BIPAI Center of Excellence to be established in Kenya

HOUSTON - (May 30, 2007) - The Baylor College of Medicine International Pediatric AIDS Initiative, Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston and the Kenya Ministry of Health have announced today an agreement to establish a pediatric HIV care and treatment center in Kisumu, Kenya.

The memorandum of agreement was signed today in Nairobi, Kenya to begin creation of the Baylor College of Medicine – Texas Children’s Hospital - Bristol-Myers Squibb Children’s Clinical Center of Excellence-Kenya.

“There is a tremendous need for treatment programs for HIV-positive children living in Kenya.” said Mark Kline, president of BIPAI, professor of pediatrics at BCM, and chief of retrovirology at Texas Children’s. “This Center will build on the foundation of excellence we have created in our programs throughout Africa.”

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.

“Children are the most vulnerable members of our society and are deserving of the very best medical care available,” said John Damonti, president, Bristol-Myers
Squibb Foundation. “The goal of the children’s clinic network is to bring state-of-the-art treatment to as many HIV-infected children and their families as possible.”

The two main objectives of the center are:

- To collaborate on treatment, research, service, education, and health professional training in the fight against HIV/AIDS and the improvement of the care and management of children and their families in Kenya.

- To foster the spirit of scientific, technical and medical cooperation between Kenya and the United States of America.

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 90 percent of these children will survive beyond their second birthday.

The center will be located in New Nyanza Provincial General Hospital in Kisumu, Kenya, which serves an area with the highest pediatric HIV prevalence rate in the country and is easily accessible to nearby areas. The new site will also be a needed resource for health care workers already providing pediatric HIV care in the region.

Upon completion of the Baylor College of Medicine 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.