

## PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

### **First European antimicrobial resistance patient group launched to mark World Antimicrobial Awareness Week**

Brussels, Wednesday 18 November 2020 – Today Health First Europe launches the first European patients` group on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) which aims to raise awareness about antimicrobial resistance and to help reduce antibiotic misuse in Europe

Several national patient associations from across Europe including Fondazione The Bridge (Italy), Save Liver Association for Patients – SLAP (Macedonia), Malta Health Network, Pelvic Pain Support Network (EU), Foro Español de Pacientes (Spain), The Patients Association (UK), National Association for Patient Participation (UK), International Alliance Of Patients' Organizations (IAPO), GILS – Lotta Alla Sclerodermia (Italy), UNIAMO Federazione Italiana Malattie Rare (Italy), Associazione Respiriamo Insieme (Italy) and RePE (Rete Pazienti Esperti) have decided to join hands in order to tackle the issue of growing antimicrobial resistance and healthcare associated infections ( HAI)which represents a significant threat to our health and lives.

Antimicrobial resistance is one of the most serious threats to public health globally. It is responsible for approximately 33,000 deaths per year in the EU alone and is estimated to cost the EU €1.5 billion annually in healthcare costs and productivity losses. Moreover, 3.5 million patients are affected by HAIs in Europe each year. This is devastating for patients and caregivers and a financial burden to the healthcare system.

We decided to form the AMR Patient Group to address the gap in awareness at the patient-level about the danger of antibiotic misuse and their shared responsibility for infection prevention. *'Together we will work to raise patient awareness about AMR and HAIs, to help reduce antibiotic misuse in Europe, to develop a consistent patient voice across Europe advocating for national policies to tackle AMR and HAIs and to broaden the AMR debate to include infection prevention and control measures'* said Executive Director of Health First Europe, Melina Raso.

Today represents the first step of a longer journey. As a new group, we are still open and looking for new members to join us. We invite any interested patient groups to get in touch by emailing [info@healthfirsteurope.org](mailto:info@healthfirsteurope.org) with 'AMR Patient Group' in the subject line. We believe that responsible use of antibiotics can help stop resistant bacteria from developing and help to keep antibiotics effective for the use of future generations. Keeping antibiotics effective is everyone's responsibility.

For more information on the Health First Europe AMR Patient Group visit: [www.healthfirsteurope.eu/topic/amr-patient-group](http://www.healthfirsteurope.eu/topic/amr-patient-group).

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**Notes to editors:**

- Executive Director of Health First Europe, Méline Raso, is available for interview upon request.
- Follow Health First Europe on LinkedIn [here](#).
- Follow Health First Europe on Twitter [here](#).

### **About Health First Europe**

Health First Europe is a non-profit, non-commercial alliance of patients, healthcare workers, academics, healthcare experts and the medical technology industry. It aims to transform healthcare in Europe through innovative solutions. The alliance advocates for every European citizen to benefit from the best medical treatments available, and works to ensure that equitable access to modern, innovative and reliable healthcare is seen as a vital investment in the future of Europe. The alliance was founded in 2004 by its committed co-patrons and members who aspire to build truly patient-centred healthcare systems in Europe.