



**Testimony of Allan Coukell,
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Before the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology
July 11, 2014**

Thank you for the opportunity present comments. My name is Allan Coukell and I direct drug and medical device programs for The Pew Charitable Trusts, including our work to address the growing threat of antibiotic resistance. I commend this Council and the Administration for taking on this issue. Protecting the public from drug-resistant pathogens is an immediate and pressing need. Progress requires both leadership and cooperation from federal agencies, health professionals, the private sector and members of the public.

As the CDC identified in its 2013 report, there are four pillars to an effective strategy to address this threat: preventing infections; improved surveillance; appropriate use of antibiotics in people and animals; and development of new drugs. You have the opportunity to recommend a comprehensive national strategy to address all four areas.

Pew's efforts to date have focused on the urgent need for new antibiotics and the widespread inappropriate use of antibiotics in animal agriculture. Congress passed the GAIN Act in 2012 to address some of the economic challenges facing drug developers. It is now considering legislation to create a new approval pathway for antibiotics for use in limited populations of patients with serious or life-threatening infections and few, or no, other treatment options. Congress should move quickly to give FDA this important authority.

In parallel, the Administration should facilitate antibiotic discovery by addressing major scientific barriers to drug discovery. There is growing recognition nationally and internationally that we need better coordination between industry and publicly-funded science to priorities and work toward solutions.

As a nation, we must also do a better job of managing the drugs we have. We need to collect better data on antibiotic use both in both agriculture and humans. The current Administration has made progress toward phasing out the use of antibiotics for growth promotion on industrial farms. PCAST should recommend additional steps to curb other inappropriate non-therapeutic uses, and to ensure appropriate oversight by veterinarians. We must similarly address over-use of antibiotics in human healthcare settings.

I thank you again for your leadership. Pew looks forward to working with you and the Administration to ensure that implementation of your recommendations is as strong as it can be to protect public health.

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