

**Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation Announces Funding of more than \$1.17 Million to Bridge Gaps in Hepatitis C Awareness, Prevention and Care in China, India and Taiwan**

(PRINCETON, New Jersey, February 13, 2009) – The [Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation](#) today announced funding of more than \$1.17 million, focused on hepatitis C prevention and education and the mitigation of the disease in China, India, and Taiwan. The funding is part of *Delivering Hope*, an umbrella program for Bristol-Myers Squibb’s efforts in the areas of hepatitis awareness, prevention and care. Organizations receiving funding are:

- The Liver Disease Prevention and Treatment Research Foundation (Taiwan) will create a training program for patients and community-based health care providers in detection, care, and management of patients and provide access to treatment in remote areas.
- The Liver Foundation/West Bengal (India) will conduct a survey of the impact of liver disease and hepatitis C and utilize the findings to inform public health policy and foster prevention and awareness activities in at risk populations.
- The Hepatobiliary Division, Department of Internal Medicine, Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital (Taiwan) will initiate a comprehensive intervention program focusing on prevention, early diagnosis, and medical management.
- The National Liver Foundation (India) will focus on improvement of hepatitis C screening, including the addition of more sensitive tests, and will create education and awareness programs for local communities.
- The Shanghai Charity Foundation (China) will focus on improving education, screening rate and accuracy, and disease therapy.

“The programs these organizations propose exemplify our Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation mission of addressing health disparities in communities where the need is greatest,” said John Damonti, president, Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. “Through these programs, we anticipate significant improvement in our understanding of how to best address the hepatitis C health challenges in China, India, and Taiwan. We envision key learnings from these programs will be applied in other countries.”

In keeping with the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation’s commitment to sharing lessons learned, funding recipients will prepare a comprehensive final report at the completion of their

projects. These reports will be shared with the hepatitis C community to enhance the body of knowledge on hepatitis prevention, care, and support. Earlier this week, *Delivering Hope* organizations, experts and national policy makers from Asia, the United States, and Southern Africa initiated the reporting process by meeting for a *BMS Foundation Delivering Hope Learning and Sharing Workshop* to discuss community-based education and outreach interventions. At the two-day workshop, attendees shared best practices from their home countries and attendees learned new skills to apply in their home countries.

### **About Hepatitis C <sup>1</sup>**

Hepatitis C is a virus that infects the liver and is transmitted through direct contact with blood. An estimated 170 million people worldwide are infected with hepatitis C and, of these, 94.5 million people live in the Asia Pacific region. One to five percent of people with chronic infection will develop liver cancer. Although there is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C, it is a curable disease.

### **About Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation and Delivering Hope**

The mission of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation is to help reduce health disparities by strengthening community-based health care worker capacity, integrating medical care and community-based supportive services, and mobilizing communities in the fight against disease. The Foundation's work related to hepatitis in Asia represents a significant part of the Bristol-Myers Squibb *Delivering Hope: Awareness, Prevention and Care* program. Beyond hepatitis, the Foundation also focuses on HIV/AIDS in Africa through its *SECURE THE FUTURE*<sup>®</sup> program, cancer in Central and Eastern Europe and serious mental illness and Alzheimer's disease in the United States.

Since 2002, the Foundation has supported efforts in Asia, initially focusing on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B and promoting hepatitis B immunization in China. In 2006, the Foundation expanded those efforts to provide broader support for hepatitis B and C awareness, prevention and education as well as adoption and integration of hepatitis B and C interventions and health education in public health programs. Today, the Foundation's priority hepatitis B and C programs encompass capacity building for health care professionals and lay health workers, disease education and awareness, and sharing of best practices in the prevention of management of hepatitis B and C to inform public health policy.

### **About Bristol-Myers Squibb**

Bristol-Myers Squibb is a global biopharmaceutical company whose mission is to extend and enhance human life. For more information visit [www.bms.com](http://www.bms.com).

###

### Reference

1. World Health Organization Web site. Fact sheet N°164.  
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs164/en/>. Accessed February 6, 2009.