

Research on Public Support to Address Antimicrobial Resistance

Findings From a National Survey of 1,001 Registered Voters

October 2021

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Survey Methodology

- This bipartisan poll was designed and administered by Lake Research Partners and The Tarrance Group.
- The survey reached a total of 1,001 registered voters nationwide.
- The survey was conducted via online panel from September 1-9, 2021.
- Data were weighted slightly by gender, age, race, race by gender, education, region, region by gender, and party identification to reflect the demographic composition of registered voters nationwide.
- The margin of error for the base sample is +/-3.1%.



Demographics of Registered Voters Nationwide





Summary of Key Findings

- Over 7 in 10 voters are concerned about antimicrobial resistance (AMR). With some additional information on its cause and impacts, this rises to 81% with 39% *very* concerned.
- Large majorities of voters across party lines say developing new antibiotics should be a public health priority (71% a top or high priority).
- Pluralities in each party think the current level of research into this issue is too low. Fewer than 1 in 10 voters overall and across parties think there is too much research being done.
- Addressing AMR is politically salient: 72% of voters want to know where their member of Congress stands on developing new antibiotics. Close to two-thirds of voters would be more likely to vote for a candidate who prioritizes new antibiotics to combat AMR.
- A solid majority of voters (59%) support the PASTEUR Act after hearing a basic description of it. A similar majority (60%) is opposed to cuts in federal payments that go toward vaccines, antibiotics, and other medicines for infectious diseases.
- Support for developing vaccines and antibiotics in the U.S. rather than abroad is strong across parties.



Nearly three in four voters (73%) are at least somewhat concerned about the issue of antimicrobial resistance.

Concern About Antimicrobial Resistance



Q35. [IF Q34= 1 OR 2] How concerned are you about the issue of antimicrobial resistance?

Information on Antimicrobial Resistance:

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites evolve so that existing medications used to treat related infections no longer work. These so-called "superbugs" are bacterial infections that have evolved to become more resistant to a lot of antibiotics. At the same time, many of the antibiotics we use today were developed decades ago.

As a result, patients require higher and stronger doses of antibiotics to fight infections that used to be easily cured with a small dose. In some cases, antibiotics don't work at all. As antimicrobial resistance becomes more common, more of us could be prone to infections that aren't treatable by any antibiotics. In many cases, the infections may even be deadly. According to the CDC, more than 2.8 million infections resistant to antibiotics occur in the U.S. each year, and more than 35,000 people die as a result.



After learning basic background information on AMR, the level of concern increases to 81%, including 39% who are very concerned.

Concern About Antimicrobial Resistance After Information



Q36. Now here is some more information on antimicrobial resistance: [information on antimicrobial resistance] After reading this statement, how concerned are you about the issue of antimicrobial resistance?



Voters support research into new antibiotics. Seven in ten voters put developing new antibiotics to combat resistance as a high or top priority in public health.



Q37. When you think about priorities in public health, how high of a priority would you put on developing new antibiotics to combat resistant bacteria?

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Information on Development of New Antibiotics:

As use of antibiotics continues to increase, the problem of antimicrobial resistance has grown in recent years, which means that we need to develop new antibiotics to treat bacterial infections that are resistant to older antibiotics. It also means that doctors need to save new antibiotics for life-threatening infections in order to prevent bacterial resistance from developing to these new antibiotics.

As a result, developing new antibiotics can be unprofitable - it takes an average of 23 years before research and development costs are covered. This has led to far less investment in research on new antibiotics than other medicines. In fact, the number of new antibiotics approved by FDA today is less than half of what it was 30 years ago.



Across all parties, pluralities of voters think there is too little research being done on new antibiotics, and fewer than 1 in 10 think there is too much.



Q39. Here is some information on the development of new antibiotics: [information on development of new antibiotics] After reading this statement, do you feel the amount of research currently being done on new antibiotics is too low, too high, or about right?



A majority of voters (64%) say that they are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports the development of new antibiotics, and most want to know where their member of Congress stands on this issue.

Want to Know Where Member of Congress Stands/Likelihood to Vote for Candidate who Supports Developing New Antibiotics



Close to two-thirds of voters say that they are more likely to vote for a candidate that supports the development of new antibiotics. Almost none would be less likely.



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Q42. Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a political candidate who supports making the development of new antibiotics a priority?

Information on PASTEUR Act:

The PASTEUR Act aims to encourage development of innovative drugs against the most threatening infections, to improve the appropriate use of antibiotics, and to ensure those drugs are available when we need them.

It would provide federal payments to companies that develop new antibiotics for risky, resistant infections in advance to make sure that when we need them, those antibiotics are available. It also would support programs that improve how and when we use antibiotics and would enhance the system used to report cases of drug-resistance to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



A majority of voters put a high priority on passing the PASTEUR Act after hearing basic background information on it.

Passing PASTEUR Act Priority Level After Information



Q44. After reading this statement, how high of a priority do you think passing the PASTEUR Act should be?

Six in ten voters oppose cuts to federal health care programs that pay for vaccines, antibiotics, and other medicines for infectious diseases. This includes 56% of Republicans.

Support or Oppose Congress Cutting Payment for Medicine With Information

As you may know, currently federal health care programs pay for vaccines, antibiotics, and other medicines for infectious diseases. Congress is considering legislation that would cut those payments.



Q43. Do you support or oppose Congress making cuts in federal payments for vaccines, antibiotics, and other medicines?

Across party lines, voters strongly believe vaccines and antibiotics should be developed in the U.S. rather than abroad, including 57% who say this is very important.

Importance of Developing Vaccines & Antibiotics in the U.S.



Q48. How important do you think it is to develop vaccines and antibiotics for infectious diseases in the United States, rather than abroad?

Among voters nationally, six in ten report that they or someone close to them have contracted COVID and just under one third know someone who has died from it.



Q15. Do you personally know anyone who has died from COVID-19?

At the time of the survey, just under two-thirds of voters were already vaccinated for COVID-19, while 19% say they will not get vaccinated. Those who are vaccinated say most of their friends and family are as well.



Q24. About what proportion of your friends and family members already have gotten the COVID-19 vaccine as far as you know?



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