Revitalizing the antibiotic pipeline
Stimulating innovation that supports sustainable use and global access

The Problem

Bacterial resistance is a global human and economic burden that is increasing annually. Antibiotic research and development (R&D) pipelines are inadequate and no new antibiotic that is effective against the most resistant Gram-negative bacteria is expected to be available in the near future.

There is an urgent need for new economic models that stimulate antibiotic R&D while considering sustainable use and access for all patients in need.

The Project

DRIVE-AB is a multinational consortium composed of 16 public and 7 private partners from 12 countries funded by the EU Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), a joint undertaking between the European Union and the pharmaceutical industry association EFPIA. DRIVE-AB is in the process of developing a menu of push and pull incentives that will be recommended to policy makers in July 2017. DRIVE-AB is part of the IMI’s New Drugs for Bad Bugs (ND4BB) programme.

Challenge - Discovery

Discovering novel antibiotics that are active against the most resistant priority pathogens is extremely difficult. Hundreds of discovery projects are necessary to increase the chance of one successful development programme and finally getting a new drug. Energising the research and discovery community is a prerequisite for further development activities (Push incentives, Figure 3). Increased funding and prioritising parts of the funds for the most relevant scientific problems should supplement efforts to coordinate and align global initiatives and funding bodies.

The Antibiotic Tripod

Access for all patients in need

Sustainable use of novel antibacterial drugs

Challenge – Business model

The current business model of pharmaceutical companies incentivises volume sales to drive return on investment. Generic antibiotics are effective in most cases and new antibiotics should be used only in case of resistance or intolerance to existing antibiotics. This restriction on volume use results in low sales that cannot sustain the high investments required for R&D. DRIVE-AB is the process of developing a menu of push and pull incentives that will be recommended to policy makers in July 2017.

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