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Hepatitis C Leadership Summit, October 29-30, Seeks to Elevate the Current Response to the Hepatitis C Epidemic

Boston, MA, October 27, 2005. The Healthcare Advocacy and Research Collaboration Project (HARCP), a non-profit organization, and The Bruckner Group, are pleased to announce the Hepatitis C Leadership Summit (HCVLS), a private meeting taking place October 29-30 in Boston.

With 4 million hepatitis C (HCV) infections in the U.S. and 3 million chronic infections, HCV is a serious public health crisis for which the current response is vastly inadequate. The HCVLS, a new initiative, is bringing together stakeholder leaders in hepatitis C for a series of discussions aimed at elevating the response to the epidemic. The HCVLS will specifically explore opportunities to increase the number of patients tested and treated for hepatitis C using currently-available resources.

While there are many worthwhile areas for discussion, the HCVLS is focusing on these three specific areas:

1. Hepatitis C and the Insurance Industry: A discussion of the private and public insurance issues around the identification and treatment of hepatitis C patients.
2. Care options for HCV patients, with a focus on best practices that maximize patient outcomes.
3. Partnering with community faith organizations to expand HCV awareness and patient support.

Attendees at the HCVLS include the majority of the State Hepatitis C coordinators, leading managed care payers, state Medicaid organizations, the CDC, leading clinicians, advocates, and manufacturers.

“The HARCP and The Bruckner Group are pleased to bring together this distinguished group of stakeholder participants to discuss how we can collectively do better in the fight against HCV,” said Michael J. Russo, President of The Bruckner Group. “The need and the urgency for action could not be clearer. I’m heartened by the unusually strong buy-in to this process. We’d like to especially commend the State Hepatitis C coordinators, as well as public and private insurance industry stakeholders, for their enthusiastic participation. We expect actionable items to emerge from the HCVLS.”

The HCVLS will commence with a video welcome from Senator Edward M. Kennedy (MA). Senator Kennedy has for years demonstrated tireless leadership in the congressional fight for greater visibility and resources in efforts to combat HCV. His unstinting efforts deserve the widest possible recognition, and the HCVLS is honored by his participation.

The HCVLS, initiated and organized by the HARCP and The Bruckner Group, is sponsored by Roche Pharmaceuticals and The Bruckner Group, with additional support from Schering-Plough Corporation, Valeant Pharmaceuticals International, and Vertex Pharmaceuticals.

The Healthcare Advocacy and Research Collaboration Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving access to, quality of, and delivery of healthcare services, particularly in under-served disease areas and patient populations. The HARCP conducts research studies and projects, develops and disseminates information, and demonstrates leadership in activities and efforts to fight disease. Current HARCP initiatives include activities in hepatitis C, hemophilia, and autoimmune disorders.

The Bruckner Group are strategy and research consultants in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. BGI are the leading experts in value strategy, helping clients define, prove, and leverage the healthcare value of their therapeutics to build successful product launch strategies and post-launch brand strategies. BGI's strategies emerge from an understanding of the intersection of therapeutic outcomes, healthcare value at the standard of care, and a determination of unmet market needs of payers, physicians, and patients. BGI's unique and systematic approach creates market success by maximally addressing the healthcare value needs in therapeutic markets.