

Lori Williams
Baylor College of Medicine
713-798-4710
loriw@bcm.edu

Rebecca Taylor
Bristol-Myers Squibb
609-252-4476
rebecca.taylor@bms.com

Construction starts on children's AIDS center in Kenya

HOUSTON -- (Oct. 29, 2007) -- Groundbreaking ceremonies were held today in Kisumu, Kenya, for a comprehensive center to provide pediatric HIV/AIDS care – the latest effort by the Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative and the Bristol-Myers Squibb *SECURE THE FUTURE*[®] program.

Built in partnership with the government of the Republic of Kenya, the Baylor College of Medicine – Texas Children's Hospital - Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Clinical Center of Excellence - Kenya will provide state-of-the art care to thousands of children and their families. The center is part of the New Nyanza Provincial General Hospital.

"The center, when completed, will be a milestone for the Kenyan children and will signify a step forward in increasing access to care for HIV-infected children," said Dr. James W. Nyikal, director of medical services for the Kenya Ministry of Health.

BIPAI already has a team on the ground in Kenya, providing care while the new center is under construction.

"The location of the new center, in an area that has the highest pediatric HIV prevalence rate in the country, will help us meet the needs of thousands of children," said Dr. Mark Kline, president of BIPAI, professor of pediatrics at BCM, and chief of retrovirology at Texas Children's. "Working with the Ministry of Health and our partner institutions, this center soon will be a reality for the children of Kenya."

The new center, funded by the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation's *SECURE THE FUTURE* program, will be staffed jointly by BCM, Texas Children's and health care professionals from Kenya. In addition to caring for children, the center will be used for training local health care professionals. BIPAI also will support four satellite centers at rural government hospital districts in the region.

"With this newest addition to our network of children's clinics, *SECURE THE FUTURE*, Baylor and Texas Children's Hospital, along with the government of Kenya, are ensuring that first-rate medical care can be delivered to children in those regions of Africa with the highest incidence of HIV," said John Damonti, president of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. "This clinic and the planned creation of rural satellite locations will bring care that much closer to children and their homes."

The center will also provide social services including educating the community on preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Up to 150,000 children in Kenya are infected with HIV and more than 34,000 new cases are reported each year resulting in 30,000 AIDS-related deaths. With proper care and treatment, rates of illness and death can be reduced dramatically, to 1 percent per year or less.

Upon completion of the Children's Clinical Center of Excellence in Kenya, it will be among a network of Baylor centers of excellence in Africa including Botswana, Uganda, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi, Burkina Faso and Libya.