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Portuguese researchers granted €2.5m to work on antibiotic resistance

Over 80 researchers from three Portuguese institutes have received funding of €2.5 million to work together over the next three years on prevention and control of infectious diseases and antibiotic resistance in Lisbon hospitals.

The project is called ONEIDA and is intended to "create an innovative network including researchers and hospi-

tals for the prevention and control of infectious diseases and antibiotic resistance", involving over 80 researchers.

The researchers, from the Institute of Chemical and Biological Technology (ITQB NOVA), the Institute of Molecular Medicine (IMM)

and the Gulbenkian Science Institute (IGC), will work on "responding, in real time, to the specific needs of Lisbon hospitals in terms

of infectious diseases", according to a statement from the three institutes.

In a second phase, the project is expected to be extended to the rest of the country. It is to be coordinated by Raquel Sá-Leão and Mónica Serrano (ITQB NOVA MostMicro), and is intended to get "a fast response to questions about the pathogens that infect the patients arriving at the hospitals, achieving a careful biological characterisation of each strain in genetic and proteins".

"Hospitals will be able to respond more quickly to each case, reducing morbidity and preventing inappropriate use of antibiotics. At the same time the scientific community can make a more rigorous and detailed study about the pathogens that infect people and animals in Portugal", the statement said.

The project is funded by

Portugal 2020, a programme that groups together five European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs).

In related news a so-called super-bacteria has infected ten patients at the Conde Ferreira Hospital in Porto.

It is thought to be the same ultra-resistant bacteria that caused six deaths in Vila Nova de Gaia and Coimbra at the start of this year.

In February, Coimbra's university hospital confirmed three people died in January at the facility from the multi-resistant bacteria "klebsiella pneumoniae". A total of 21 patients were either infected or colonised by the bacteria.

Jornal de Notícias had earlier reported that the cases in Coimbra were associated with an outbreak in Gaia, near Porto, in which a further three people died.



An ultra-resistant bacteria which was detected at Coimbra University Hospital (pictured) earlier this year has this week been tracked at a Porto hospital. (Photo: Supplied)