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PQMD Presents Inaugural Legacy of Leadership Award to Merck at 2026 Global Health Policy Forum

New York, NY | April 28, 2026 - The Partnership for Quality Medical Donations (PQMD) presented its inaugural **Legacy of Leadership Award** to **Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada**, during a special ceremony at the **2026 Global Health Policy Forum** in New York City.

Established in PQMD's 25th anniversary year, the Legacy of Leadership Award honors a current member organization whose sustained partnership, leadership, and commitment have strengthened PQMD and advanced the broader global health community.

Merck was selected as the first recipient in recognition of its longstanding leadership within PQMD and its profound contributions to advancing global health over decades. As a founding member of PQMD, Merck played a formative role in establishing the principles that continue to guide the partnership today, including ethical medical donations, cross-sector collaboration, and a shared commitment to improving access to care worldwide.

"Merck's leadership has helped shape PQMD from its earliest days," said Elizabeth Ashbourne, Executive Director of PQMD. "Their commitment to partnership, innovation, and responsible engagement has contributed substantially to strengthening our organization. Merck has also influenced how the broader global health community approaches access, collaboration, and long-term impact. It was especially meaningful to recognize Merck in this milestone year as we celebrate 25 years of PQMD."

Merck's global health leadership extends far beyond PQMD. Through initiatives such as the **Mectizan Donation Program** - the longest-running disease-specific drug donation program of its kind - Merck has demonstrated what sustained, large-scale commitment through cross-sectoral partnership can achieve. Since its launch in 1987, the program has donated more than 5 billion treatments across 62 countries, reaching an average of 300 million people annually and helping to eliminate river blindness and lymphatic filariasis in multiple countries.

The award was accepted on behalf of Merck by Dr. Allison Goldberg, Executive Director, Social Impact & Sustainability.

"We are honored to receive PQMD's Legacy of Leadership Award," said Dr. Goldberg. "As a founding member, we are proud to have worked with dedicated partners to advance global health. Receiving this recognition during PQMD's 25th anniversary year is especially meaningful. We look forward to continuing this important work together."

The award was presented during the Executive Forum, which convened senior leaders to examine the geopolitical, financial, and operational forces shaping the future of global health under the theme, "The Global Health Reset."

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About PQMD

The Partnership for Quality Medical Donations (PQMD) is a global alliance of corporations and nonprofits working together to strengthen health systems and improve access to quality healthcare for underserved populations worldwide. Through collaboration, standards-setting, and shared learning, PQMD advances responsible medical donations and cross-sector partnerships that deliver sustainable impact.

About the Global Health Policy Forum

The Global Health Policy Forum (GHPF), convened annually by PQMD, brings together senior leaders from across industry, NGOs, philanthropy, government, and multilateral institutions to examine the political, economic, and operational dynamics shaping access to health worldwide. Through candid discussion and cross-sector exchange, the Forum creates space for leaders to engage on emerging challenges, identify opportunities for collaboration, and explore how global health systems are evolving to meet future needs.

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