



May 15, 2009

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President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We are writing on behalf of the global Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics (APUA) to express our strong support for the President's call to increase foreign aid dollars dedicated to control of acute bacterial diseases. While millions of U.S. dollars have been invested in laboratories and treatments for HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria, resource poor countries have little funding and capacity to detect and diagnose the more common acute bacterial infections such as pneumonia which are the leading causes of death in children under 5 in resource poor countries.

The generous PEPFAR funding for HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria programs has produced significant results and saved many lives. By increasing allocation of funding for diagnosis and treatment of respiratory and diarrheal diseases, we have the opportunity to readily avoid millions of preventable deaths. The November 2008 JAMA article by Dr. Emmanuel, et al, supports this case.

We suggest continuing generous PEPFAR funding while investing more to improving the treatment of bacterial infections. Increasing laboratory capacity to diagnose bacterial diseases and to determine which antibiotics are effective would result in more targeted and effective treatment. Doctors in developing countries are now forced to resort to unguided empirical treatment of bacterial infections. This 'blind therapy' for bacterial disease results in treatment failures and over use of antibiotics and anti-malarials as well as in increases in antimicrobial resistance.

APUA is working to document these issues further with funding from the Gates Foundation in Zambia and Uganda. We would be to happy work with you and others in the administration to ensure appropriate allocations through USAID and other agencies to address this public health funding deficit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kathleen T. Young
Executive Director

Stuart B. Levy, MD
President

Attachment: JAMA article

cc: Susan Foster PhD, APUA; Thomas O'Brien MD, APUA; Anibal Sosa MD, APUA; Ezekiel Emmanuel MD, NIH; Kathleen Sebelius, HHS; Colleen Denny, NIH;