



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DIGICEL PARTNERS WITH CARIBBEAN BROADCAST MEDIA PARTNERSHIP ON HIV/AIDS TO MAKE HIV/AIDS INFORMATION MORE ACCESSIBLE**

***First-of-its-Kind Initiative Will Allow Digicel Customers to Receive Local HIV Referral Services and Information Via Text Message***

**ST. KITTS** – The Digicel Group, the Caribbean’s leading mobile operator, and the Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS (CBMP) announced today an alliance to connect Digicel mobile phone customers to local HIV/AIDS resources via text messaging. This new initiative, which will launch on World AIDS Day (December 1) 2007, will enable Digicel customers across the Caribbean to quickly and easily receive information on their mobile phones about local HIV/AIDS clinics, testing centers, and other resources.

The initiative will be incorporated into the CBMP’s ongoing regional LIVE UP campaign that includes over 40 Caribbean media houses from 23 countries. The new HIV/AIDS text message service will be promoted through new public service ads (PSAs) and on-air promotions by CBMP members.

“Our new alliance with Digicel will significantly extend the reach of the LIVE UP campaign by allowing young people to access information and resources about HIV/AIDS with the touch of a button,” said Dr. Allyson Leacock, CBMP Executive Director. “This initiative will empower young people to take control of their health using technology with which they are already comfortable.”

“We’re very pleased to partner with such a dynamic coalition of Caribbean broadcasters to provide important HIV/AIDS-related information to our customers,” said Ben Atherton, Marketing Director of Digicel Group. “It’s an exciting opportunity for our company to make a real difference in the lives of young people, and contribute to AIDS awareness across the region.”

Today’s announcement was made during the first annual CBMP Executive Summit, convened in conjunction with the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU) Annual General Assembly in St. Kitts. Digicel customers in 17 Caribbean markets will be able to access the service from their Digicel mobile phones.

The Caribbean is the region most affected by HIV/AIDS in this hemisphere, and is second only to sub-Saharan Africa in terms of the impact of the disease. AIDS is a leading cause of death among adults (ages 15-44) in the Caribbean, and 250,000 of the region’s residents are living with HIV or AIDS. Half of those are women, and a third are young people between the ages of 15-24.

**ABOUT DIGICEL**

Since its launch in 2001, Digicel has become the fastest-growing wireless telecommunications operator in the Caribbean and a new entrant to the Central American market. Digicel is renowned for competitive rates, unbeatable coverage, superior customer care, a wide variety of products and services, and state-of-the-art handsets. It is the largest GSM operator in the region.

Digicel is incorporated in Bermuda and has operations in twenty two markets, including Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Aruba, Barbados, Bermuda, Bonaire, Curaçao, The Cayman Islands, Dominica, El Salvador, French Guiana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos and El Salvador. Digicel also has a license in Guatemala, coverage in St. Martin and St. Barths and is preparing to launch in Suriname.

The company is the lead sponsor of Caribbean sports teams including the West Indies Cricket Team, Special Olympics teams across the Caribbean and is title sponsor of the Digicel Caribbean Football Union Cup, which involves over 30 Caribbean countries and is an important qualifier towards the CONCACAF Gold Cup.

For more information, visit <http://www.digicelgroup.com>.

## **ABOUT THE CBMP**

The Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS (CBMP) unites 43 top broadcasters from 23 countries in the region's first coordinated media response to the pandemic. The Partnership creates a structured framework for sharing information and resources among broadcasters that significantly expands HIV/AIDS-related programming and public education activities across the Caribbean. Member broadcasters deliver HIV/AIDS information across a variety of platforms and formats, including targeted public service announcements (PSAs), entertainment programming, news and public affairs programming, and online resources.

The CBMP was launched in May 2006 at a regional summit of media executives on HIV/AIDS, organized by the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, the Caribbean Broadcasting Union, and the Kaiser Family Foundation. The CBMP is overseen by a Steering Committee of broadcast executives representing a diverse constituency of media houses from Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent & Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica, Belize, and regional organizations Caribbean Media Corporation and Caribbean Broadcasting Union, with strategic and technical guidance and production support from Kaiser. The Ford Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation provide additional financial support to underwrite production of campaign materials and informational resources.

For more information, visit <http://www.cbmphiv.org>