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# Exploring perceptions of bacteriophage use in the UK

## Response 2: Department of Health & Social Care

Department of Health & Social Care

*From the Ministerial Correspondence and Public Enquiries Unit*

*39 Victoria Street*
*London*
*SW1H 0EU*

26 September 2025

Dear Irene, Daisy and Lucky,

Thank you for your correspondence of 30 July to the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology about phage therapy. Your email has been forwarded to the Department of Health and Social Care. I have been asked to reply, and I apologise for the delay in doing so.

I appreciate your concerns.

As noted in the roundtable document, the Government, in its March 2024 response to the Science, Innovation and Technology Committee's report on bacteriophages recognised the challenge of requiring UK-produced phages to meet Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) standards, which is essential for clinical use. To address this, it committed to exploring the case for a dedicated GMP facility to support innovators, working with funders and research organisations to strengthen UK manufacturing capacity and improve patient access.

The Department works with the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) and UK Research and Innovation to monitor research and clinical trials for antimicrobials and alternative therapies. It has also engaged with Innovate UK's Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN) Phage Innovation Network and would welcome further discussion in this forum. Where opportunities are identified, NIHR can encourage and support funding applications to build the necessary evidence base.

NICE and NHS England are considering whether the proposed antimicrobial subscription model could apply to phage therapies. If so, eligibility and award criteria would be updated to allow assessment of their effectiveness. Consistent with the 2024 voluntary scheme for branded medicines pricing, access and growth, NICE remains committed to reviewing all new active substances and significant indications. NICE will also begin engagement with phage stakeholders and notes the committee's suggestion that the KTN Phage Innovation Network may be an appropriate forum for this dialogue. The UK Health Security Agency, which chairs the Network's scientific advisory board, supports its work to develop phage-based products and strengthen links with researchers.

On 4 June, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) published guidance on the Regulatory considerations for therapeutic use of bacteriophages in the UK. The MHRA regulates medicines under the Human Medicines Regulations 2012 (as amended), ensuring compliance with statutory requirements on manufacture, distribution, sale, labelling, advertising and promotion. The new guidance sets out the regulatory framework for the therapeutic use of bacteriophages in humans, both as licensed and unlicensed medicinal products.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Correspondence Officer

**Ministerial Correspondence and Public Enquiries**
**Department of Health and Social Care**