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MEDIA RELEASE

Help for a neighbour to fight tuberculosis

A global anti-tuberculosis partnership will today get behind efforts in East Timor to fight deadly multi-drug resistant tuberculosis. The Lilly MDR TB Partnership will provide \$AUD 61,000 to the Klibur Domin care facility located outside Dili, towards better facilities for sufferers of this disease.

Multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB) is a form of tuberculosis which has become resistant to at least two key anti-tuberculosis drugs. It is much harder to treat than regular tuberculosis.

Timor Leste with a population of more than 1 million has one of the highest estimated incidence and prevalence rates for tuberculosis in the South East Asian Region, with an estimated prevalence of all forms of tuberculosis at 378 cases per 100,000 population or 4,371 active cases. MDR TB cases are now being detected in East Timor.

Speaking at the Canberra World TB Day launch, a representative of the Lilly MDR TB Partnership, Stuart Englund, said that while tuberculosis in Australia had receded as a public health issue, the same could not be said of our neighbours. "The freedom from TB and the significant disruption and enormous costs that it once imposed is something most take for granted. This freedom is not shared by those communities that live nearest to us."

"We are pleased to be able to contribute to East Timor's fight against this insidious disease. We are particularly pleased to be able to focus on the growing threat of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis.

The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership is an initiative led by Eli Lilly and Company to address the expanding crisis of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) together with 17 global health and development organizations, academic institutions and private companies. The partnership is pursuing a comprehensive strategy to fight MDR-TB by providing access to medicines, transferring manufacturing technology, training healthcare workers, raising awareness of the disease and providing resources for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of people living with MDR-TB.

The Lilly MDR TB Partnership contribution will go towards:

- expanding Klibur Domin's capacity to admit additional tuberculosis patients;
- improving infection control mechanism such as: ventilation fans, UV lighting and safe disposal for hospital waste;
- additional training of existing staff on MDR-TB management and counselling; and
- improving patient facilities such as communications between patients and their family members through access to telecommunication services to patients who possess mobile phones and providing radio, TV set and DVD player for the ward housing the MDR-TB patients.

Note to Editors: World Tuberculosis day is observed globally on March 24 2009.

For more information or to arrange interviews at the launch, please contact Stuart Englund at Eli Lilly Australia (112 Wharf Rd, West Ryde NSW 2114) on 9325 4444