Medtronic News

Medtronic Answers United Nations' Call for "International Commitment" to Non-Communicable Diseases

MINNEAPOLIS, Mar 02, 2011 (BUSINESS WIRE) --

In its continued commitment to reduce the global burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), Medtronic, Inc. today announced it will make nearly $4 million in Medtronic Foundation grants in 2011 to international organizations specifically to address diseases such as diabetes and heart disease in developing countries.

With non-communicable diseases accounting for 60 percent of all deaths worldwide, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon earlier this year called upon the world's businesses to help address NCDs, which are expected to increase by 50 percent in developing countries by 2030. NCDs account for roughly 75 percent of healthcare costs in both advanced and developing economies, according to the World Economic Forum.

"The cost in human life and health is just one dimension of the global epidemic of non-communicable disease," said Bill Hawkins, Medtronic's chairman and chief executive officer. "Insufficient management of chronic illness can have a devastating impact on economic growth and productivity, especially in the world's most underserved communities where access to prevention, diagnosis and treatment options are often severely limited."

"While we are providing critical grants to address non-communicable diseases, we're specifically focusing on ways Medtronic's size, scale and expertise can bring about important, sustainable change in the health outcomes of the world's lowest-income populations - the 'bottom billion.' By partnering with leading stakeholders, we can bring a range of innovative solutions necessary to prevent and treat the some of the worlds' most neglected, endemic chronic diseases."

Today's announcement was made in conjunction with the "Tackling the Endemic Non-Communicable Diseases of the Bottom Billion" conference hosted by the Harvard Medical School Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard School of Public Health, Partners In Health and the NCD Alliance. The conference was convened to provide recommendations for the September 2011 United Nations' High-level Meeting of the U.N. General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases.

The Medtronic Foundation has committed $3.7 million in grants primarily focused in three distinct action areas:

1) Strengthening health systems: programs to improve delivery of healthcare in developing countries by integrating NCD care into primary care systems, and training healthcare professionals to foster best practices in cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Foundation grants made to Partners in Health, and several NCD Centers of Excellence in South Africa, India and China will support programs that can serve as models for future integration in other areas of the world.

2) Disease-specific initiatives: programs designed to address neglected chronic diseases, which significantly impact the health of the world's poor. For instance, funding will be directed to support awareness, surveillance, prevention, treatment and advocacy efforts for rheumatic heart disease, one of the more prevalent diseases in lower income countries, and a disease that has been virtually eradicated in developed countries.

3) Promoting global advocacy: funding to advance policy efforts leading up to the U.N. High-level Meeting including sponsorship of the "Bottom Billion" meeting and the NCD Alliance.

Today's announcement is a continuation of Medtronic's commitment announced in September 2010 to address the global burden of NCDs, and includes a previously announced $1 million grant to the NCD Alliance, a coalition of nonprofit organizations that will develop data driven plans and recommendations for the U.N. High-level Meeting.

ABOUT MEDTRONIC

Medtronic, Inc. (www.medtronic.com), headquartered in Minneapolis, is the global leader in medical technology - alleviating pain, restoring health and extending life for millions of people around the world. The Medtronic Foundation is committed to improving the lives of people around the world living with chronic disease. Its grant making is focused in three areas: health, education and community.

Any forward-looking statements are subject to risks and uncertainties such as those described in Medtronic's periodic reports on file with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Actual results may differ materially from anticipated results.

SOURCE: Medtronic, Inc.

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