

GARPNet News

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On the horizon: World Antibiotic Awareness Week — 13-19 November

This year's World Antibiotic Awareness Week (WAAW) takes place November 13-19. Some GARP working groups have led WAAW activities in past years, starting in 2013. We have had expressions of interest from several more countries this year, and are planning some GARP-wide opportunities for all groups who would like to participate. In this newsletter, we review some of the past WAAW successes, tell you about some things we are planning and ask for your ideas for other GARP-wide activities and resources that can be shared.

Each year, WAAW presents an opportunity for GARP working groups to educate as well as to foster new connections with stakeholders through the publicity generated by the week's events. Increasing collaboration between WHO and other stakeholders around WAAW allows the messages generated by

GARP working groups to spread far and wide through social media, facilitating international dialogue and collaboration.

Collaboration is a key feature of WAAW. It is important that GARP groups collaborate with government, most of all, but also with other stakeholders and partners. In the past, GARP working groups have received sponsorship for specific WAAW activities from Ministries, pharmaceutical companies, NGOs like ReAct and the Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network (EPN), and more. We strongly suggest seeking out additional means of supporting WAAW activities this year.

GARP Country WAAW Activities

Kenya

In Kenya, the GARP working group has collaborated with the Ministry of Health, the Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network, the Infection Prevention Network-Kenya, ReAct, schools of public health, medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary schools, student champions, pharmaceutical companies, and hospitals on awareness week activities. Representatives from these organizations have given lectures, presented at meetings and workshops, and worked with students to share educational materials with patients, health workers, and farmers over the course of the week.



Lectures at the Kenya Medical Training College, Nairobi



Marching to raise awareness

Nepal

In Nepal, the GARP working group has partnered with the World Health Organization, the National Health Education Information and Communication Center, and Ministry of Health and Population to design educational materials. They have disseminated these and other tools through print media and awareness-raising corners in hospitals, markets, universities and schools. The working group has also organized marches and cycle rallies through the streets to raise the visibility of the issue. Competitions—through essays and posters—are another staple of the annual Nepal WAAW.



Community AMR information session at an education stall

History of World Antibiotic Awareness Week

WAAW has gained momentum each year since the first one in 2015, promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other stakeholders. A similar event was first celebrated in 2008 in Europe as European Antibiotic Awareness Day (expanded in later years to a week) and in 2010 in the United States, led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as “Get Smart About Antibiotics Week.”

Typical GARP WAAW activities

- Cycle rallies and marches
- Speeches given at meetings/conferences/workshops arranged over the week
- Lectures given to medical and veterinary students and at hospitals
- Distribution of educational materials at schools, farms, or hospitals
- Essay contests
- Poster contests
- Educational graphics in national newspapers
- Op-eds in national newspapers
- Patient education corners in hospitals
- Consumer education corners in shops
- Launch/dissemination of high profile AMR articles or publications

Tools and shareable content

WHO has campaign materials, including posters, infographics, videos, radio spots and more available on their website (<http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-antibiotic-awareness-week/en/>). Visual promotion tools and educational materials are also available from the U.S. CDC online (<https://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/week/>).

Exclusive GARP WAAW 2017 Premier: *A Staph's Diary*

Based on the essay that took first place in GARP-Nepal's 2015 WAAW essay contest, GARP-Nepal has partnered with local Nepali animation firm ESPACE Studio to create a short animated film that will premier at WAAW 2017. The film features a *Staphylococcus aureus* bacterium as the main character confronting his enemy: antibiotics.

This five-minute short will be available for all GARP working groups to release during WAAW. It can be played at events and lectures, shared online, or screened before main features in movie theaters. The movie is especially popular with children in our test audiences and could also be shared in schools.

We will provide a link to the video (with voiceovers available in Bengali, Lao, Nepali, Portuguese, Swahili and Vietnamese), social media images from the video with educational information, and templates to create t-shirts to share at your local events.

Although the full video is not yet publicly available, the script is printed below.



Mr. Staph aureus

A Staph's Diary

By Pranjal Rokaya

The video script has been adapted from the original winning essay text, which is available at: http://www.cddep.org/blog/posts/day_life_staphylococcus_aureus_and_other_stories_winning_essays_nepal#sthash.rjsX8aof.dpuf

Good morning, my name is *Staphylococcus aureus*, but you can call me Staph. I'm a bacterium that is currently living on your skin, in your nose, in your genitalia, in your mouth and even in the hearts of some of you. You might hate me, call me ugly names like "germ" and "bug," but remember, I still love you.

You provide me with food, shelter, a place to regenerate myself, and even a place to excrete my waste products. I love you, human beings.

There are 7 billion humans, and for every human being there are trillions of us bacteria. But you can't see us - at least not with your naked eye. You humans are very arrogant. You think you control the world with your science and technology. But do you really think you're the master? You've been in this world for only let's say about 200,000 years: that's a blip in the timeline of the universe. We've been around for billions of years: survived harsh ice ages, meteor strikes. We saw the rise and fall of dinosaurs. We saw oceans fade and mountains rise. You know who will survive if there's a nuclear holocaust? That's right, us.

We're not bad beings. Mostly we like to live peacefully in your body. We just take some nutrients to feed ourselves and our colonies just like you do. OK, sometimes we get carried away and migrate deeper into your bodies, where the pickings are better. And after we finish our feeding frenzy, we secrete waste into your body, which sadly makes you very hot. You even try to throw us out of your body with repeated coughing, urination and diarrhea. Usually you recover and it's a win-win for you and us. But sometimes it's lose-lose: you die from our infection and we lose our home, although you provide lots of good eating for other bacteria even when you're dead.

All in all, things were going pretty well for us, until this poison, this crazy evil thing called antibiotics, came along. Ah! Let's talk about antibiotics. One day, my friend had a wonderful opportunity to explore the bloodstream of the man she was living in during a surgery to remove his appendix. She was enjoying all the proteins when suddenly this penicillin came and started destroying her cell wall. Needless to say, she did not survive as we have only one cell. As if penicillin wasn't enough, you humans started producing more villains like cephalosporins, aminoglycosides and fluoroquinolones. For more than 50 years, we suffered serious calamities at the hands of these antibiotics. Initially, they would just destroy our cell walls. Later, they started tearing our DNA apart, destroying our proteins and shredding our nuclei.

You almost defeated us. But then you humans grew more arrogant and less thoughtful. In your vicious killing spree, you forgot that we can fight back. You started bombarding us with the same antibiotics again and again. Even when it wasn't us bacteria, but tiny viruses tickling your nose and making you sneeze, you used penicillin to fight them. Ha! Are you kidding me? Those tiny viruses

“We’ve been around for billions of years: survived harsh ice ages, meteor strikes. We saw the rise and fall of dinosaurs. We saw oceans fade and mountains rise.”

don't even have a cell wall. Because of your injudicious use, we found out how your antibiotics work. We started producing beta-lactamase—bye, bye penicillin! We developed mechanisms to throw your drugs out of our cells. We even found ways to inactivate your poisons.

Slowly but surely, we're becoming resistant and we love it. Today, most of your antibiotics still work. But there will be a day when none of your poisons will harm us. Nothing will destroy our colonies. Imagine a world without antibiotics. That's our fairy-tale ending: a world where bacteria can live happily ever after.

Country Updates

Bangladesh

GARP-Bangladesh has gotten a jump-start on their WAAW activities. At the request of the Directorate General of Drug Administration, the working group developed an educational poster to be hung in pharmacies across Bangladesh. More than 20,000 copies of the poster have already been produced, and the Directorate was so pleased with the outcome that they have agreed to print

and distribute an additional 100,000 copies. GARP-Bangladesh is now working to create a similar poster guiding antibiotic use in animals.

The pharmacy poster reads, “Antibiotic sales are prohibited without a prescription. Unnecessary, inappropriate and incomplete use of antibiotics results in the development of antibiotic resistance, posing a risk to us and our future generations. Antibiotics are not effective against viral fevers, coughs, colds or diarrhea. To make sure that antibiotics are still effective for the generations to come, follow these simple instructions:

1. Antibiotics can only be dispensed according to a prescription from a



GARP-Bangladesh educational poster, hung in pharmacies across Bangladesh

registered physician (in some special cases national guidelines allow government trained health workers to prescribe antibiotics)

2. Take antibiotics for the correct duration and at the correct dosage, as instructed
3. Complete the full course of the antibiotic even if you feel better before finishing.”



The poster on display in front of a case of antibiotics for sale in a local shop

Nepal

Awareness activities are also under way in Nepal, where the working group is partnering with the National Health Education, Information and Communication Centre to develop a television program and documentary on AMR. The working group is also supporting the development of curricula and training materials for veterinarians, medical students and pharmacists in cooperation with the national veterinary and medical councils and the Department of Drug Administration (DDA), respectively. A stewardship program is starting up at the tertiary care hospital Chitwan Medical College, led by the DDA.

Vietnam

GARP-Vietnam collaborates with the Newton Project and Fleming Fund to support the Vietnam NAP, with a focus on surveillance activities. A national reference lab and database are currently being established and a microbiology training of trainers is scheduled for August 2017. A quality standards program is being developed to support the surveillance system. In addition, the first phase of the Abacus study looking at community antibiotic access and use in six countries has been completed.

Join the GARP campaign

Please send us any WAAW resources to share as well as your ideas for other activities that could be launched across the GARP network for WAAW 2017. Get in touch with Molly Miller-Petrie, millerpetrie@cddep.org.

GARP Network Contact Information

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