BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS
FIGHTING ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

PROBLEM:
The growth of antimicrobial resistance is a worldwide public health issue that increases mortality, sickness and the cost of care.

RESULT:
The doctors who received the letters reduced antibiotic prescriptions by 3.3% compared to those who were not sent the letter. This reduction amounted to 73,406 fewer doses of antibiotics across 790 practices.

BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHT:
Social norms can be used to encourage individual doctors to prescribe fewer antibiotics, and cause a change in institutional behaviour of health providers.

SOLUTION:
In the United Kingdom, the top 20% of prescribing doctors were targeted through randomised control trials. One set received a leaflet on reducing antibiotics, others were informed that their antibiotics prescription rate exceeded 80% of doctors in their area. The control group received no communication.

OECD work on Behavioural Insights: oe.cd/Nudge
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