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Roche Diagnostics supports fight against MRSA as a sponsor of annual World MRSA Day

Second annual World MRSA Day held to pay tribute to patients and families and to issue a call-to-action to eradicate the MRSA epidemic

As part of its ongoing work in the prevention and control of serious infections in healthcare settings, Roche Diagnostics is pleased to announce its sponsorship of the 2nd Annual World MRSA Day, which will commence with a kick-off event at Loyola University in Chicago on October 1, 2010. Organized by the MRSA Survivors Network, the goal of World MRSA Day is to highlight the importance of a comprehensive approach to controlling MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), a type of bacterium that is resistant to common antibiotics and can cause serious infections. High rates of infection and mortality and high costs of treatment due to healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) caused by MRSA are a critical issue for healthcare facilities worldwide.

“The goal for this event is to raise widespread awareness of the need for greater MRSA prevention, screening, treatment and education,” said Jeanine Thomas, MRSA survivor and founder of the MRSA Survivors Network, the organization that started the event. “We also hope to encourage world health organizations and government officials to provide greater resources and leadership toward focusing on the response to the MRSA epidemic and preventing its spread. Through prevention, we can save lives.”

The kick-off event will begin with a closed press conference at 10:00 a.m. and then will be opened to the public at 10:30 for a remembrance ceremony. The main event will follow and

include an awards ceremony to recognize those individuals and organizations that have made a significant contribution to raising awareness and education about MRSA. The keynote speaker will be world-renowned MRSA expert and former Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) scientist, William R. Jarvis, M.D. Dr. Jarvis will also be presented with the “Barry M. Farr Lifetime Achievement Award” during the ceremony.

“While MRSA is preventable, approximately two million HAIs and 90,000 deaths are attributed to it each year in the United States, which underscores the critical need for greater awareness of the issue and the potential solutions,” said Jack Phillips, president and CEO of Roche Diagnostics Corporation. “Roche applauds the MRSA Survivors Network for bringing this important issue to the forefront and we are honored to be a sponsor of World MRSA Day. We believe that more education, together with effective screening and infection control programs, can significantly reduce the spread of MRSA and its consequences.”

Other participants in the kick-off event include local government officials, infection control experts and healthcare professionals, MRSA survivors, and those who have lost loved ones to MRSA.

“The good news is that there are some relatively simple steps that can be taken to control the spread of MRSA, such as appropriate screening and testing, hand washing and careful use of antibiotics,” said Lance Peterson, M.D., FASCP, epidemiologist and a founder of the MRSA screening program at NorthShore University HealthSystem in Evanston, Illinois. “This event is important because it will help to raise awareness of these steps and the importance of following them among both healthcare professionals and the general public.”

About HAIs and MRSA screening

Healthcare-associated infections caused by MRSA are a tremendous burden for healthcare systems and hospitals and are associated with significant healthcare costs. In addition, community-associated MRSA (CA-MRSA) infection has spread in the U.S., underscoring the need for comprehensive infection control programs along with more rapid and reliable MRSA screening methods. In response to this public health issue, an increasing number of states have passed legislation requiring mandatory reporting and/or screening for HAIs.

In July 2010, the United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA) cleared Roche’s LightCycler® MRSA Advanced Test, a qualitative in-vitro diagnostic test for the direct detection of nasal colonization with methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) to aid in the prevention and control of MRSA infections in healthcare settings. The test is performed

on the LightCycler® 2.0 Instrument with nasal swab specimens from patients suspected of colonization.

About Roche

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