



European Men's Health Forum Launches Community-Based Quality of Life Study for People Living with HIV

*** Personal Experiences will Provide a Key to Understanding the Impact of HIV Treatment on Day-to-Day Life and Help to Assess Quality of Life Expectations for the Future ***

Bangkok, Thailand 11 July 2004; Today, on the eve of the XV International AIDS Conference in Bangkok, the European Men's Health Forum (EMHF) announced the launch of a European community-based study to examine the complexity and connectedness of issues that affect the Quality of Life (QoL) of men and women living with HIV and AIDS.

The EMHF study, '*A European HIV-related quality of life review*', is supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Bristol-Myers Squibb Company and falls under the umbrella of the pharmaceutical company's *One Vision European Photographic Competition*, designed to reduce HIV-related stigma in Europe.

"This is an exciting project for us as it will provide an update on the valuable knowledge acquired from previous HIV-related QoL projects, administered separately from any clinical trial," stated Erick Savoye, Director of EMHF. "It is unique in focussing on the influencing factors such as treatment, day-to-day life, employment and access to health services that make up a patient's total experience of the disease."

The study requires people living with HIV and AIDS in Europe to complete a comprehensive questionnaire, which has been designed in collaboration with European experts in the field of HIV and AIDS. The answers will help to determine the impact of changes in treatment over time and, from non-medical dimensions, will assist in understanding the expectations of the HIV and AIDS community for the future. "There is no doubt that QoL factors play a major role in determining how well people with HIV and AIDS are living today", added Mr. Savoye.

The questionnaire will be available to any HIV-positive adult living in Europe, via the EMHF website at www.emhf.org. It will also be available at a number of treatment centres in the United Kingdom and HIV clinics in Germany. Furthermore, links to the questionnaire will be provided from a number of partner websites including the *One Vision* website (www.onevision2004.org), UK-based HIV and AIDS information provider NAM (www.aidsmap.com), a consumer-based male health website with a large international reach (www.malehealth.co.uk) and the website of the European Institute of Women's Health (www.eurohealth.ie).

Preliminary results from the study will be announced on World AIDS Day, 1st December 2004, and will be presented to representatives of EU institutions, the World Health Organisation and national authorities for consideration when developing their health intervention strategies.

Torsten Hoof, General Manager of Bristol-Myers Squibb Virology Europe commented: "We are very pleased to support this crucial initiative. With ever improving medical technologies and increased survival rates in Europe, the emphasis must shift towards improving quality of life for those people living with HIV and AIDS. The results of this study will help all of us to better understand the needs of patients in Europe, now and for the future."

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Notes to Editors:

To access the *European HIV-related quality of life review* questionnaire, please visit www.emhf.org. In addition, please find below information on each of the organisations involved in providing on-line access to the questionnaire.

European Men's Health Forum

The EMHF is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit-making organisation established to promote male health across Europe. It is a membership organisation managed by a Board of Directors and an executive committee, which represent the diversity of its stakeholders. These include national men's health organisations, EU policy makers, organisations representing health professionals, academics, and women's health and patients' organisations. www.emhf.org.

Bristol-Myers Squibb Company

Bristol-Myers Squibb is a global pharmaceutical and related health care products company whose mission is to extend and enhance human life. www.bms.com.

One Vision European Photographic Competition

Download the questionnaire on-line or find information about the *One Vision European Photographic Competition* and view the 2004 winning entries. www.onevision2004.org.

NAM

NAM is a community-based information provider based in the UK whose sole aim is to combat the AIDS epidemic through accurate, accessible and up-to-date information. NAM is a UK Registered Charity Number 1011220. www.aids.map.com.

European Institute of Women's Health

The European Institute of Women's Health is a non-governmental organisation working to make the health and well being of women a priority for the European Commission and Member States of the European Union. www.eurohealth.ie.

Malehealth.co.uk

Malehealth.co.uk is run by the Men's Health Forum, the UK's leading charity working to improve men's health. The website is consumer-based and has a large international audience. Malehealth provides essential, accurate, easy to use information about the key health problems that affect men. www.malehealth.co.uk.

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