



## Global Healthcare Concern

### **Extracts from UN Speech by Dr Margaret Chan, Director - General of the World Health Organization**

Keynote address at the conference on Combating antimicrobial resistance: Denmark, 14 March 2012

“The antimicrobial threat is easy to describe. It has an irrefutable logic.”

“Antimicrobial resistance is on the rise in Europe, and elsewhere in the world. We are losing our first-line antimicrobials. Replacement treatments are more costly, more toxic, need much longer durations of treatment, and may require treatment in intensive care units.”

“For patients infected with some drug-resistant pathogens, mortality has been shown to increase by around 50%. Let me give an example of what this means for a disease of global significance. If current trends continue unabated, the future is easy to predict.”

“Things as common as strep throat or a child’s scratched knee could once again kill. Some more sophisticated interventions, like hip replacements, organ transplants, cancer chemotherapy, and care of pre term infants, would become far more difficult, or even too dangerous to undertake.”

“Hospitals have become hotbeds for highly-resistant pathogens, like MRSA, ESBL, and CPE, increasing the risk that hospitalization kills instead of cures. These are end-of-the-road pathogens that are resistant to last-line antimicrobials.”

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The World Health Organization ranks nosocomial or hospital acquired infections [HAI's] as the third most significant threat to the human race.

The USA Center for Disease Control Research have identified that 1,700,000 people contracted hospital acquired (HIA) infections annually in the USA.

This results in 145,000 recorded deaths annually, 97,000 of these being healthy people, who entered hospital for a relatively minor surgical procedure.

Margaret Chan (WHO Director) recently stated "This is a global threat situation which no medical system can sustain, humanely or financially. We must explore new approaches."

The cost of HAI interventions in the US now exceeds USD 34 billion annually, and growing.