



Combating Antimicrobial Resistance: Policy Recommendations to Save Lives

Antibiotic resistance poses a serious threat to public health, patient care and safety, and national security. Past approaches used to manage antibiotic development and uses are failing. This issue has reached a critical point, as bacteria are becoming increasingly resistant to the antibiotics we have, and new drugs are not being developed at anywhere near the pace necessary.

The longer we wait to address resistance and the lack of new antibiotic development, the harder it will be to solve these problems. The time is *now* to adopt specific public policy strategies and research activities. The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) has developed a policy paper entitled “Combating Antimicrobial Resistance: Policy Recommendations to Save Lives” to address this global public health and national security threat.

Key Recommendations in the IDSA Policy Paper:

- Create statutorily defined incentives for antibiotic research and development (R&D) so that companies find developing new antibiotics to be a viable business endeavor—our short-term goal is 10 new systemic antibiotics by 2020.
- Support R&D of new rapid diagnostic tests so that we can identify the cause of patients’ infections more quickly, resulting in lower cost new antibiotic clinical trials and appropriate use of antibiotics post-approval.
- Recalibrate unworkable Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements for new antibiotic approvals so that companies can move forward with long-delayed clinical studies.
- Strengthen federal coordination, accountability, and transparency by (1) designating an office/director within the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to lead the existing federal Interagency Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance; and (2) establishing an advisory board of non-government experts to work with the director and task force to establish priorities and ensure progress toward achieving measurable goals.
- Aggressively promote the judicious use of currently available antibiotics through the adoption of antimicrobial stewardship programs as well as better infection control practices and immunization policies in order to extend the effectiveness of existing antibiotics.

Antimicrobial Innovation and Conservation (AIC) Fee

IDSA proposes the creation of an Antimicrobial Innovation and Conservation (AIC) Fee that would help pay for antibiotic R&D and antibiotic stewardship efforts.

The AIC fee would be flatly charged against the wholesale purchase of antibiotics in the U.S. for all uses (including generic and brand drug use in/on humans, animals, plants and aquaculture) and would be allocated to an HHS trust fund.

Rationale: Effective antibiotics are a precious resource and a “shared societal benefit.” Every use, whether appropriate or not, erodes the resource and the benefit. Like a toll-booth to pay for public roads, the AIC fee provides an equitable way for society to share responsibility for preserving antibiotics for current and future generations.

We Need Immediate Action

If these issues are not addressed immediately, we face a future that may resemble the days before these miracle drugs were developed, one in which people die of common infections, and where many medical interventions we take for granted—including surgery, chemotherapy, organ transplantation and care for premature babies—become impossible.