Antibacterial drug discovery has declined in most large pharmaceutical companies and has shifted to small companies usually having their background in an academic setting.

Where is the innovation coming from?

In Europe, more than 60 small companies engage in anti-bacterial drug R&D. More than half of them focus entirely on antibiotics and about 30% are active in diverse fields. The antibacterial approaches range from classical antibiotics and peptides to antibodies, vaccines, and small molecules.

European "antibacterial" SMEs

The European "antibacterial" SMEs are located across Europe with most companies in the UK.

Major antibacterial drug research and development (R&D) programmes and their phase of clinical development

DRIVE-AB (Driving reinvestment in R&D and responsible antibiotic use) is a collaborative project funded by the European Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI). DRIVE-AB has been launched to find ways policymakers can stimulate innovation, responsible use, and global access to antibiotics to meet public health needs. DRIVE-AB engages with all interested stakeholders during the three-year project to develop and test new economic models for antibiotic development and use. SMEs are critical stakeholders with a wide range of innovative approaches to treat or prevent bacterial infections. Though small companies face considerable financial barriers and challenges inherent to small organisations, "antibacterial" SMEs are powered by academic research, providing critical basic discovery efforts that are transformed into antibacterial drug R&D programmes.

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