



Dear ReAct friends,

Welcome to the first Newsletter from ReAct, Action on Antibiotic resistance. Since you have not heard from us for some time we would like to share with you some of the important events from the past year, 2007 and brief you about our ongoing plans and activities.

### **New website**

First of all, please pay attention to our new website, [www.reactgroup.org](http://www.reactgroup.org), whose structure and design has been significantly improved. We hope that it will grow to become a useful tool for all people interested in combating antibiotic resistance. Please send your comments about the content and functionality of the website, in order for us to improve it further.

### **Regional activities**

ReAct's way of working, being a broker of access to expertise and a partner that complements the efforts of others has already proven to be successful. As part of the strive towards a decentralised structure and local ownership of ReAct, regional structures serving as geographical hubs are being established or is under discussion in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

In April 2007, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima arranged a *Bacterial Resistance Day Workshop* supported by ReAct. The workshop linked key experts and leaders in Peru and Latin America to take a major step in concerted action on antibiotic resistance. A regional network, ReAct Latinoamérica, has been formed, with a local office and staff in Cuenca, Ecuador organised through the Child to Child Center and the Medical Faculty at the University of Cuenca.

In collaboration with PAHO, an international ReAct workshop & conference is planned for June 9-13, 2008 in Cuenca with the objectives to:

- analyse the problem of antibacterial resistance in Latin America from a holistic perspective of the ecosystem, in the context of the right to health and the political and economic conditions of the Latin American people;
- establish an outline of actions and define strategies of integration between scientific and academic institutions, state institutions, and social and community organisations to contain antibiotic resistance;
- define strategies to integrate activities between the different sectors involved in the problem of bacterial resistance.

ReAct is currently conducting an analysis of stakeholders in the South East Asian region who may want to engage in ABR. This is done through Raks Thai Foundation (RTF) who will act as the ReAct desk in Asia for the first 6 months of 2008.

In Africa, meetings with representatives from the Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network (EPN) have evolved to a preliminary work plan to introduce the issue of antibiotic resistance to their network of drug supply organisations (DSO). Preparatory work has included a survey to collect information on how antibiotics are selected and used at the DSO's own districts, and the level of knowledge on the problem.



## ***Work at international level***

### *WHA/WHO*

Negotiations has taken place with officials at WHO Headquarters in Geneva and the regional offices in America (PAHO) and South East Asia (SEARO) about the need for increased activity and leadership for management of antibiotic resistance.

ReAct was active during the 60th World Health Assembly in Geneva held in May 2007.

The main agenda of ReAct activities at the WHA was to;

- highlight the need of a thorough report on measures taken to implement the resolution about antimicrobial resistance (WHA 58.27), since very little has been done to implement it since its passage in 2005;
- draw attention to the lack of leadership in response to the WHO progress report;
- support the adoption of the resolution on Rational Use of Medicine (EBI20.R12)

### *Burden of resistance*

Guided by the results from the 3 day workshop organised by ReAct in co-operation with the European Commission DG Research in Brussels in June 2006 we have continued the work to summarize and critically review available knowledge regarding burden of antibiotic resistance.

As a result, a number of fact sheets on the burden of antibiotic resistance, including economical aspects of antibiotic resistance; [burden of resistance to multi-resistant gram-negative bacilli](#) (MRGN) and [burden of resistance to methicillin-resistant \*Staphylococcus aureus\*](#) (MRSA) are now available.

The material is used as briefing documents and is publicly available from ReAct's website. One additional fact sheet regarding "Consequences of antibiotic resistance in relation to sexual and reproductive health" is also being prepared. The MRSA, MRGN and the Economy fact sheets are to be given a new more attractive layout and has been sent to an editor for review. The new versions will be ready soon.

### *Innovation of antibacterials*

ReAct has together with EMEA and the European Centre for Disease prevention and Control (ECDC), discussed necessary interventions at EU level to promote a needs-driven development of new antibiotics. The ReAct strategic policy unit at Duke University is together with the EMEA conducting an analysis of the status of the pharmaceutical pipeline for antibiotics. This analysis will be matched with a study of the trends of antibacterial resistance in a number of bacteria with significant medical importance and merged into a report in early 2009.

A fact sheet on [antibacterial innovation](#) has been produced, and is available on ReAct's website. It documents the paucity of the antibacterial pipeline, particularly with regard to new classes of drugs, and highlights some incentives that could stimulate innovation