

March 26, 2007

BD and Direct Relief International Launch Volunteer Service Program to Improve Healthcare in Ghana

FRANKLIN LAKES, N.J., March 26 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- BD, a leading global medical technology company, and Direct Relief International, a humanitarian medical aid nonprofit organization, today announced a joint volunteer initiative to strengthen healthcare in two areas of Ghana. Working side-by-side for three weeks with clinic staff from Direct Relief partners at the Maranatha Maternity Clinic and Motoka Clinic, 12 BD employee volunteers from around the globe will help build local healthcare capacity in the region.

This is the third company-sponsored service trip BD employees have made to sub-Saharan Africa. In 2005 and 2006, BD employees volunteered at five clinics in Zambia to help strengthen the country's capacity to diagnose and treat infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Through training healthcare providers, constructing a new health facility, upgrading existing laboratory capabilities and incorporating clean water solutions at existing facilities, these volunteers in Ghana will bolster the clinics' ability to provide vitally needed services to their patients.

"This unique collaboration will strengthen health services for people in Ghana, where access to diagnostic and treatment services is scarce," said Direct Relief President and Chief Executive Officer Thomas Tighe. "BD has been a leader in sharing its healthcare products for humanitarian purposes, and we are honored that the company is sharing its most valuable resource -- its employees' tremendous talent -- toward the same end. These upgraded facilities will become major health resources for the entire region."

"The BD-Direct Relief collaboration in Ghana is a natural, given the histories and missions of the two organizations," said Edward J. Ludwig, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of BD. "It could be a model for future private-nonprofit partnerships in the healthcare field. Both organizations strive to help address unmet global health needs in some of the most remote and underserved places in the world."

The Maranatha Maternity Clinic serves approximately 250 patients per month, of whom approximately 40 percent are unable to pay for their medical treatment. The rural Motoka Clinic, established in 1996, is the only source of healthcare for nearly 100,000 people in its district. Services offered at the clinic are complemented by regular mobile clinics conducted in villages that are accessible only by boat.

BD and Direct Relief have worked together since 1996, helping people in developing countries and disaster-ravaged areas, supplying and delivering specifically requested medical supplies to communities in greatest need. BD and its associates are contributing money, products, talent and time to help people in Ghana treat disease and improve lives by raising health standards.

Direct Relief has assisted public and private healthcare facilities in Ghana since 1991 by supplying more than \$5.5 million (wholesale) of critically needed medicines, medical

supplies, nutritional products and medical equipment. Limited access to clinical and laboratory health services is a major constraint to battling disease in developing countries. The majority of the disease burden exists in non-urban locations (districts and rural villages), and access to health services in these locations is often poor to non-existent. Malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition and HIV/AIDS are primary health concerns in Ghana.

About BD

BD, a leading global medical technology company that manufactures and sells medical devices, instrument systems and reagents, is dedicated to improving people's health throughout the world. BD is focused on improving drug therapy, enhancing the quality and speed of diagnosing infectious diseases, and advancing research and discovery of new drugs and vaccines. The Company's capabilities are instrumental in combating many of the world's most pressing diseases. Founded in 1897 and headquartered in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, BD employs approximately 27,000 people in approximately 50 countries throughout the world. The Company serves healthcare institutions, life science researchers, clinical laboratories, industry and the general public. For more information, please visit www.bd.com.

About Direct Relief International

Founded in 1948, Direct Relief International is a Santa Barbara, California-based nonprofit organization focused on improving the quality of life by bringing critically needed medicines and supplies to local healthcare providers worldwide. In 2006, Direct Relief distributed over \$200 million in direct aid through medical material assistance and targeted cash grants to more than 300 healthcare facilities and organizations in 56 countries, serving 23.8 million people. Forbes recently recognized Direct Relief for the fifth consecutive year as one of only eight nonprofit organizations in the United States that is 100 percent efficient in fundraising.

SOURCE BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company)