



### *10<sup>th</sup> European Health Award goes to European Antibiotic Awareness Day.*

Bad Hofgastein, 28 September 2016. The *European Antibiotic Awareness Day (EAAD)*, launched by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has been awarded the prestigious European Health Award (EHA) of €10,000 at the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2016. The initiative raises awareness about the threat to public health of antimicrobial resistance and the importance of prudent antibiotic use.

For the past decade, the International Forum Gastein (IFG) has presented the EHA in recognition of transnational projects that contribute to improving public health and healthcare systems in Europe. Helmut Brand, President of the IFG explains that “the award supports initiatives focused on the development of sustainable and innovative concepts, which successfully address current challenges such as disparities in health status and access to healthcare as well as improvements in medical care and treatment options.”

The EHA jury, made up of high-ranking European health experts, selected the EAAD for its impact and sustainability. The jury stated: “The project is dealing with probably the most important threat to public health today: antimicrobial resistance (AMR). The EAAD has contributed to placing this issue high on the national and international public and political agenda”. Jury Member, Dr. Peter Brosch, stated: “The Austrian Federal Ministry for Health and Women’s Affairs supports European wide measures for a targeted and moderate use of antibiotics.”

Dr. Pamela Rendi-Wagner, Head of Public Health Section, Austrian Federal Ministry of Health and Women’s Affairs (BMGF) added “Antibiotics are indispensable therapeutics for the treatment of infectious diseases. However, a prudent use of antibiotics is essential in order to prevent AMR. It is fundamental to raise awareness about rational use and hospital hygiene. Therefore, we see it as an important sign to award EAAD with the EHA”.

Alongside the BMGF, the EHA is kindly sponsored by the Forum of the Research-based Pharmaceutical Industry in Austria (FOPI). FOPI President Ingo Raimon added: “The exploration of penicillin and antibiotics are milestone in the development of therapies. Today, antibiotics are often prescribed too easily and AMR is increasing as a result. Research plays an important role in unlocking solutions for new mechanisms of action. The EAAD relies on prevention and health literacy and can thus contribute immensely to tackling the problem of AMR. For the use of antibiotics counts: As much as necessary, as little as possible!”

The goal of EAAD is to provide the participating countries with evidence-based tools, as well as technical and political support for their campaigns. In accepting the award, Dr. Andrea Ammon, Acting Director of the EAAD said: “This award recognises the value the European Antibiotic Awareness Day has in raising prudent antibiotic use and resistance as priorities for governments and health authorities across the European Union and beyond.”

This year’s European Health Forum Gastein will look at the challenges and solutions for our health systems brought about by unprecedented demographic changes and increased diversity. The winner of the EHA demonstrates one element of the work that is taking place to address such challenges in Europe.

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#### **Notes to the Editor:**

##### **About the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG)**

The European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) offers a unique platform made up of and for experts, policy makers, opinion leaders and interest groups from the health policy field. Over the last 18 years, the EHFG has developed into an institution which addresses and discusses current and future trends and developments in European health policy and thus plays a role in shaping European health policy. The EHFG is in receipt of funding from various bodies including the



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European Commission, the Austrian Ministry of Health and the Province of Salzburg. The EHFG is organised by the International Forum Gastein.