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

FRANKLIN LAKES, N.J., March 27 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company) (NYSE: BDX), a leading global medical technology company, and Direct Relief International, a humanitarian medical aid nonprofit organization, today announced the second joint volunteer initiative to strengthen healthcare in Ghana. A team of 13 BD associates have volunteered to travel to Ghana for three weeks and work side-by-side with Direct Relief partners at three sites to improve the region's ability to provide basic healthcare services for its people.

"By continuing our collaboration, BD and Direct Relief are demonstrating the value of private-nonprofit partnerships in addressing unmet healthcare needs in the developing world," said Edward J. Ludwig, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of BD. "When two organizations with closely aligned missions partner and harness the talent of their associates to improve the lives of others, it is a powerful combination that benefits all involved."

Limited access to clinical and laboratory health services is a major constraint to battling disease in developing countries, and Ghana is no exception. Access to health services in rural locations is often poor to non-existent. Malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition and HIV/AIDS are primary health concerns in Ghana.

"Access to diagnostic testing and medical care in many parts of Ghana is scarce," said Direct Relief President and Chief Executive Officer Thomas Tighe. "Our partnership with BD and its associate volunteers is truly making a difference in the lives of thousands of Ghanaians by bringing much-needed healthcare services to this underserved region."

The BD associates will work with staff from Ghana's Bora Health Center, King's Medical Centre and Maranatha Maternity Clinic to build on their existing patient care services by:

- Bolstering all three clinics' laboratory diagnostic capabilities to help detect malaria-induced anemia (a major issue for pregnant mothers) and tuberculosis;
- Establishing a blood bank system at King's Medical Centre; the closest existing blood bank is a 45-minute drive;
- Holding training sessions for obstetric care, infection control and healthcare worker safety;
- Assisting with clinic administration procedures for record keeping and supply forecasting.

This is the fourth Company-sponsored volunteer service trip that BD associates have made to sub-Saharan Africa and the second with Direct Relief. In 2007, 12 BD volunteers spent three weeks working at the Maranatha Maternity and Motoka clinics in Ghana. BD associates also volunteered at five Zambian clinics in 2005 and 2006 to help strengthen the country's capacity to diagnose and treat infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Beyond the volunteer service trips, 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 contribute money, products, talent and time to help people throughout the world 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 value) of critically needed medicines, medical supplies, nutritional products and medical equipment.

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 28,000 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-based nonprofit organization focused on improving the quality of life by bringing critically needed medicines and supplies to local healthcare providers worldwide. Direct Relief is one of two charities ranked by Forbes that has received a perfect fundraising efficiency score for five consecutive years and is ranked by the Chronicle of Philanthropy as California's largest international nonprofit organization based on private support. For more information, please visit <http://www.DirectRelief.org>.

SOURCE BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company); Direct Relief International