

## AMR Network



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## Internal news and events

### Update on Exeter Research Networks initiative

The Exeter Research Networks (ERN) initiative is a key part of the University of Exeter's Research and Impact Strategy and the University's Strategy2030. It aims to enable agile collective research groupings to develop quickly in response to changing interdisciplinary imperatives and opportunities.

Nine areas have been selected for designation as an Exeter Research Network, and the AMR Network will fall in under a new, wider network called **Microbes and Society**. Work is underway to develop branding and communications to launch the ERN formally. Stay tuned!

### Tackling Emerging Co-infections: MRC Online National Workshop

Joint hosted by Exeter's [MRC Centre for Medical Mycology](#), as well as Imperial College London's [MRC Centre for Molecular Bacteriology and Infection](#), Glasgow's [MRC Centre for Virus Research](#) and its [Wellcome Centre for Integrative Parasitology](#), this MRC-funded workshop will be held on **28 March from 1pm until 4.30pm** and aims to identify the challenges, scientific priorities and opportunities for research going forward. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

### SSM Annual Scientific Virtual Meeting 2022 Abstract Submission now live

Abstract submission is now live for the [Society for Social Medicine's Annual Scientific meeting](#) in Exeter on 6-9 September 2022.

Held at the University of Exeter, the conference will cover a range of subjects including epidemiology, the medical and health needs of society, health services, and the prevention of disease. We welcome research that addresses important issues in population health sciences and includes qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches. Free and subsidised places available. [The deadline for abstracts](#) is 23:59 (GMT), **Monday 28 February 2022**.

## New Penryn Campus Microbiology Seminar series

Penryn-based microbiologists are meeting the final Thursday of every month from 2-3pm to hear about research going on in different groups across campus, and to give everybody a chance to collaborate, catch up, or just have a break and a chat. Every self-identifying microbiologist or person interested in microbiology is more than welcome to join. Please email [D.Walker-Sunderhauf@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:D.Walker-Sunderhauf@exeter.ac.uk) to join the distribution list.

The next seminar will be held on **Thursday, 31st March** from 2-3pm in the Exchange Lecture Theatre. Speaking will be Zoltán Erdos (Ben Raymond group) and Arthur Newbury (Buckling group).

## Congratulations to...

[Aimee Murray](#), who has won a NERC Responsive Mode (New Investigator) grant for "Exploring understudied aspects of antimicrobial resistance evolution to improve environmental pollution policy".

The £812,282 grant is for three years starting 1 May 2022. With Co-Investigators William Gaze, Angus Buckling, Mario Recker and Barbara Kasprzyk-Hordern at University of Bath, along with support from the Environment Agency and Roche, the project will generate the largest, publicly available database of the lowest antibiotic concentrations that increase AMR, both for individual compounds and environmental antibiotic mixtures in bacterial communities.

Impacts of evolutionary (exposure) history will also be explored, to better understand potential efficacy of future mitigation strategies in different environments.



If you have project updates or resources that you think might be of interest to other members of the Network, we would be pleased to highlight them through this monthly newsletter – contact us on [AMR-Network@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:AMR-Network@exeter.ac.uk)

## Publications

**Article:** The Company of Biologists has published [an interview](#) with AMR Network Member [Alessandra da Silva Dantas](#) about her recently published paper, '[Crosstalk between the calcineurin and cell wall integrity pathways prevents chitin overexpression in \*Candida albicans\*](#)' (*Journal of Cell Science*, featured in last month's newsletter).

**Publication:** Louis, M., Clamens, T., Tahrioui, A., Desraic, F., Rodrigues, S., Rosay, T., **Harmer, N.**, Diaz, S., Barreau, M., Racine, P.-J., Kipnis, E., Grandjean, T., Vieillard, J., Bouffartigues, E., Cornelis, P., Chevalier, S., Feuilloley, M. G. J., Lesouhaitier, O. [Pseudomonas aeruginosa Biofilm Dispersion by the Human Atrial Natriuretic Peptide](#) (*Advanced Science*)

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Don't forget to use #ExeterAMR



## Spotlight on...

**Kasim Allel** is an engineer with a mixed background in economics and global health. He spends half his time completing his PhD in Infectious Diseases at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and the other half working as a Research Associate of the College of Medicine and Health. His main research interest lies in AMR, particularly analysing transmission patterns within different low-and-middle-income sub-populations and cost-effective ways to tackle the disease burden.

Kasim is currently working within the AMR Research Team, developing a conceptual framework to improve the understanding of antimicrobial resistance in livestock systems in Argentina using a One Health perspective. In his PhD, he works on evaluating/estimating the burden of bloodstream infections produced by AMR in hospitalised patients from LMICs. Kasim's complete profile is [here](#).





## GW4 AMR Alliance



### GW4 AMR Alliance

The [GW4 AMR Alliance](#) continues to welcome new members from all disciplines and working at any level.

In January 2022, the AMR Alliance held an online collaborative bid-writing event, and plans are in development for a follow-up event in April. You can find out more about the aims and focus of the event [here](#).

Other recent developments include a newly-established network for Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and Postgraduate students.

### How to join

Please sign up [here](#) to complete a short online registration form (this link can also be found on the [website](#) along with our Privacy Policy).

Many thanks and we look forward to you joining us. If you have any queries, please do contact the AMR Alliance team at [amr@gw4.ac.uk](mailto:amr@gw4.ac.uk)

If you would like to find out more about the GW4 AMR Alliance and its aims, as well as hear about some of the research that is taking place across the four partner universities of Bath, Bristol Cardiff and Exeter, please have a look at the launch event [here](#).

### **GW4 AMR Alliance ECR and PGR Network**

The GW4 AMR Alliance ECR and PGR Network is working to develop its community through the Slack platform and is currently putting together an events programme to support networking across disciplines and all four university partners.

You can find out more about the ECR and PGR network, including key contacts at each of the four partner universities and information on the developing events programme, on the dedicated webpage [here](#). There is also a link to join the network on the same page.

The first planned event will be on **Monday 28 February, 3.00pm-4.00pm**, and will take the form of "lightning talks". This will provide an opportunity to participate in/hear 3-minute thesis talks from a range of disciplines and to network in breakout rooms hosted by each speaker. Details and a registration form will be available on [the dedicated site](#).



## External news and events

### **Funding Opportunities**

**JPIAMR 14th Call Disrupting Drug Resistance Using Innovative Design**

**International collaboration to address antimicrobial resistance**

Deadlines: 8th March 11:00 UK time (pre-proposals), 5th July 13:00 UK time (full proposals)  
Funding: £250k max per award (£1.5M total funding available) – for UK elements only  
Duration: Maximum three years  
Eligibility: Standard UKRI rules apply. Minimum three eligible partners from three different countries  
Link: Full details are available on the JPIAMR website [here](#)

**Note:** there was a call webinar on **25 January** to present the opportunity in more detail and explain the partner search tool. Videos of the general presentation and the partner search tool can be watched again [here](#).

The call is for funding to develop or improve drugs or plant production agents to help:

- treat bacterial or fungal infections
- reduce the spread of resistance to drugs

Projects should involve either licensed antibiotics or antifungals, or agents in pre-clinical or early clinical development. Projects could aim to:

- improve efficacy of specificity
- repurpose existing interventions
- optimise combinations of drugs or plant protection agents
- design and implement new strategies, or inventive tools, including novel chemistry and new materials

Proposals can focus on one or more of the 'one health' settings, namely humans health, animal health, or plants (including trees and crops).

### **UKRI Molecules to landscapes: building interdisciplinary capabilities**

The [UKRI](#) has launched a new funding opportunity, '**Molecules to landscapes: building interdisciplinary capabilities**'. Awards range from £100,000 - £200,000. Closing date **24 March 2022**.

For more information, click [here](#).

### **MRC and JPIAMR trans-national call**

[MRC](#) and [JPIAMR](#) have published a preannouncement of a trans-national call for Diagnostics and Surveillance Networks in AMR.

The aim of this call is to assemble networks of leading experts and stakeholders with an intent to facilitate the development, optimisation and use of diagnostic and surveillance tools, technologies and systems. Networks should work towards the conceptualisation of ideas in order to provide white papers, guidance documents and/or best practices/roadmaps and evidence frameworks to identify key questions to be addressed and/or potential solutions to overcome barriers to enhanced surveillance and advanced diagnostics to reduce the burden of AMR.

Each network coordinator will be able to apply for a maximum of 50,000 Euro for a 12- or 24-month period for support of its activities.

Further details have not yet been announced, but previous network calls have required the involvement of at least 15 representatives from organisations from at least 10 different countries, at least 3 of which are from 3 different countries participating in the call. Details of previous calls and networks funded can be found on the JPIAMR website.

## Timeline

22 March 2022 – Detailed pre-announcement text available

12 April 2022 – Call opens

28 April 2022 – Webinar for applicants

14 June 2022 – Proposal deadline

## Sector news

**New report from ECDC and WHO:** The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the WHO Regional Office for Europe published a report on 26 January 2022 that provides a pan-European overview of the antimicrobial resistance (AMR) situation in the European region, featuring data from 2020. [Read more here](#).

**WHO Expert Opinion Survey:** The WHO is characterising the role of vaccines in combatting AMR and needs expert opinions to generate health and/or economic estimates of burden for pathogens where data is too limited to produce modelling estimates. The pathogens for which expert opinion on health burden or economic burden is required are *Chlamydia trachomatis*, *Vibrio cholerae*, *Clostridium difficile*, *Helicobacter pylori*, *Group A Streptococcus*, *Haemophilus influenzae b (Hib)*, and *Neisseria meningitidis*. **If these pathogens fall within your area of expertise, [please click here to take the survey](#).**

The [Infection Management Coalition](#) have published a White Paper on the 'hidden pandemic' of antibiotic resistance, featuring 29 recommendations "to accelerate the creation of a system which is resilient and mature with regard to: outbreak and pandemic preparedness; infection prevention; rapid recognition, diagnosis and treatment of time-critical viral and bacterial infections; and to, ultimately, deliver effective AMS". [Read it here](#).

The **Guardian** reports on how [drugs have dangerously polluted the world's rivers](#) (14 February)

**Farming UK:** [UK Falling behind EU on farm antibiotics, campaigners warn](#) (28 January)

## Sector events

### Save the date - BSAC Spring Conference 2022

The **British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy** will hold its Spring Conference on **10-11 May 2022**. Programme and registration details to follow. For more details and to register, [click here](#).

### LSHTM virtual conference/symposium

**7 March 2022**, 09:00-16:00 UK time. *RESIST2* Virtual Conference. This workshop will focus on how mathematical modelling can reduce the numbers of this endpoint - the patients infected with drug resistant bacteria.

To register, [click here](#).

### LSHTM webinar

**8 March, 2022**, 13:00-14:00 UK time. 'Chickens and eggs: The Global Challenges Research Fund One Health Poultry Hub interdisciplinary approach to tackling antimicrobial resistance'. **Professor Fiona Tomley (Royal Veterinary College)** shares preliminary results of the interdisciplinary work the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) One Health Poultry Hub is carrying out in Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Vietnam assessing antimicrobial use in chicken farming, and providing evidence to support effective change. To join webinar, [click here](#).

### Publications of interest

Wilkinson, J. L., Boxall, A. B. A., Kolpin, D. W., Leung, K. M. Y., et al. [Pharmaceutical pollution of the world's rivers](#). (*PNAS*)

Khan, A., Subba Rao, T., Joshi, H. M. [Phage therapy in the Covid-19 era: Advantages over antibiotics](#). (*Science Direct*)

Khouja, T., Mitsantisuk, K., Tadrous, M., Suda, K. J. [Global consumption of antimicrobials: impact of the WHO Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance and 2019 coronavirus pandemic \(COVID-19\)](#) (*Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy*)



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