

**For further information**

Please contact Peter Gibson on 0759 202 8142 or email

[peter.gibson@antibioticresearch.org.uk](mailto:peter.gibson@antibioticresearch.org.uk)

Learn more about Antibiotic Research UK (ANTRUK) at [www.antibioticresearch.org.uk](http://www.antibioticresearch.org.uk)

Facebook @AntibioticResearchUK

Twitter @1Antruk

**MGP Ltd** is a specialist healthcare media company which aims to improve patients’ lives by promoting best practice in healthcare. MGP specialises in multichannel content and educational projects based around clinical guidance and evidence-based information through its brands: *Guidelines*, *Guidelines in Practice*, *Guidelines for Nurses*, *Guidelines for Pharmacy* and *Specialised Commissioning*.

[www.mgp.co.uk](http://www.mgp.co.uk)