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LEADERSHIP CHANGES AT SECURE THE FUTURE

Kenneth E Weg, vice-chairman of Bristol-Myers Squibb and the driving force behind Secure the Future, retired in February 2001.

Under his leadership, more than 50 projects have been approved with a total value of over \$46 million. "Big ideas" (priority areas of intervention) have been developed and include projects to address sexual violence against women in relation to HIV, mother-to-child transmission, as well as HIV and TB.

He was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate in May last year by Medunsa, the Medical University of Southern Africa, for his commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS in the region. The doctorate recognised his pivotal role in the inception of Secure the Future.

Mr Weg will continue to serve the program, working with the Secure the Future team. His previous responsibility for Secure the Future oversight will be transferred to John McGoldrick who is Executive Vice-President of Bristol-Myers Squibb. John comes with an impressive record of key responsibilities and accomplishments at Bristol-Myers Squibb. His leadership will inspire many more successes for Secure the Future.

We wish Ken everything of the best and thank him for his commitment to making Secure the Future a reality.



Kenneth E Weg

John L McGoldrick

Stellenbosch University Department of Community Dentistry receives US\$355 000 (R2,5 million) grant from Secure the Future

The Stellenbosch University Department of Community Dentistry has received a grant of US\$355,000 (R2,5 million) over five years to train oral healthcare personnel in the identification, diagnosis and management of oral manifestations of HIV/AIDS, from Secure the Future.

Project leader at Stellenbosch University Department of Community Dentistry, Dr Sudeshni Naidoo, said: "There is no doubt that oral healthcare personnel can make a significant contribution in the battle against the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

"With the relevant training, healthcare workers in Africa can be encouraged to identify, diagnose, collect data and explore appropriate management strategies. Oral HIV research, knowledge and management could then become widely available in the future."

Dr Ashraf Grimwood, Medical Director, Secure the Future stated: "More than 70% of people with HIV present with oral manifestations of the disease, yet healthcare workers often fail to diagnose and manage these opportunistic diseases appropriately. With relevant training early diagnosis can be easily made, and patients timeously referred.

"The grant will initially be used to train oral healthcare personnel, but will be expanded to include other categories of healthcare personnel at a later stage. Resource material, available to all healthcare workers, such as posters, pamphlets and brochures will be developed to facilitate this process."

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 Leadership changes at Secure the Future
- 1 Stellenbosch University Department of Community Dentistry receives R2,5 million

- 2 Bambisanani Project
- 3 Reducing mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS
- 3 Beaded pins create jobs and empower rural women
- 4 Botswana President launches first ever Southern African Paediatric Clinical Center of Excellence

Secure the Future Co-Funds Bambisanani Project

At a launch of the Bambisanani Project held recently in the community of Umzimkulu, South Africa, BMS Foundation Community Outreach and Education Fund, together with Gold Fields Community Trust and USAID through the EQUITY Project, announced its co-funding, in the form of a US\$283 000/R2,1 million grant, to the initiative. (Bambisanani is a Xhosa word meaning "Let's support each other".)

The Eastern Cape Region E area comprising the districts of Umzimkulu, Bizana and Lusikisiki, is one of the poorest rural areas in South Africa. The aim of the Bambisanani Project – started in July last year – is to assist these communities to respond to the emerging HIV/AIDS-related needs for care and support.

Phangisile Mtshali, Community Outreach and Education Director: Secure the Future said that it was hoped the funding would make a significant difference in the battle against the AIDS pandemic in the region.



Cooking up a storm... local women prepared all refreshments for the more than 1 500 people who attended the community function.

SECURE THE FUTURE HIV/AIDS GRANTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA EXCEED US\$46 MILLION (R345 MILLION)

**21 new grants totaling US\$3,1 million
(R23,25 million) announced**

Five Southern African countries have received 21 Secure the Future grants totaling more than US\$3,1 million (R23,25 million) to support medical research and community outreach and education projects aimed at combating HIV/AIDS. This brings the total Secure the Future commitment since inception in May 1999, to over US\$46 million (R345 million).

Since the inception of the program, seven grants have been co-funded by the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference/Catholic Medical Mission Board, which has contributed approximately US\$500 000 (R3,75 million).

For more information on these grants, see www.securethefuture.com

"The communities in Region E are desperate for assistance in the fight against poverty and HIV/AIDS particularly as the number of women who have tested HIV positive has jumped from 49% in the August – December 1997 period to 56% in October 1999, while there is only one doctor for 16 000 people.

"At the end of 1999, according to an antenatal survey conducted by the South African National Department of Health, Region E showed a 22% HIV prevalence, a marked increase from 1997's figure of 12,2%."

The Bambisanani Project consists of five elements, namely:

1. Community capacity building.
2. Home based care.
3. Support groups – a "drop-in centre".
4. Income generating activities to be conducted at each of the drop-in centres.
5. Care and support for children in distress.

Three Namibian programs funded with grants totaling US\$390 000 (N\$2,9 million)

First significant partnership between a major corporation and the church

The Community Outreach and Education Fund of Secure the Future, in partnership with the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference/Catholic Medical Mission Board, has announced grants totaling US\$390 000 (N\$2,9 million) to three Namibian programs involved in combating HIV/AIDS.

The first two recipients are: Catholic Aids Action (US\$193 000, N\$1,4 million), and Lifeline/Childline (US\$57 000, N\$400 000). The Catholic Medical Mission Board co-funding for these two projects totals US\$121 000 (N\$850 000). The third grant is for the Namibian Housing Action Group/Cactus Partnership. Secure the Future's funding is US\$140 000 (N\$1,07 million).

Phangisile Mtshali, Community Outreach and Education Director: Secure the Future said that the grants were all supporting critical areas in HIV/AIDS management, namely, counselling, home-based care and empowering communities to respond to the epidemic.

"Secure the Future and the SACBC/CMMB recognised the value that these NGOs can add to the Namibian Government's multisectoral National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS," she said.

Johan Viljoen, Project Manager SACBC/CMMB said that the partnership was significant as it was the first functioning partnership between a major corporation and the church.

"It combines the technical expertise of a major corporation with the grassroots presence, experience and credibility of the church, and is an expression of international and multi-sector solidarity in the fight against AIDS," he said.

SECURE THE FUTURE FUNDS VITAL STUDY AIMED AT REDUCING MOTHER-TO-CHILD TRANSMISSION OF HIV/AIDS

In Johannesburg, South Africa, a groundbreaking project aimed at reducing the rate of mother-to-child transmission of HIV is currently underway. UNAIDS has estimated that almost six million HIV/AIDS infections occur each year, most of them in Africa. Ten percent of these occur in children, the majority due to mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) of HIV.

The study, led by Dr Glenda Gray, director of the Perinatal HIV Research Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand, is investigating whether post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) reduces the incidence of infection in infants whose mothers did not access anti-retroviral therapy during pregnancy or in labour. The grant is for US\$700 000/R5 million.

In addition, Epitope, Inc. Of Oregon, USA is contributing \$50,000/R375 000 worth of its OraQuick HIV-1/2® rapid oral fluid tests. Epitope is the manufacturer of OraQuick®, the new rapid HIV test that can test HIV antibodies (types 1 and 2) using oral fluid, whole blood, or serum/plasma.

This study builds on a body of evidence on the effectiveness of antiretrovirals in MTCT. Most recently, a study undertaken in Uganda demonstrated that one dose of nevirapine given to the mother in labour and one to the infant within 72 hours of birth, reduced transmission by 47%.

"Labour and delivery appear to be times of high risk for vertical transmission. As much as 70% of vertical transmission occurs at this time and so strategies to prevent transmission in this period will have a dramatic impact in reducing MTCT," says Dr Gray. "What is not known is the value of PEP antiretroviral therapy in reducing transmission of HIV to infants whose mothers did not access therapy during pregnancy or in labour".

The study will compare the efficacy of zidovudine and nevirapine, both proven inhibitors of HIV-1 replication.

Dr Ashraf Grimwood, Medical Director, Secure the Future stated: "This pioneering study will provide insight for expanding strategies to combat MTCT in the developing world which are critically important in curbing the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic".

Auction raises \$70 000 for HIV programs in Africa

An exhibition of the works of 30 renowned artists from five southern African countries, entitled ArtWorks for AIDS, was auctioned at the Harvard Club in Boston, raising \$70 000. All proceeds from the event will fund research and programs to confront HIV and AIDS in southern Africa.

ArtWorks for AIDS was a Secure the Future initiative to benefit research and care in southern Africa. Included in the exhibition were artists from Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland all commissioned to interpret the theme of HIV/AIDS in southern Africa with special reference to women and children. This exhibit was curated by Marilyn Martin, Director of the South African National Gallery.

Dr Max Essex, chair of the Harvard AIDS Institute said, "We deeply commend this collaborative effort by artists in southern Africa to draw attention to the epidemic that is sweeping across the region, with a particularly devastating impact on women and children".

The Botswana-Harvard Partnership for HIV Research and Education, a partnership between the Harvard AIDS Institute and the Botswana Ministry of Health, is one of the major beneficiaries of ArtWorks for AIDS. The partnership conducts epidemiologic and laboratory-based studies focusing on mother-to-child transmission of HIV in Botswana and trains southern African researchers and laboratory personnel.

The exhibition was co-sponsored by Secure the Future. The artists included Jane Alexander, Deborah Bell, Willie Bester, Lisa Brice, Norman Catherine, Trudi Dicks, David Goldblatt, Austin Hleza (work provided posthumously), Lallitha Jawahirilal, William Kentridge,

Sam Nhlengethwa, Velaphi Mzimba, Karel Nel, Pat Mautloa, Hentie van der Merwe, Hercules Viljoen, Wonderboy Nxumalo, Joseph Madisia, Durant Sihlali, Bernadette Searle, Sue Williamson, Clive van den Berg, Steve Mashoabathe Rasehloho, Valentim Macie, Zwelethu Mthethwa, Noria Mabasa, Stephen T Mogotsi, Neo Matome, Johannes Segogela, Thamae Kaashe and Penny Siopis.



Chris Howard and Delano Lewis, US Ambassador to SA at the Bristol-Myers Squibb stand at AIDS 2000 at which the ArtWorks for AIDS were first exhibited.

BEADED PINS CREATE JOBS AND EMPOWER RURAL WOMEN

During 2000, Secure the Future, through its purchase of AIDS beaded pins, created jobs and provided a regular source of income for 60 women in South Africa and Swaziland through the purchase of 35 000 AIDS pins.

More than R360 000 has been paid to the bead makers, who are all infected/affected by HIV/AIDS. The money from these pins is often their sole source of income. The women also participated in a project to sew beaded jackets, which were later displayed in the USA.

In addition to the bead makers, a small group of women from Gauteng, South Africa, take responsibility for tagging and packaging of the pins prior to dispatch. R8 000 has been paid to these women to assist them to pay for the education of their children.

The pins are distributed across continents for the purpose of raising awareness of HIV/AIDS in Africa and generating resources for persons infected or affected.

To help generate income by purchasing pins, contact Simeka TWS Communications in South Africa trishl@stws.adcorp.co.za.



Nomisile Kani, one of the women from the Eastern Cape participating in the beaded pins project.

BOTSWANA PRESIDENT MOGAE LAUNCHES FIRST EVER SOUTHERN AFRICAN PAEDIATRIC CLINICAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

President Festus Mogae launched Southern Africa's first Children's Clinical Center of Excellence, with a special emphasis on HIV/AIDS paediatric care, on September 18, 2000 in Gaborone, Botswana.

The Children's Clinical Center of Excellence will be a public-private sector partnership between the Botswana Ministry of Health, Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital and Bristol-Myers Squibb Company's Secure the Future program. The US\$9.7 million/P48.5 million grant is jointly funded through a grant of US\$6.0 million/P30 million from Bristol-Myers Squibb and a \$3.7 million material commitment from Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children's Hospital.

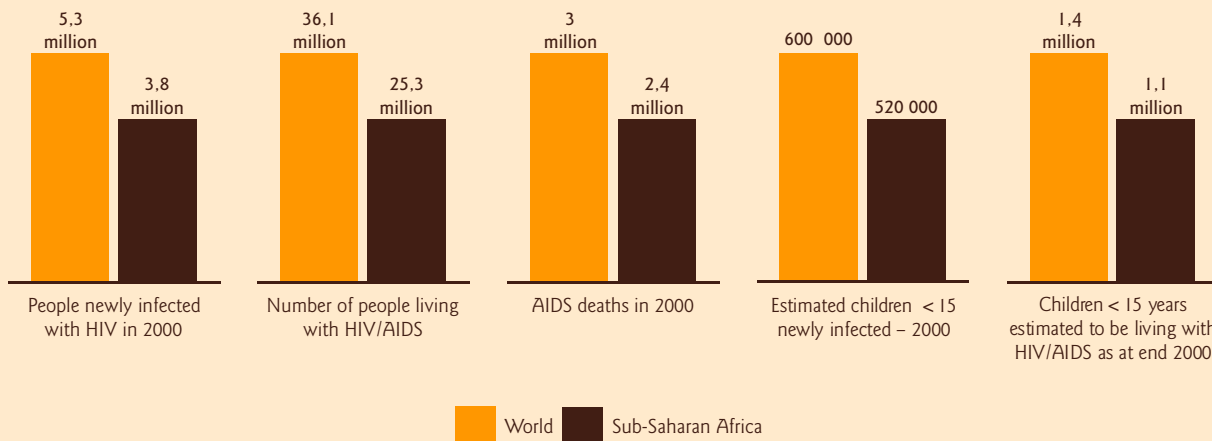
The center will be located at the Princess Marina Hospital and will serve children visiting the hospital, the Mpule Kwelagobe Children's Center, an orphanage to be situated in nearby Jwaneng, as well as children from the region. One of the aims of the center is to reduce the number of required hospital stays for HIV-infected children, by improving diagnostics as well as care.



Seen at the ground-breaking ceremony for the Children's Clinical Center of Excellence (from left) Ken Weg, Botswana President Festus Mogae, a child who read a poem about HIV/AIDS, Botswana Minister of Health Joy Phumaphi and Dr Schwartzwald, representing Baylor

AIDS EPIDEMIC UPDATE

The World Health Organisation – UNAIDS report “AIDS Epidemic Update” (December 2000) highlights the impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa



Visit “SECURE THE FUTURE” website at www.securethefuture.com

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