

June 2013

# Antibiotic Resistance Policy Newsletter



***Read Rebecca's story: A healthy 17-year-old high school honor student and swimmer from New Jersey who died of an antibiotic-resistant infection. She is unfortunately one of many patients who has suffered from or succumbed to a drug-resistant infection, and her story highlights the need for a strong federal effort to combat antimicrobial resistance.***

[Additional Patient Stories](#) | [Antibiotic Resistance Quick Facts](#)  
[IDSA's Antibiotic Development Website](#) | [IDSA's 10 x '20 Initiative Statement](#)  
[Organizations Endorsing the 10 x '20 Initiative](#) | [IDSA's Bad Bugs No Drugs Report](#)

## Co-Sponsor the “Strategies to Address Antimicrobial Resistance” (STAAR) Act, H.R. 2285

Antimicrobial resistance is a serious patient safety, public health, and national security issue. We cannot stop the development of antimicrobial resistance. However, we can respond with new and effective strategies and interventions to limit the emergence of resistance and protect patients. Outside of strengthening our antimicrobial drug pipeline, we need improved U.S. coordination and specific actions to better monitor, treat, and prevent the development and transmission of drug-resistant microbes. The STAAR Act provides the appropriate, balanced set of measures to achieve these goals.

- [STAAR Act One Page Overview](#)
- [STAAR Act Section-by-Section Summary](#)
- [STAAR Act Bill Text](#)
- [STAAR Act Coalition Support Letter](#)
- [Rep. Matheson Statement on STAAR Act Reintroduction](#)
- [IDSA Statement on STAAR Act Reintroduction](#)
- IDSA Policy Paper: [Combatting Antimicrobial Resistance: Policy Recommendations to Save Lives](#)

To co-sponsor the STAAR Act, please contact Joel Bailey in the office of Representative Jim Matheson at 5-3011 or [joel.bailey@mail.house.gov](mailto:joel.bailey@mail.house.gov).

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### New Reports on Antimicrobial Resistance

#### [IDSA Report: Antibiotic Pipeline Progress “Alarminglly Elusive”](#)

Despite the desperate need for new antibiotics, only one new systemic antibiotic has been approved since IDSA launched its *10 x '20 initiative* in 2010, according to a recent policy [report](#). The report’s authors also found a dwindling number of pharmaceutical companies investing in antibiotic research and development (R&D) as rates of multi-drug resistant pathogens continue to rise. “We’re on the precipice of returning to the dark days before antibiotics enabled safer surgery, chemotherapy and the care of premature infants,” IDSA Board Member Helen Boucher, MD, FIDSA, lead author of the report and a member of the Society’s Antimicrobial Resistance Committee, told [Yahoo! News](#). “We’re all at risk.”

#### [CDC Raises Alarm on Rising CRE Rates, Stresses Prevention](#)

A family of bacteria—Carbapenem-Resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* (CRE)—has become increasingly resistant to last-resort antibiotics, and more hospitalized patients are getting lethal, impossible-to-cure infections. The findings, published in the CDC’s [Vital Signs](#) report, are a call to action for the entire health care community to work urgently to protect patients. During just the first half of 2012,

almost 200 hospitals and long-term acute care facilities treated at least one patient infected with these bacteria, which kill up to half of patients with bloodstream infections.

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## **Antimicrobial Resistance in the News**

### **[CDC: Antibiotic Resistance Rising](#) (ABC News)**

Experts have warned for a decade that overuse of antibiotics is helping germs become resistant to drugs, raising the specter of more deaths and amputations. The situation has become “even more worrisome in the last two years,” according to Dr. Cynthia G. Whitney of CDC. Appropriate use of antibiotics can help stem this trend.

### **[Antibiotic Resistance ‘as big a risk as terrorism’—Medical Chief](#) (BBC News)**

The U.K.’s top health official, Professor Dame Sally Davies, warns that the growing threat of antibiotic resistance be ranked along terrorism on a list of threats to the nation. Davies describes antibiotic resistance as a “ticking time bomb,” warning that routine operations could become deadly in just 20 years if the ability to fight infection is lost.

### **[Sex and the Superbug: Meet Antibiotic-Resistant Gonorrhea](#) (Yahoo! News)**

Gonorrhea, an extremely common infection, is becoming increasingly resistant to antibiotics. While the most resistant strain has not yet been reported in the U.S., the bug’s growing resistance and spread is causing serious alarm and underscoring the need for strong policies to combat resistance.

### **[Superbugs Are a ‘Costly War We Can’t Win’: Doctors](#) (CNBC)**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has named antibiotic resistance as one of the top three health threats to the world in the twenty-first century, and medical experts warn that “we are in a crisis situation,” with an estimated 99,000 people dying in the U.S. alone from antibiotic resistant bacteria.

### **[CDC Says ‘Nightmare Bacteria’ a Growing Threat](#) (The Washington Post)**

CDC Director Tom Frieden warns that CRE is “a nightmare bacteria,” and a “triple threat.” CRE is resistant to nearly all known antibiotics, kills up to half of infected patients, and can transfer their antibiotic resistance to other bacteria, making them potentially untreatable as well. These “nightmare bacteria” are posing a growing threat to hospitals and nursing homes across the United States.

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**Infectious Diseases Society of America**

1300 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 300

Arlington, VA 22209

Amanda J. Jezek, Vice President, Public Policy and Government Relations

(p) 703-740-4790 | (f) 866-889-7319

[ajezek@idsociety.org](mailto:ajezek@idsociety.org) | [www.idsociety.org](http://www.idsociety.org)