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Twinning Center Launches New Partnership to Strengthen Emergency Medical Services in Ethiopia

Program will build capacity to provide urgent care and related education and training at Addis Ababa University Faculty of Medicine at Black Lion Hospital

WASHINGTON, DC, July 7, 2009 — The American International Health Alliance (AIHA) has established a new partnership through its HIV/AIDS Twinning Center Program that will support the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) by building critical institutional and human resource capacity in the field of emergency medicine. Established with support from CDC/Ethiopia and in close cooperation with the Ethiopian Ministry of Health, this partnership is the Twinning Center's seventh in the country.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison will serve as the lead US partner, joining forces with People to People International, a Kentucky-based nonprofit that harnesses the knowledge and expertise of Ethiopians in the Diaspora, to help combat HIV/AIDS in the East African nation of more than 85 million people. The American partners will work with the Addis Ababa University Faculty of Medicine and Black Lion Hospital to strengthen their capacity to provide quality care — including ART and treatment for opportunistic infections — to people living with HIV or AIDS.

Addis Ababa University Faculty of Medicine at Black Lion Hospital established the first residency program for emergency medicine in the country and the hospital's emergency room opened in August 2008. Ethiopia's Ministry of Health has committed to creating an Emergency Medical Services Center of Excellence at Black Lion, where the majority of urgent care patients present with internal medical emergencies related to HIV/AIDS.

Partners from Addis Ababa University Medical Faculty at Black Lion Hospital are in Wisconsin this week, where they will meet with their counterparts and AIHA Twinning Center staff, collaborate on their year-one work plan, tour various clinical sites, participate in grand rounds, and shadow professional counterparts to learn about effective models of urgent care, service organization, and clinical education and training.

Funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration, the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center mobilizes and coordinates the resources of US healthcare providers to effectively build capacity to reduce HIV infection rates and provide care to those infected with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS in countries targeted for PEPFAR assistance.

For more information on the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center, visit www.TwinningAgainstAIDS.org. For more information about AIHA, visit our Web site at www.aiha.com.

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