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PRESS RELEASE

AIHA Conducts Meeting on Strengthening Health and Social Service Professions Education in Africa

PEPFAR-supported Partnerships Working to Improve Education and Training for Medical and Allied Health Professionals Gather at the University of the Witwatersrand

PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA, June 20, 2011 — The American International Health Alliance (AIHA) has gathered a group of more than 80 African and US health and allied professionals involved with its HIV/AIDS Twinning Center partnerships working to strengthen medical and social service education programs throughout Africa for a three-day meeting that kicks off today in Johannesburg. Representatives from the National Department of Health, CDC/South Africa, WHO/South Africa, and other key stakeholders will also participate in this event, which is being held at the University of the Witwatersrand this week.

Thanks to support from the American people through the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), partners engaged in the development of programs that are helping to strengthen pre- and in-service health and social service education and training at educational institutions in Botswana, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia will take part in this forum, sharing best practices and exploring opportunities for expanded cross-partnership and cross-country collaboration. Individually, these partnerships are addressing specific gaps in health professions education in their respective countries. Collectively, they are helping build sustainable capacity to educate human resources for health and help improve people's access to quality treatment, care, and social support services.

Key objectives are also to identify concrete strategies for ongoing collective efforts to establish or strengthen education and training programs, design and implement effective assessment and monitoring and evaluation programs, and integrate dynamic clinical training components into curricula.

Speakers include Maggie Ravhengani, Director for HR Stakeholder Relations & Management at the National Department of Health; Dr. Stella Anyangwe, WHO Representative for South Africa; Mrs. Makhosazane Ntuli, WHO HRH Specialist; Ahmed Wadee, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand; Prof. Yunus Ballim, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic, University of the Witwatersrand; and Prof. Khaya Mfenyna, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Walter Sisulu University.

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