

Heart to Heart International tapped by CDC to help fight opioid epidemic in U.S.

September 30, 2018 – An average of 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose, and Heart to Heart International (HHI) has now joined the fight against this public health emergency. On October 1, 2018, HHI will begin work on the \$9.5 million grant it was awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to address the opioid crisis in the United States.

In this comprehensive program led by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), HHI will respond to designated state and territorial requests to procure and establish critically needed laboratory equipment that will be used in the fight against the opioid epidemic.

HHI's extensive experience and technical excellence in the U.S. and around the world in the field of laboratory medicine will ensure accurate and reliable laboratory services, which are critical for conducting clinical diagnoses, guiding treatments and responding to public health crises. HHI's expert staff and volunteers have developed and implemented a wide range of laboratory programs including:

- Collaboration with the National Laboratory of Haiti teaching World Health Organization (WHO) Laboratory standards.
- Partnered with the CDC and African Society of Laboratory Medicine to administer Fellowship programs to improve the qualifications of laboratorians in Africa.
- Established point of care laboratories in safety net clinics across the United States.

HHI maintains a large network of fully vetted professional volunteers, including laboratory and medical professionals. These volunteers, under the supervision of HHI's expert staff, offer a range of talents in the laboratory field including: quality management, purchasing, training and education, and clinical expertise ranging from point of care to high complexity testing methodologies.

"Heart to Heart International's expertise in the field of laboratory medicine is unique among global humanitarian organizations. We are committed to supporting the CDC and state laboratories in this comprehensive effort to combat the opioid crisis. Addressing this national epidemic is a formidable but critical challenge for our country," Jim Mitchum, CEO, Heart to Heart International, said.

Heart to Heart International is a nonprofit international health organization with its headquarters in Lenexa, Kansas. Since its inception in 1992, HHI has delivered medical aid and supplies worth \$1.7 billion to more than 130 countries, including within the United States. HHI responds to crises and natural disasters both domestically and internationally by supplying medical relief and mobilizing volunteers. The organization is a BBB Accredited Charity and is on the "Philanthropy 400."

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