



FOX News Statement of Position: Antimicrobial Resistance

Created by founders Rupert Murdoch and Roger Ailes in 1996 to 17 million cable subscribers, FOX News has risen to the position of one of the most influential news networks in the American and global media.¹ Today, FOX News subsidiaries can be found on all forms of media—television, radio, Internet, etc. FOX News aims to provide “Fair & Balanced” coverage to our viewers on all issues, including that of antimicrobial resistance.

FOX News’ reporting of antimicrobial resistance and related topics stretches back to the first introduction of concerns on these topics in the public space. In 2005, we reported on the unnecessary prescriptions of antibiotics for relatively benign illnesses such as sore throats. In our coverage, we obtained information from the Office of Antimicrobial Resistance at the CDC, with which we have consulted since then.² Increased coverage has followed in the years since then, especially due to the rising urgency of the matter of “superbugs.” Since 2013, we have published 30 articles pertaining to the rising threat of bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

Demographically, FOX News viewers are a median age of 68, and a majority of loyal viewers identify as conservative.³ While the personal views of our viewers play no part in our goal of creating truthful and balanced content, AMR is not a particularly divisive issue in the political space. In the United States, AMR has recently come to national attention, as cases have begun sprouting up around the country. Fighting AMR is a bipartisan responsibility, and one that has already been embraced by Congress. In 2012, a bipartisan group of legislators led by Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-Georgia) and Rep. Gene Green (D-Texas) passed the Generating Antibiotic Incentives Now (GAIN) Act.⁴ The urgency of addressing AMR by the global public cannot be stressed enough.

To that end, FOX News is committed to doing its part in communicating truthful information to the public. In May 2016, we aired a report on the first cases of antibiotic resistant infections appearing in the United States.⁵ Since then, we have continued coverage of the issue of AMR as it has become more widespread in the United States. We believe it is our duty as a responsible news organization to accurately convey the scope of the issue and the recommendations of public health officials.

Regarding the convening of this assembly of the American Mock World Health Organization, we aim to produce a story to accurately portray what our global leadership in the World Health Organization is doing to address this issue. Our viewers require assurance that their leaders are taking necessary actions to reverse the trend of rising AMR. We will be asking tough questions

¹http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_product=MWSB&p_theme=mwsb&p_action=search&p_maxdocs=200&p_topdoc=1&p_text_direct0=0EB8296FA53CD CD2&p_field_direct-0=document_id&p_perpage=10&p_sort=YMD_date:D&s_trackval=GooglePM

² <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2005/11/09/antibiotics-overprescribed-for-children-with-sore-throats.html>

³ <http://nymag.com/news/frank-rich/fox-news-2014-2/#print>

⁴ http://www.rollcall.com/news/fighting_antibiotic_resistant_bacteria_is_a_bipartisan_cause-227813-1.html

⁵ <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2016/05/27/deadly-superbug-arrives-in-us-report-says.html>

of the ambassadors present at the conference in order to ensure that bureaucratic inefficiency does not affect the health and wellbeing of the public. We have outlined our particular questions of interest on the subthemes of the conference:

I. Economic Feasibility

While still a relatively low-cost issue, AMR is likely to grow into a health epidemic that will severely affect global health systems financially. In the United States especially, much of the financial burden will eventually be placed on taxpayers. Our viewers want to know: how do states plan on addressing the inevitable financial burdens of AMR? How are private and public sector investors both addressing this issue? What can taxpayers expect in the coming years?

II. Culturally Sensitive Education

In many countries, including the United States, health literacy is at an inadequate level. Moving forward, governments must partner with media outlets to increase health literacy. What plans are nations proposing to involve the media in increasing understanding of medical issues like AMR?

III. Human Resources for Health

This subtheme is only tangentially relevant to FOX News' goals at this conference, but we would still like to understand the plans delegations are proposing.

IV. Establishing Stewardship and Building Surveillance

While surveillance will be important for functional early warning systems of AMR, many of FOX News' viewers are skeptical of government surveillance of their daily activities. How do delegates plan to make sure surveillance programs do not infringe on personal freedoms? How can personal freedoms be kept secure while new programs are put into place?

V. Promoting Innovation and Alternatives

Many of FOX News' viewers are receptive to the idea of increased innovation and success if markets are further opened up. How will programs delegates propose encourage private sector growth in pharmaceutical R&D? To address AMR, governments must work with private research and development companies. This would also serve as a means of alleviating financial pressures on tax-funded government research bodies. We want to know how the private sector will play a role in increased research into innovations in the field of AMR.

FOX News has a vested interest in the outcomes of this conference, not only for the stories we will be airing in the upcoming weeks, but for the health and wellbeing of our audience. It is our hope and sincere wish that the delegates at the AMWHO 2016 conference are able to develop cohesive, innovative, and efficient resolutions to the issue of antimicrobial resistance. We look forward to participating in the conference and seeking answers from the leaders to whom our viewers have, quite literally, entrusted their lives.