



Recent ID Outbreaks, Disasters Highlight Ongoing Funding Needs

Recent events, including the fungal meningitis outbreak caused by contaminated steroid treatments, a historic outbreak of pertussis (whooping cough) across the nation, and Hurricane Sandy, have highlighted the unpredictability of infectious disease (ID) threats and the need for the U.S. to be prepared to respond. The nation must also continue addressing ongoing ID needs, such as development of new antimicrobials and diagnostics; antimicrobial resistance; and prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and vaccine-preventable illnesses. Agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) need robust funding in order to address these priorities.

IDSA and HIVMA Urge Congress to Stop Sequestration

The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) and the HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA) sent a [letter](#) to Congressional leaders urging them to stop the potentially devastating cuts to federal agencies under sequestration. Among the many priorities at risk are: a reduction of 200,000 children receiving recommended vaccinations, reduced services for HIV and AIDS patients at the majority of Ryan White-funded clinics, eliminated treatment for 273,000 HIV and AIDS patients worldwide, a \$350 million cut to infectious diseases research (including research on new antibiotics and antimicrobial resistance) at NIH, and a \$48.3 million reduction in public health emergency preparedness grants.

Infectious Diseases in the News

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Meningitis Outbreak and Public Health Funding

[IDSA President David Relman's statement on meningitis outbreak congressional hearings](#)

As Congress held hearings on the meningitis outbreak, IDSA noted that additional funding cutbacks to public health, either through sequestration or the traditional budget process, would devastate our nation's ability to respond effectively to future public health emergencies.

[As meningitis outbreak spreads, public health funds shrink \(Washington Post\)](#)

State and local public health departments, which depend upon federal funding from CDC, are on the front lines of our nation's response to the current meningitis outbreak. This article highlights responses from Tennessee and Oklahoma health departments as examples.

[At CDC, scientists fight to halt a deadly outbreak \(Fox News\)](#)

CDC staff are working day and night in numerous capacities to address the current meningitis outbreak, including testing laboratory samples, gathering data, advising doctors, and reaching out to thousands of people who may have been exposed.

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Antibiotic Resistant Infections

[Fighting superbugs \(Washington Post\)](#)

IDSA on Funding

- [3000 groups say "Stop Sequestration!"](#)
- [Health groups support BARDA funding](#)
- [Fix NIH salary cap](#)
- [IDSA's FY2013 Appropriations testimony](#)
- [Protect the Prevention and Public Health Fund](#)
- [Health groups support CDC National Healthcare Safety Network \(NHSN\)](#)
- [200 organizations support increased NIH funding](#)
- [60 organizations support increased CDC funding](#)

IDSA Policy Statements

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HIVMA Policy Statements

- [Policy and Funding on AIDS Should Follow Science](#)
- [Repeal HIV-Specific Criminal Statutes](#)
- [Federal Funding Activities](#)

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A strong federal investment is essential to further the development of desperately needed new antibiotics to fight resistant infections.

[NIH superbug outbreak highlights lack of new antibiotics \(Washington Post\)](#)

Doctors were forced to use colistin—a dangerous antibiotic that causes kidney damage—to treat drug-resistant infections because there were no other effective drugs. This article highlights the need for research funding.

[Surviving sepsis: New device speeds ID of dangerous bacteria \(NBC News\)](#)

Hospital stays for sepsis in the U.S. have more than doubled in recent years. Two tragic cases in New York City and Dallas illustrate how serious the disease is. A new diagnostic tool is helping physicians identify sepsis cases more quickly, leading to more successful treatment. But new diagnostics are sorely needed for many other serious and life-threatening infections.

[First antibiotic stewardship probed in Journal of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society \(Science Codex\)](#)

Up to 35 percent of inpatient antibiotic prescriptions are either unnecessary or inappropriate, helping to drive the development of drug-resistant bacteria. A new study of antibiotic stewardship programs at children's hospitals found a significant decrease in antibiotic usage—ranging from a 37 percent decrease in the early months, to 13 percent at the end of the observation.

[Far more could be done to stop the deadly bacteria *C. diff* \(USA Today\)](#)

An often deadly bacteria—*C. diff*—strikes nearly half a million Americans annually, including patients from New York City and California, highlighted in this article. Rates are rising steadily. Stronger infection control policies, systems to track antibiotic use, and antibiotic stewardship programs can all help reduce *C. diff* rates.

[C. diff causes concern in primary care, other outpatient settings \(American Medical Association News\)](#)

C. diff is no longer just a hospital problem. A recent study found 75 percent of infections studied were in nursing home patients or people who recently received care in an outpatient doctor's office or clinic.

[Researchers at the University of Michigan discover how bloodstream infections begin \(Infection Control Today\)](#)

Deeper understanding of how bloodstream infections begin and persist and how the bacteria causing these infections behave will help scientists and physicians develop better tools to fight these serious infections, which drive up health care costs and claim lives.

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Vaccine-Preventable Infections On the Rise

[State's flu-shot mandate for health workers 1st of its kind in nation \(American Medical Association News\)](#)

Rhode Island says the requirement is needed to protect the health of residents and prevent the spread of the illness to vulnerable populations.

[Whooping cough outbreak prompts shots for 6th, 9th grade \(Chicago Tribune\)](#)

Re-emergence of whooping cough is particularly dangerous for infants, who are far more likely to be hospitalized and die from the disease. Because the vaccine wears off, booster shots are recommended for older children and adults, particularly those in regular contact with infants.

[Vaccine preventable diseases 18 hours away \(United Press International\)](#)

Vaccines prevent deadly illnesses—many of which are just a plane ride away. "One of the few remaining places where polio circulates is Afghanistan, and U.S. troops return home from there daily; anyone exposed could inadvertently pass polio to a child," says Dr. David Kimberlin of the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society.

[Adult immunization program needs a shot in the arm \(Family Practice News\)](#)

The latest data indicate that adult immunization rates remain low.

[What recent measles and rubella outbreaks in Europe can teach the US \(Forbes\)](#)

In Europe, declining immunization rates have led to recent outbreaks of diseases previously thought to be eradicated or controlled. The same could happen here.

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Influenza and Other Biothreats

[Teen's death shows how flu can kill in a flash \(NBC News\)](#)

Influenza can lead to death even in healthy children, as this tragic story of a Rifle, Colorado teen demonstrates. The best way to prevent influenza and related complications is the

annual influenza vaccine.

[Study flags drop in antivirals for hospitalized flu patients \(Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of Minnesota\)](#)

Researchers have found a troubling drop in the use of the drugs for treating hospitalized patients with lab-confirmed flu, especially children. More strategies are needed to teach health providers about appropriate antiviral treatment.

[Does your doctor have the flu? \(Reuters\)](#)

Many physician residents have reported going to work while suffering from flu symptoms, not only risking their own health but also risking transmission of the flu virus to their patients and colleagues.

[HHS launches partnerships to make influenza/biodefense products \(Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of Minnesota\)](#)

HHS is establishing three public-private centers in Maryland, North Carolina, and Texas designed to give the nation a new and stronger ability to quickly make vaccines and drugs to respond to bioterrorist attacks, pandemic influenza, and other public health emergencies. These centers will be overseen by the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA).

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Hepatitis

[CDC recommends hepatitis C testing for all boomers \(National Public Radio\)](#)

Broader screening will identify many more cases of hepatitis C during early stages, allowing people to receive treatment before the infection causes more serious and costly problems, including cirrhosis and liver cancer.

[Cost-effectiveness and population outcomes of general population screening for hepatitis C \(Clinical Infectious Diseases\)](#)

General population screening for hepatitis C virus (HCV) is likely to be a cost-effective approach to detect undiagnosed HCV in the United States, but a broad initiative aimed at improving referral and treatment would be necessary to substantially reduce population-level health outcomes.

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Food Safety

[Foodborne diseases: Active surveillance network \(FoodNet\) in 2012: A foundation for food safety in the United States \(Clinical Infectious Diseases\)](#)

Foodborne disease is an important public health problem in the U.S., with an estimated 9.4 million domestically acquired cases and 1351 deaths each year. CDC's FoodNet program tracks foodborne illnesses, generating information that provides a foundation for food safety policy and prevention efforts.

[Invasive listeriosis in FoodNet, 2004-2009: Further targeted prevention needed for higher risk groups \(Clinical Infectious Diseases\)](#)

Listeriosis can cause severe diseases, especially in fetuses, neonates, older adults, and persons with certain immunocompromising conditions. Overall, listeriosis incidence has not declined since 2004. Further targeted prevention through well-funded public health initiatives to those at highest risk is needed to substantially affect rates.

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Global Health

[Dr. Myron Cohen Speaks Out on the U.S. Global AIDS Blueprint \(Science Speaks: HIV & TB News, A Project of the Center for Global Health Policy\)](#)

A prominent AIDS researcher at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill answers questions regarding treatment as prevention and other essential elements of a global AIDS plan.

[Dr. Salmaan Keshavjee Weighs in on Tuberculosis in the U.S. Global AIDS Blueprint \(Science Speaks: HIV & TB News, A Project of the Center for Global Health Policy\)](#)

A well-known tuberculosis expert at Harvard Medical School notes that a credible blueprint for global AIDS response must address deaths from tuberculosis.

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