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N E W S R E L E A S E

Contact: Kate Ruddon, CDC Foundation
404-653-0790

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Judy Brooks, Pfizer Inc
212-573-7897

New Program Offers Medical Students Hands-on Training at CDC

ATLANTA--The CDC Foundation has received a grant of \$600,000 from Pfizer Inc and The Pfizer Foundation to establish a program to provide medical students with applied, hands-on training in epidemiology and public health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The program is designed to help address a gap in communication and collaboration between physicians and public health professionals and better prepare physicians to work with the public health system. The grant will fund a planning year and, initially one year of the fellowship. The first class of students will begin in the fall of 2004.

“The medical and public health communities have begun to recognize the tremendous benefits of working together to achieve their complementary missions,” says Denise Koo, M.D., M.P.H., director of the Division of Applied Public Health Training at CDC. “Our current national focus on public health preparedness has underscored the urgent need for physicians and public health professionals to work collaboratively.”

The fellowship program will bring eight competitively selected medical students to work in apprenticeship at CDC for nine to twelve months. During their fellowship, the students will receive classroom training in epidemiology and biostatistics, perform epidemiologic analyses and participate in field investigations of disease outbreaks or other public health problems. Each student will work with a CDC mentor on a particular area of study and will complete a culminating project on a topic of interest.

“CDC has other short-term opportunities for medical students, but this is the first program that will provide an in-depth learning experience in public health,” says Charles Stokes, president and CEO of the CDC Foundation. “Pfizer Inc and the Pfizer Foundation are truly

visionary in their support of this program. Their leaders clearly understand the value of integrating public health training into medical education.”

“Now more than ever, the ability of physicians to understand disease prevention and surveillance is critical, and Pfizer Inc is pleased to help shape the development of a corps of physicians with this capability,” said Barbara DeBuono, M.D., senior medical director of Pfizer’s Public Health Department. “This program supports Pfizer Inc's longstanding commitment to training and career development of young medical professionals through our Medical and Academic Partnership programs.”

In 2002, Pfizer Inc funded a feasibility study to identify the level of interest for the program and determine the most effective format and content. Information gathered from students, medical school leaders, public health professionals and CDC staff indicated a strong interest in the proposed fellowship and helped shape the program design.

In recent years, the medical and public health communities have focused on strengthening the connection between the practices of clinical medicine and public health. According to a report by the New York Academy of Medicine, the driving forces behind these recent attempts at increasing collaboration include concern about the direction of the health care system, increasing economic and performance pressures and a realization that neither can accomplish its mission alone. Recognition of the role of health professionals in emergency preparedness has only strengthened the case for cross-fertilization.

The CDC Foundation is an independent, non-profit enterprise that forges effective partnerships between CDC and others to fight threats to health and safety.

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The Pfizer Foundation, Inc. is an independent charitable foundation established by Pfizer Inc in 1953. The Foundation’s mission is to promote access to quality health care and education, to nurture innovation and to support the community involvement of Pfizer people.

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