

Pivotal local research on antibiotic-resistant infections in hospitals begins in earnest

The Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP), together with the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) has launched a study in South Africa that will give valuable insights into the increasing rate of antibiotic-resistant infections in hospitals.



Source: [Pexels](#)

The observational study will collect and analyse data in 150 patients being treated for infections caused by carbapenem-resistant organisms across five hospitals in South Africa.

The study gets underway this month at Livingstone Hospital in Gqeberha, followed by Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town, Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital in Soweto, King Edward VIII Hospital in Durban and Tygerberg Hospital in Cape Town.

“We are seeing rising rates of resistance to carbapenems – the class of antibiotics most commonly used to treat hospital-acquired multidrug-resistant bacterial infections,” said François Franceschi, GARDP’s project lead for serious bacterial infections.

“This is a global health emergency that requires urgent action. We hope this study will give us some of the answers we need to provide better treatments for people who develop these antibiotic-resistant infections in the future.”

The study will look at the epidemiology as well as the treatments administered to both adults and children with severe infections caused by carbapenem-resistant Enterobacterales and/or *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (Crep). It will also collect data on the clinical outcomes for patients with confirmed Crep infections in the five hospital sites.

"There is very limited data from African countries on the demographics, risk factors and clinical outcomes of hospital patients affected by carbapenem-resistant infections.

"The serious bacterial infections – SBI-Crep study will provide fundamental information that could ultimately be used to improve treatments, and work towards reducing deaths and illness associated with these infections.

Building a bank of data

"Through a central microbiology laboratory, the study will also provide much-needed data on the molecular epidemiology of the bacterial isolates responsible for Crep infections," said Adrian Brink, clinical investigator for the study at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town.

The study will also look into the capabilities of the hospitals involved in the study to carry out clinical trials with an ultimate goal of building capacity in the region.



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This type of support for the sites could pave the way for future interventional trials, which will generate high quality data to assess the effectiveness of novel therapeutics to fight carbapenem-resistant infections.

The study will continue into 2023 in South Africa and will be extended to six hospital sites in India in early 2023.

A recent study published in *The Lancet* showed that nearly 1.3 million people – and potentially millions more – died as a direct cause of antibiotic-resistant infections in 2019.

The study reported that sub-Saharan Africa had the highest death rate from antibiotic-resistant infections in the world.

Hospital-acquired infections are among the deadliest of these resistant infections, which urgently require new and improved treatments.

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