10 x '20: ID experts call for 10 new antibiotics by 2020
Infectious Diseases Society of America urges development of new antibiotics to address global drug resistance crisis

25.11.2009 - The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) has asked for a commitment from the Obama administration and the European Union to further the Society's mission to achieve the development of 10 new antibiotics within the next 10 years, known as the 10 x '20 Initiative. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified antimicrobial resistance as one of the three greatest threats to human health.

A new European Union report confirms there are just 15 antibacterial drugs in the pipeline with the potential to offer a benefit over existing drugs. Only five of these have progressed to later-stage clinical trials. A 2009 IDSA report, "Bad Bugs, No Drugs, No ESKAPE," arrives at similar findings. From past experience, we know that few of these drugs likely will make it to market. Meanwhile, the antibiotics now in use are in danger of becoming ineffective as bacteria learn to outsmart them. This leaves doctors with fewer and fewer options to treat life-threatening infections.

The lack of new antibiotics and the increase of drug-resistant bacteria was addressed during the recent U.S. and European Union summit, when President Barack Obama and Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, acting on behalf of the EU Presidency, created a Transatlantic Task Force to encourage global research and development of new antibiotics and address antimicrobial resistance.

"If we can initiate a global commitment to achieve this significant '10 x '20' goal, we'll take a giant step toward safeguarding the health and well-being of patients worldwide," said IDSA President Richard Whitley, MD, FIDSA. "We offer the unique expertise of IDSA's members to assist the research and policy communities and urge the U.S. and EU to establish a specialized 'antibacterial drug pipeline work group,' which would be responsible for indentifying strategies to motivate antibiotic drug development."