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Kettering Health Network Partners with DIATHERIX Laboratories To Improve Quality, Efficiency of Care

KETTERING, OHIO (March 15, 2010) – Kettering Health Network is the nation's first health system to use a new testing process developed by DIATHERIX Laboratories (www.DIATHERIX.com), which dramatically reduces the time it takes to detect H1N1, methicillin resistant staphylococcus (MRSA), Clostridium difficile (C-diff) and other infectious diseases. Kettering Medical Center (KMC) will be the first hospital in the network to use the testing system and DIATHERIX will maintain an onsite lab at the facility.

The method known as Target-Enriched Multiplex Polymerase Chain Reaction (TEM-PCR), licensed for use by Huntsville, Alabama-based DIATHERIX, allows microbiologists to test simultaneously for multiple pathogens from one specimen. The test takes approximately six hours to perform, compared to the conventional technology which takes a minimum of 48 hours. Rapid results improve care by reducing the rate of healthcare-associated infections due to multi-drug resistant organisms.

While it improves care, TEM-PCR is also a money saver because it allows healthcare workers to appropriately isolate patients with communicable diseases in a timely fashion. Projected savings for MRSA alone is about \$225,000 a year at KMC alone. Cost savings will occur with other infectious diseases as well, and these savings will be realized at all Kettering Health Network hospitals and at other hospitals throughout the Dayton region. Thus, savings can easily be projected into the millions.

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Additional savings will be realized by freeing up beds and by more efficient use of personnel and supplies. “When the possibility exists that a patient has H1N1 or MRSA, for example, he is immediately isolated until the disease can be ruled in or out. This means the patient cannot share a room with another patient. Therefore, the second bed in a two-person room is not utilized,” said Carol Quinter, Ph.D., Laboratory Technical Director and Coordinator of Clinical Studies.

“Every time someone enters the room of an isolated patient, he must gown up and glove up and sometimes use special masks,” Dr. Quinter added. “All of this is very time-consuming, expensive, and underutilizes the hospital’s bed capacity. Technology which allows us to rule out the need for isolation in a timely manner is invaluable.”

Beyond the obvious business benefits, the reduction in morbidity and mortality through TEM-PCR are expected to be significant nationwide. Hospital-associated infections cause an estimated 48,000 deaths a year in America. “Kettering Health Network is the first hospital system to partner with DIATHERIX, which places them at the forefront of technology that will decrease healthcare costs while enhancing patient care,” said Dennis Grimaud, Chairman and CEO DIATHERIX, Inc. “Kettering has proven that they are focused on bringing new innovation to their hospital system, their physicians and patients within their community.”

“Based on published studies, active surveillance reduces hospital acquired MRSA infections by as much as 50 percent. We think you will see many more hospital affiliations with this company in the years to come,” said Greg Wise, MD, Vice President for Medical Affairs for Kettering Medical Center.

The recent H1N1 pandemic points up the need for prompt diagnosis, isolation and treatment for such pathogens. “Identifying the organism is vital to making an accurate diagnosis,” said Catherine Bacheller, MD, Medical Director of Infection Prevention and Control. “Illnesses caused by resistant bacteria can be treated more quickly and aggressively, with better outcome for the patient and less potential for the spread of infection to others.”

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DIATHERIX Laboratories, Inc. is located in the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology in Huntsville, Ala. DIATHERIX operates as an independent high complexity CLIA-certified clinical laboratory providing advanced molecular multiplex diagnostic services to assist healthcare providers in the detection of infectious disease. For more information, please visit the company's web site at www.DIATHERIX.com.

Kettering Medical Center features some of the most advanced medical imaging practices in the country along with robotic surgery, Gamma Knife and other high technologies. KMC is one of six hospitals within Kettering Health Network, which serves an 11-county area in western Ohio. This past September a Thomson-Reuters study named KHN one of America's Top 10 Health Systems, based on the efficient delivery of quality care. The medical center and the network are named for Charles F. Kettering, the renowned inventor, and both institutions constantly strive to uphold his legacy of innovation.

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