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**Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital awarded  
\$2.5 million by Bristol-Myers Squibb to train AIDS specialists in Africa  
Embargoed for Noon CDT Thursday, May 6, 1999**

HOUSTON--Health-care workers in the region of the world hardest hit by AIDS can benefit from the expertise of HIV experts at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, thanks to a \$2.5 million grant from Bristol-Myers Squibb Company.

The Baylor-Texas Children's Hospital team of AIDS specialists will use the five-year grant to establish a Southern African AIDS Education and Clinical Research Initiative.

"Our goal is to provide physicians and nurses from Southern African countries with basic information and skills to prevent and treat HIV infection," said principal investigator Dr. Mark Kline, a professor of pediatrics at Baylor and a pediatrician at Texas Children's Hospital. "But we also need to help them acquire the knowledge they will need to find creative solutions to AIDS in underdeveloped countries, which lack many of the medications and sophisticated equipment used in the United States."

Kline's team of AIDS experts has experience providing HIV education to health-care workers in Romania and Mexico. They will:

\* Develop an annual series of educational meetings about

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AIDS to be held for health-care professionals in Southern African countries. These professionals will, in turn, help train others at their home sites;

- \* Host 10 to 15 African physicians per year for training in HIV clinical care and research at Baylor and Texas Children's Hospital;

- \* Develop research collaborations between African and U.S. clinicians and scientists and initiate pilot clinical research projects; and

- \* Select approximately six promising young U.S. pediatric and infectious-disease trainees per year for first-hand AIDS education and training experiences in Southern Africa.

The Southern African AIDS Education and Clinical Research Initiative at Baylor and Texas Children's Hospital is part of Bristol-Myers Squibb's landmark effort to address the problem of AIDS where the disease has the greatest impact. The drug company has committed \$100 million over the next five years to AIDS research and community outreach focused on women and children in the countries of South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, and Swaziland.

"HIV is particularly devastating to women and children in these countries," Kline said. "More than half of all adults infected with the AIDS virus are women, and more than 1,000 infants are newly infected with HIV every day. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, nearly 8 million children have become HIV/AIDS orphans."

Of the 34 million people in the world infected with HIV, an estimated 70 percent live in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 80 percent of HIV/AIDS-related deaths have occurred.

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