

# HEALTH MATTERS



## Fighting AIDS By Building Communities

(NAPSA)—Hope is emerging in the villages along the Zambezi River, thanks to a new program that provides medicine and much more to fight the AIDS pandemic that grips the African continent.

To date, the SECURE THE FUTURE program has provided almost \$100 million to fund some 170 projects in nine countries in southern and western Africa.

Funding covers the cost of medical treatment and drugs, but, importantly, it also supports a wide variety of community programs. Some programs help women raise their orphaned grandchildren, others teach prevention through dramatic skits, provide “buddies” to remind patients to take their medicines, help patients meet their dietary needs and even encourage traditional African healers to work side by side with medical specialists.

“In the five years SECURE THE FUTURE has been in operation in Africa, we have learned that working with Africans in their communities, weaving a continual fabric of support for patients and their families, is vitally important to fighting this disease,” said Peter R. Dolan, CEO, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company.

Also critical to the program’s success is a collaborative approach, with governments, medical professionals, community activists, the faith community and businesses working together to address the epidemic.

The newest initiative focuses on establishing six community treatment centers in resource limited settings in South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland in southern Africa and Mali in West Africa, in addition to Namibia.



**In the long run, a community-based approach to fighting AIDS may be the most cost effective.**

Each center offers a variety of medical and community services. The intent is to demonstrate the importance of combining community support services with treatment and to document and evaluate the lessons so that they can be replicated elsewhere in the region and the continent.

According to John McGoldrick, the executive vice president of Bristol-Myers Squibb who oversees the SECURE THE FUTURE program, “If these integrated care and treatment models work—and they are being rigorously measured to test their success—they will provide a cost-effective way for governments, the World Fund and others to dramatically increase lifesaving anti-HIV treatment in Africa.”

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

To learn more, please visit [www.securethefuture.com](http://www.securethefuture.com).