



Professor Dame Sally Davies, UK Special Envoy on Antimicrobial Resistance

“Our world is facing an antimicrobial resistance (AMR) pandemic. Globally, almost 5 million deaths annually are associated with AMR. For health-care workers, for patients and their families, these data are real, lived, scary experiences – and a wake-up call that we are hurtling towards the undoing of modern medicine sooner than we predicted. AMR impacts all of us, and each of us can play a part in containing this insidious threat.

To save lives and livelihoods, we need to catalyze innovation for new and equitably accessible antimicrobial treatments. I am pleased that the G7 Finance and Health Ministers have committed to strengthening antibiotic innovation through piloting “pull incentives” that can grow the global marketplace for antibiotics, and level up access while avoiding excess use. The UK’s new subscription model is now live, and the US PASTEUR Act is in Congress, and I call on all countries, and industry, to work together to value antimicrobials as critical infrastructure.

We need broad, integrated surveillance systems to help us anticipate outbreaks before it is too late to beat them back. Coordinated surveillance systems across communities, sectors and countries can enable targeted interventions against AMR. For politicians and policy-makers, accessible data provide an understanding and ownership of the challenge. On the ground, data empower health-care workers with the tools they need to drive solutions that work for the context they are facing.

We need to move forward together and take the public with us. From health-care workers and scientists singing about the discovery of penicillin and the toll of AMR in the musical production, *The Mould That Changed the World*, to cartoons depicting an apocalyptic world without antibiotics and to the Roll Back Antimicrobial Resistance Initiative running drama clubs in schools in Tanzania to educate children about AMR, I hope to see the arts harnessed to inspire communities to be activists and actors on AMR.

In 2024, there will be a High-Level Meeting on AMR at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. This will be a pivotal moment for global stakeholders to come together and reaffirm commitments on AMR, leveraging lessons from COVID-19 and from climate change, too. I urge everyone, everywhere, to help shape this meeting and the outcomes from it.”

Dame Sally Davies was appointed as the UK Government’s Special Envoy on AMR in 2019. She is also the 40th Master of Trinity College, Cambridge University. Dame Sally was the Chief Medical Officer for England and Senior Medical Adviser to the UK Government from 2011–2019. She has become a leading figure in global health, serving as a member of the World Health Organization (WHO) Executive Board 2014–2016 and as co-convenor of the United Nations Inter-Agency Co-ordination Group (IACG) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), which reported in 2019.

In the 2020 New Year Honours, Dame Sally became the second woman (and the first outside the British Royal family) to be appointed Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath (GCB) for services to public health and research, having received her DBE in 2009.