



NEWS RELEASE

# Merck and Premier Inc. Collaborating to Help Reduce Clostridium difficile (C. diff) Infection

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Companies working together to address serious public health concerns for at-risk patients

KENILWORTH, N.J. & CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, and Premier Inc. (NASDAQ: PINC), a leading healthcare improvement company, have expanded their preventative and chronic disease care collaboration to include a new effort designed to help reduce the recurrence of Clostridium difficile infection (C. diff).

Merck and Premier® will develop and test the combination of a software-based platform and a coordinator to provide surveillance, consultation, support and education to patients with C. diff at participating Premier member health systems. The goal is to increase patient access to healthcare services, raise awareness of how to decrease patient risk of recurrence and help patients identify if they are having a recurrence. Since 2016, Merck and Premier have been **working together** to co-develop and test solutions that help promote wellness and prevention for specific groups of at-risk patients.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has stated that due to prolonged use of antibiotics or contact with the bacteria, C. diff infection – which causes serious and life-threatening diarrhea – has become the most common microbial cause of healthcare-associated infections in U.S. hospitals. The infection affects approximately half a million people and contributes to an estimated \$4.8 billion in excess U.S. healthcare costs each year. Patients on antibiotics are seven to 10 times more likely to contract C. diff while on antibiotic therapy and during the month after. While the infection is treatable, one in five patients experience a recurrence.

“The expansion of our performance improvement efforts to include the serious threat of C. diff infection is a natural extension of our collaboration,” said Sam Bozzette, M.D., Ph.D., Vice President and Chief Scientist of Premier’s Retrospective and Interventional Research Division, Premier Applied Sciences®. “By increasing clinician and patient knowledge of this often prolonged, and sometimes deadly infection, and developing and testing a software-based application to help reduce the recurrence of C. diff infection by improving follow-up and management, we believe there is a strong potential to make a real difference to address this critical public health problem.”

“Combining the technical capabilities of Premier and the therapeutic area expertise of Merck has been instrumental in our ability to address these difficult healthcare challenges,” said Raquel Tapia, Associate Vice President, Hospital/Specialty Marketing, Merck. “By testing the solutions in real-world settings and learning from our growing knowledge base, we’re confident that our work together will help patients.”

The proposed C. diff intervention will be tested within volunteer Premier member health systems. Merck and Premier welcome interested healthcare organizations to inquire about participation.

The financial terms of the collaboration were not disclosed.

## About Merck

For more than a century, Merck, a leading global biopharmaceutical company known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world’s most challenging diseases. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to advance the prevention and treatment of diseases that threaten people and communities around the world - including cancer, cardio-metabolic diseases, emerging animal diseases, Alzheimer’s disease and infectious diseases including HIV and Ebola. For more information, visit [www.merck.com](http://www.merck.com) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

## About Premier Inc.

Premier Inc. (NASDAQ: PINC) is a leading healthcare improvement company, uniting an alliance of approximately 3,900 U.S. hospitals and health systems and approximately 150,000 other providers and organizations. With integrated data and analytics, collaboratives, supply chain solutions, and advisory and other services, Premier enables better care and outcomes at a lower cost. Premier, a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipient, plays a critical role in the rapidly evolving healthcare industry, collaborating with members to co-develop long-term innovations that reinvent and improve the way care is delivered to patients nationwide. Headquartered in

Charlotte, N.C., Premier is passionate about transforming American healthcare. Please visit Premier's news and investor sites on [www.premierinc.com](http://www.premierinc.com); as well as [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#) and [Premier's blog](#) for more information about the company.

## Forward-looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the "company") includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company's ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company's patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2017 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site ([www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)).

## Forward-looking statements of Premier Inc.

Matters discussed in this release that are not statements of historical or current facts, as discussed herein, are "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of Premier to be materially different from historical results or from any future results or projections expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Accordingly, readers should not place undue reliance on any forward looking statements. In addition to statements that explicitly describe such risks and uncertainties, readers are urged to consider statements in the conditional or future tenses or that include terms such as "believes," "belief," "expects," "estimates," "intends," "anticipates" or "plans" to be

uncertain and forward-looking. Forward-looking statements may include comments as to Premier's beliefs and expectations as to future events and trends affecting its business and are necessarily subject to uncertainties, many of which are outside Premier's control. More information on potential factors that could affect Premier's financial results is included from time to time in the "Forward Looking Statements," "Risk Factors" and "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" sections of Premier's periodic and current filings with the SEC and available on Premier's website at [investors.premierinc.com](http://investors.premierinc.com). Forward looking statements speak only as of the date they are made. Premier undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise that occur after that date.

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