



PRESS NOTICE

14 April 2016

Review on Antimicrobial Resistance responds to UK Chancellor's statement of support for global action

The UK Review on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) today welcomed comments made by the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, supporting global action to beat drug resistance and endorsing a key recommendation by the Review.

Addressing the international finance community gathered in Washington DC for the Spring meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), Mr Osborne today echoed the Review's warning of the scale of the future human and economic costs of failing to tackle rising drug resistance – predicted to cause 10 million deaths globally each year, at a cumulative cost to global GDP of 100 trillion USD. Mr Osborne also endorsed the Review's recommendations to support antibiotic development through a system of global 'market entry rewards', large lump sum payments to the developers of new antibiotics that meet a specified unmet medical need. Among other engagements, the Chancellor was speaking at an event at the Center for Global Development alongside Margaret Chan, World Health Organization Director General; Larry Summers, former US Treasury Secretary; and Arvind Subramanian, Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India.

Responding to the Chancellor's comments, the Chairman of the Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, Lord Jim O'Neill, said:

"I am delighted that the Chancellor has decided to raise this important global issue with his counterparts at the IMF, as I believe that the support and buy-in from finance ministers will be key to mounting an effective response to the challenge. He is right that 2016 can be a breakthrough year in beating rising drug resistance, and discussions at the UN General Assembly and G20 in the autumn could be pivotal to achieving real, global action.

I am also thrilled that he has added his support for our key recommendations regarding new ways to incentivise the development of new antibiotics and diagnostics. This is a vital part of the wider solution to rising drug resistance, alongside reducing unnecessary demand for antimicrobials while ensuring affordable access to patients who do need them."

The Review will shortly be presenting its final report and recommendations to the UK Prime Minister, which will set out detailed proposals for new interventions to support the global market for antibiotics, as well as wider recommendations for how demand for antimicrobials can be reduced and the rise of drug resistance slowed.

Notes for Editors

1. AMR or ‘antimicrobial resistance’ is the term used to describe drug-resistant infections, sometimes referred to as ‘superbugs’. Antimicrobials include antibiotics (which act only on bacteria), antivirals, antiparasitics and antifungals.
2. The UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, commissioned the Review on Antimicrobial Resistance in July of last year to address the growing global problem of drug-resistant infections. It is Chaired by Lord Jim O’Neill and backed by the Wellcome Trust and the UK Government.
3. The Review has so far published a series of seven interim reports, focussing on specific aspects of the global problem of antimicrobial resistance. These included research, published in December 2014, that showed that the unchecked rise of drug resistance could claim 10 million lives per year by 2050, at a cumulative cost to global GDP of \$100 trillion. These reports are available on the Review website, www.amr-review.org
4. Lord Jim O’Neill is the current Commercial Secretary to HM Treasury, as well as the Chairman of the Review on AMR. He is an internationally published economist and until 2013 was Chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, having previously been the organisation’s Head of Economic Research. Before chairing the Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, he led the Cities Growth Commission which played a central role in the Government’s decision to devolve significant new powers to large urban centres in the UK starting with Manchester and the Northern Powerhouse project. He is particularly well known for his work in relation to developing and middle-income economies, having coined the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) acronym – meaning that he is especially well-placed to understand the broad range of international interests raised by antimicrobial resistance.

Media enquiries should be addressed to the AMR team on: info@amr-review.org and +44 (0) 20 7611 5722.