

News story: UK-China partnerships against antimicrobial resistance get funding

On the day that the UK Government publishes its strategy to tackle antimicrobial resistance (AMR), the UK's innovation agency, Innovate UK is announcing winners of two research competitions to address the issue of infections resistant to antibiotics both in humans and in animals.

On behalf of the [Department of Health and Social Care \(DHSC\)](#), Innovate UK has completed two research competitions that will award £20 million of research funding for AMR research. This includes a bilateral research competition between DHSC's Global AMR Innovation Fund (GAMRIF) and the [Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology \(MoST\)](#), and a competition as part of the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI).

GAMRIF's UK-China research competition supports new innovations to address antimicrobial infections in both humans and animals, which together constitute a significant threat to human health. Successful projects are a partnership of UK companies and research organisations, with Chinese companies and research organisations. £10 million of UK aid funding has now been awarded to UK partners, with MoST providing funding for the Chinese partners who will receive up to a total of 60 million RMB.

These partnerships will enable novel research to be conducted that neither country could carry out alone within the same time frame.

In total, 14 projects were selected and will run over the next three years. These projects include a diverse range of innovations, such as novel diagnostics, therapeutics, and animal feed, as well as opportunities from traditional Chinese medicine for treating or preventing infectious bacterial disease.

The results of this research will have global implications including in China and across emerging and developing countries.

Among these projects, are a collaboration between [The Vaccine Group](#), based in Plymouth and the [Shanghai Veterinary Research Institute \(SHVRI\)](#), [Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science \(CAAS\)](#), which plans to use a bovine virus as a safe, inexpensive, single dose vaccine to control *Streptococcus suis* infection in domestic pigs. Also working with SHVRI, CAAS is [GAMA Healthcare Ltd](#) in Watford, who have collaboratively proposed to develop a non-antibiotic treatment of multi-drug resistant organisms in poultry.

Professor Dame Sally Davies, England's Chief Medical Officer, said:

Drug resistant infections claim hundreds of thousands of lives across the globe. An innovative and international response is vital

– this latest collaboration between the UK and China guarantees much needed research to address the complex and world-wide issue of AMR

Dr Kath Mackay, Interim Director – Ageing Society, Health & Nutrition, Innovate UK said:

Antimicrobial resistance is one of the biggest global challenges in healthcare. It has been estimated that the AMR threat could lead to 10 million extra deaths a year and cost the global economy up to £75 trillion by 2050.

This partnership between China and the UK's world-leading bio-industry is a vital contribution to tackling this issue through international co-operation.

A further £10 million has been awarded to UK organisations as part of the SBRI to develop solutions to AMR in humans. This competition focuses on two strands of research; new therapies and infection prevention and control.

Of the 13 projects selected across business and academia, 9 are led by small and medium enterprises who will translate AMR research into industry.

Winners include a project from Surrey-based Clean Blue Ltd that will develop an anti-infective medical device. [Medisieve](#), based in London, has also received funding to use magnetic blood filtration to treat antibiotic resistant bacterial sepsis.

Press release: MHRA recalls more blood pressure and heart medication from pharmacies as a precaution

Today's recall affects 3 batches of Irbesartan 150mg and 300mg tablets which reached the UK market, supplied by Macleods Pharma UK. Information on which batches are affected can be found [here](#).

The pharmacy-level recall is being undertaken as a precaution as testing revealed possible N nitrosodiethylamine (NDEA) contamination.

There is no evidence at present that the impurity has caused any harm to patients and not all Irbesartan products are affected. People should continue to take their medication and should speak to a doctor or pharmacist if they have any concerns.

[Earlier this month](#), MHRA advised pharmacies to recall all affected batches of Irbesartan containing medicines made by Actavis.

In 2018, the Agency twice recalled batches of Valsartan to pharmacy level in 2018. Valsartan containing medicines from Dexcel and Actavis (now Accord) were recalled in [July](#) and batches of Valsartan containing medicines made by Mylan and Teva, were also recalled to pharmacy level [in November](#).

The initial recall occurred after an impurity, N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA), was identified as part of the manufacturing process in a Valsartan active substance manufactured at one facility based in China. A second impurity, NDEA, was later discovered.

The MHRA continues to thoroughly investigate the issue alongside the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines (EDQM). We will continue to monitor the situation in the UK and consider what actions are necessary to protect public health.

Dr Sam Atkinson, MHRA's Director of the Inspection, Enforcement and Standards Division, said:

Our most important concern is the safety of the medicines you take.

As today shows, we continue to investigate potential contamination of sartan containing medicines such as Irbesartan. We will continue to act and provide updates when appropriate.

Currently, there is no evidence that medicines containing NDMA or NDEA have caused any harm to patients.

Because of the risk associated with suddenly stopping high blood pressure medication, continue to take your medicines as prescribed by your doctor.

If you have any concerns about your medicine, please speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

Notes to editor

1. [In July, MHRA advised pharmacies](#) to recall affected batches of Valsartan containing medicines made by Mylan and Teva as a precautionary measure. 2. [In November, we advised pharmacies](#) to recall batches of valsartan from Dexcel and Actavis as a precautionary measure. 3. Earlier this January, MHRA advised pharmacies to recall all affected batches of Irbesartan containing medicines made by Actavis as a precautionary measure. More information [here](#). 4. Find out more about our [Yellow Card Scheme](#).

Press release: MHRA recalls more blood pressure and heart medication from pharmacies as a precaution

More Irbesartan containing products are being recalled from pharmacies in the UK as the MHRA continues to investigate possible contamination of sartan products.

Press release: UK Hydrographic Office welcomes Maritime 2050 strategy

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) has welcomed the publication of the UK government's 'Maritime 2050' strategy paper, which sets out the vision for the future of the UK maritime sector.

The strategy, which has been developed in consultation with agencies including the UKHO and the wider public and private sectors, sets out a series of detailed recommendations to help the UK maintain its position as a leading global maritime nation. These recommendations span themes including the environment, international trade, security and resilience, infrastructure, people and technology.

A focus on the positive impact that smart shipping and use of autonomous vessels could have on the environment, as well as safety and efficiency across the maritime industry, forms a key part of the paper. In recognition of these benefits, the strategy supports collaboration between the UKHO, Maritime & Coastguard Agency, industry experts and the wider government to develop navigation and safety data requirements that enable the use of these technologies in the future.

The strategy also recognises the value of marine geospatial data in unlocking economic potential for maritime-related industries, with further recommendations to not only fully map the seabed in the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone (spanning 6,805,586 sq. km) to modern standards, but also play a key role in international efforts to chart the world's seabed. This aim will be key to helping government and the wider industry improve our understanding of how we can protect and sustainably benefit from the global marine environment.

Commenting on the Maritime 2050 paper, Cathrine Armour, Director of Customer Division, said:

The UK Hydrographic Office welcomes the publication of Maritime 2050, which sets out a compelling vision for the future of the UK maritime sector. The UK has the world's fifth largest Exclusive Economic Zone and the better we understand our oceans, the better placed we will be to ensure its prosperity whilst capitalising on the opportunities that exist.

As the government's hydrographic and marine geospatial data experts, we are proud of the part we play in mapping the UK's seabed and enabling the future of maritime navigation. At the same time, we can only meet the ambitions of Maritime 2050 through a collaborative approach that brings together the expertise and insights of all our partners across government, industry and academia. We look forward to working closely with these partners to fulfil these goals.

You can read the strategy in full here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maritime-2050-navigating-the-future>

[Press release: UK Hydrographic Office welcomes Maritime 2050 strategy](#)

UK Government aims to support autonomous navigation and map over 6 million square kilometres of the world's oceans