



## News Release

### Participation group grows impatient with lack of antibiotics progress

A small group of volunteers who have made a herculean impact on their local surgery and community are now turning their attention to the world's biggest health problem.

The increasing failure of antibiotics to treat infections such as drug-resistant pneumonia and TB is predicted to kill 10 million people by 2050.

And such staggering shattering statistics have prompted the Patient Participation Group (PPG) at South Chadderton Health Centre to join with their GP Dr Anita Sharma to raise awareness of the issue and collect cash to find new medications to replace our ailing

antibiotics.

The group has already held fundraising events such as raffles and tea parties during World Antibiotics Awareness Week to benefit superbug-busting charity Antibiotic Research UK (ANTRUK). The cash they collected will go to supporting patients with drug-averse conditions as well as fund research by universities and companies into new treatments. As ANTRUK's first fully fledged Patient Participation Group partner, they will now continue with this trailblazing work and act as an inspiration for other patient groups across Britain.

“By law, all surgeries in England and Wales have to have a PPG that takes an active interest in its local practices' procedures and acts as a voice for its community on vital health issues” revealed Professor Colin Garner, Chief Executive of ANTRUK, “imagine if every one of them was stimulated into action by South Chadderton and Britain became the country where we found the solution to what the World Health Organisation say will be a bigger health problem than cancer.”

South Chadderton is one of the oldest PPG's in the country having been in existence for around 20 years. During that time, it has:

- Raised cash to pay for defibrillators in local schools
- Organised regular gentle walks to promote fitness in older folks and reduce isolation
- Increased awareness of prostate cancer and promoted screening and,
- Challenged local health commissioners on decisions that they believe don't meet the needs of their patients.

The group joined Dr Sharma in appealing for cash to be made available to pay for diagnostic equipment to help decipher whether patients needed antibiotics or not. Said Dr Sharma: “Antibiotic resistance in our bodies is often caused by overuse and misuse of the drugs. As prescribers we need better training, information and tools to help us. Antibiotics are not a miracle cure for everything and in fact, they could do you damage in the long run. It is so encouraging to have our patient participation group onside in this battle. They are the voice of NHS users and I hope they spur-on others to take an interest in this and other important health concerns.”

A recent survey by ANTRUK and pharmaceutical company Pfizer, showed that just 11% of people thought that antibiotic resistance was a major health problem - this despite it killing 700,000 people per year globally. And for South Chadderton Chair Margaret Heywood, this anomaly is where patient participation groups could make a real difference.

“I think the patients who come here now know that antibiotics are not always the best thing for them” said Margaret, “but they need more information as to why. We only really have the posters with “Keep Antibiotics Working” written on them, so patients need better education. At least our patients know that when they visit Dr Sharma she won't give them antibiotics unless they really need them – that needs to happen everywhere!”

To learn more about Patient Participation Groups go to the National Association of Patient Participation Group's (NAPP) site <https://www.napp.org.uk/overview.html>

ANTRUK is the only charity in the world solely dedicated to fighting antibiotic resistance. It also supports people and their families coping with the often heart-breaking effects of superbugs such as MRSA.

To donate to the charity, visit <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/2680#/DonationDetails>

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#### **For further information**

Please contact Peter Gibson on 0759 202 8142 or email

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

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**Pictured left to right, are:** Susan Richardson, Jim McDermott, Margaret Heywood, Eric Richardson (all South Chadderton PPG) and Dee Radcliffe (Practice Manager, South Chadderton Health Centre).