UK-JAPAN COLLABORATION ON ANTIMICROBIAL R&D

SUMMARY OF ACHIVEMENTS AND EMERGING IMPACT

AUGUST 2026

The UK–Japan collaboration, convened by LEAD and anchored in a partnership between the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Japan Institute for Health Security (JIHS), is a sustained initiative to strengthen antimicrobial research and development (R&D) and its wider enabling ecosystem.

Through fellowships, joint analysis and structured engagement, the collaboration has developed a practical model that connects scientific, policy and implementation communities while building institutional relationships for long-term cooperation.

Key Achievements

1. Building a Connected Antimicrobial R&D Ecosystem

- Strengthened collaboration on antimicrobial discovery, diagnostics and translational research across institutions in the UK and Japan.
- Facilitated exchange on R&D bottlenecks, innovation pathways and policy frameworks, helping partners identify shared challenges and priorities.
- Brought scientific priorities and policy needs into closer dialogue, increasing the policy relevance of collaborative outputs.
- Helped build a more coordinated and internationally connected antimicrobial R&D community, with opportunities for shared approaches across partners.

2. Institutional Partnership: UKHSA–JIHS

- Established a trusted, sustained partnership between UKHSA and JIHS through fellowships and regular engagement, demonstrating how investment in people and relationships can support institutional collaboration.

- Created direct communication channels among researchers, policymakers and public health authorities.
- Enabled the relationship to progress from individual activities towards ongoing, programme-level engagement.
- Demonstrated wider health-security value: established relationships enabled rapid coordination and information exchange during a hantavirus incident, illustrating how institutional trust can support timely joint action. (See https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-the-hantavirus-cruise-ship-outbreak, entry dated 18 May)

3. Evidence Generation and Policy Uptake

- Produced analytical reports on the UK antimicrobial R&D system, including its strengths, gaps and opportunities.
  - UK antimicrobial R&D landscape brief
  - LEAD's UK analysis contributed to parliamentary discussion on antimicrobial innovation and to the evidence base informing recommendations by the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group on Antimicrobial Resistance. New AMR APPG Report Sets Out Plan to Rebuild the UK's Leadership in Antimicrobial Discovery - APPG AMR
- Produced a comprehensive assessment of Japan's antimicrobial R&D landscape, addressing an important evidence gap and supporting stakeholder engagement.
  - Japan antimicrobial R&D landscape report
  - Used by researchers, policymakers and other stakeholders as a reference for understanding Japan's antimicrobial R&D landscape.
- Together, the reports provided clear, policy-relevant recommendations to support strategic decision-making.

4. Multi-Stakeholder Engagement and Global Visibility

- Convened researchers, policymakers, funders and public health agencies through targeted meetings and workshops, creating opportunities for cross-sector learning, partnership development and collaboration across the antimicrobial R&D ecosystem.
  - Tokyo conference report
  - Tokyo conference video: New pathways for antimicrobial innovation
- Created space for direct cross-sector dialogue, strengthening alignment and shared understanding.

    - Scientists from Japan and the UK join forces to fight drug resistances that affect the efficacy of antibiotics | NHK WORLD-JAPAN News
- Presented findings and discussions at an official World Health Assembly side event, raising the collaboration's international profile and enabling engagement with policymakers and stakeholders from multiple countries.
    - World Health Assembly side-event report

A Transferable Model for Sustained International Collaboration

This collaboration demonstrates how:

- **Institutional partnerships** anchored in fellowships and regular engagement can move beyond ad hoc cooperation.
- **Shared evidence and dialogue platforms** can align diverse stakeholders around common priorities.
- **Trusted agency relationships** can strengthen routine collaboration and improve responsiveness when urgent issues arise.
- A **flexible, partnership-based model** can be adapted across contexts while retaining a common foundation.

Key Message

The UK–Japan experience shows that effective international collaboration on antimicrobial R&D depends on trusted relationships, shared evidence and sustained dialogue between science and policy, alongside strong research outputs.

Combining fellowships, analysis, stakeholder engagement and institutional partnership has created a platform for new opportunities, stronger capabilities and sustained cooperation on antimicrobial innovation.