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For Immediate Release

The American Diabetes Association is partnering with Merck, and the Durham Diabetes Coalition to bring increased education and awareness about Type 2 Diabetes to Eastern North Carolina

Raleigh, NC (June 26, 2015) – Merck (NYSE: [MRK](#)), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, and actress S. Epatha Merkerson are bringing the *America's Diabetes Challenge: Get to Your Goals* program to Durham, North Carolina to encourage African Americans with type 2 diabetes to know their A1C—their average blood sugar level over the past two to three months—and talk to their doctors about setting and attaining a personal A1C goal. Merkerson, one of the 4.9 million African-American adults living with diabetes, will share her story on July 15th at the American Diabetes Association's *Live Empowered* event in Durham, NC at Duke University's Trent Semans Center for Health Education Great Hall.

"We're excited to include America's Diabetes Challenge as part of our Live Empowered event," said Jim Straight, Executive Director, Eastern North Carolina, American Diabetes Association. "The American Diabetes Association is committed to raising awareness of diabetes and to providing relevant resources for people with the condition to help them get to their treatment goals. This program provides important information for African Americans living with type 2 diabetes, as well as for their friends and family."

Join the *Live Empowered* event at noon on July 15th for a lunch and learn with S. Epatha Merkerson. The event is jointly hosted by the American Diabetes Association and the Durham Diabetes Coalition. To RSVP: Please contact Justin Thomas at 919-743-5400 ext. 3217 or JThomas@diabetes.org for more information or to RSVP if you live or work outside of Durham County. Please contact Dr. Lisa P. Davis at 919-668-0028 or Lisa.P.Davis@duke.edu for more information or to RSVP if you live or work inside Durham County. Learn more about the challenge at www.AmericasDiabetesChallenge.com.

People with type 2 diabetes can help reduce their risk of serious complications by setting individual goals to help manage the ABCs of diabetes—A for A1C, also known as blood glucose, B for blood pressure and C for cholesterol.

The American Diabetes Association recommends that people with diabetes have an individualized A1C goal; the A1C goal for many adults with diabetes is less than 7 percent. However, a higher or lower goal may be appropriate for some people. High blood glucose levels over time can lead to serious health problems, including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, lower limb amputations, stroke and nerve problems. That is why, according to the Association, it is so important for people with diabetes to know their A1C and to work with their doctor to set and reach a goal that is right for them.

About S. Epatha Merkerson

Award-winning actress S. Epatha Merkerson has teamed up with Merck and the American Diabetes Association on *America's Diabetes Challenge: Get to Your Goals* to help African Americans with type 2 diabetes work with their doctor to set and reach their A1C goal (average blood glucose over a 2 to 3 month period). As a part of the program, she is also encouraging fellow patients to learn if they are at risk of low blood glucose and how to help reduce that risk. Diabetes is a significant concern in the African-American community, as 13% of all African-American adults have been diagnosed with the disease, and nearly 10 percent of adults in North Carolina are living with diabetes. That's why S. Epatha is



excited to visit Durham, NC to share her story of living with type 2 diabetes and rally the local community to accept *America's Diabetes Challenge*

About Merck

Today's Merck is a global healthcare leader working to help the world be well. Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies, and consumer care 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 healthcare through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

About The American Diabetes Association

The Association leads the fight against the deadly consequences of diabetes, fights for those affected by diabetes and gives voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes. The Association funds research to prevent, cure, and manage diabetes and offers programs, services and events to hundreds of communities across the country, providing evidence-based information about diabetes prevention, management and treatment. For more information, visit www.diabetes.org and connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

About Durham Diabetes Coalition

The Durham Diabetes Coalition is a collaborative partnership between Duke University, Durham County Department of Public Health, the University of Michigan, and Durham County community partners. The coalition is committed to improving population-level diabetes management health outcomes and quality of life for diagnosed and undiagnosed adults with type 2 diabetes and reducing disparities. For more information, visit www.durhamdiabetescoalition.org and connect with us on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

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