



PRESS RELEASE

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Twinning Center Launches Third Clinical Associates Partnership to Strengthen South Africa's Health System

PEPFAR-funded program will build capacity to support training of mid-level medical professionals at the University of Pretoria

WASHINGTON, DC, February 4, 2011 — The American International Health Alliance (AIHA) announced today the formation of a new partnership in South Africa that will support the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) by increasing human resources for health.

Established with support from CDC/South Africa and in close cooperation with the South Africa National Department of Health, this HIV/AIDS Twinning Center partnership links the University of Pretoria in Johannesburg with Arcadia University in Glenside, Pennsylvania. Partners will work together to strengthen the University of Pretoria's Clinical Associates Program, which was launched in 2008.

The University of Pretoria offers a three year's Bachelor degree in Clinical Medical Practice. Students learn how to perform clinical procedures and also to assess and manage important emergency medical conditions encountered in the country's hospital ward and casualties. During their training, the students spend most of their time in district hospitals and are being placed under a direct or indirect supervision of a qualified physician. Students receive clinical training in rural areas of South Africa's Mpumalanga Province, where many of them will serve after completion of the three-year program.

Partners will focus on building the capacity of Pretoria's faculty and clinical supervisors to train clinical associate students in the provision of quality medical care — including ART and treatment for opportunistic infections — to people living with HIV or AIDS in rural areas in South Africa. This is the Twinning Center's seventh partnership in South Africa and the third established since 2010 to bolster the capacity of local universities to train clinical associates in a concerted effort to expand South Africa's pool of well-trained medical service providers.

Arcadia University's Physician Assistant Program — which culminates in a Master of Medical Science degree — is designed to produce graduates who are well-equipped to deliver high-quality, cost-effective primary health care in a wide variety of settings, including hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices and other community settings. Arcadia offers a dual degree program with public health and taps into its strong ties with regional medical communities, as well as international global health experiences, to provide students with a foundation for professional growth through personal attention, global perspective, and a commitment to excellence. Their wealth of knowledge and experience in educating mid-level medical professionals will play a critical role in strengthening the Clinical Associates Program at the University of Pretoria.

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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