DURECT Corporation Announces Commencement of Construction of Commercial Manufacturing Facility in Cupertino, CA

CUPERTINO, Calif., Oct. 23 /PRNewswire/ — DURECT Corporation (Nasdaq: DRRX) today announced that it has commenced construction of a commercial manufacturing facility that is expected to meet DURECT's production needs for Phase III clinical trials currently planned for late 2001 and commercial market supply for its lead product, DUROS sufentanil. The new facility will comprise approximately 8,000 square feet and will be located at DURECT's headquarters in Cupertino, CA. The facility will house a state-of-the-art cleanroom space and an advanced manufacturing process capable of supporting clean assembly and aseptic filling operations. The facility is expected to have sufficient manufacturing capacity to provide commercial quantities of DURECT's lead product for the treatment of chronic pain, as well as provide pilot/clinical supplies for additional products under development by the company.

"We are pleased to reach this important milestone. This facility will allow us to commercially develop therapies that will improve the quality of life for patients with chronic diseases and conditions. Our pharmaceutical systems can improve patients' quality of life by eliminating more repetitive treatments, reducing dependence on caregivers and allowing them to lead more independent lives," says Jim Brown, President and CEO, at the CIBC World Markets 11th Annual Healthcare Conference in New York City, NY. Dr. Brown's presentation will be available for replay on DURECT's website under "Investor Relations" for a period of one week after the conference.

DURECT's lead product, DUROS sufentanil, will target patients with chronic pain that is stable, opioid responsive and results from a variety of causes. DUROS sufentanil will provide an alternative to current therapies for the treatment of chronic pain, as well as ensuring improved patient compliance and convenience.

DURECT Corporation is pioneering the development and commercialization of pharmaceutical systems that will deliver the right drug to the right site in the right amount at the right time. DURECT's pharmaceutical systems combine technology innovations from the medical device and drug delivery industries with proprietary pharmaceutical and biotechnology drug formulations. These capabilities can enable new drug therapies or optimize existing therapies based on a broad range of compounds, including small molecule pharmaceuticals as well as biotechnology molecules such as proteins, peptides and genes. DURECT's initial portfolio of products combine the DUROS technology, a proven and patented drug delivery platform licensed for specified fields of use from ALZA Corporation, with drugs for which medical data on efficacy and safety are available. Founded in 1998, the Company is headquartered in Cupertino, CA. The Company's World Wide Web site can be accessed at http://www.www.durect.com. To join DURECT's email alert service, please register by selecting "Email Alerts" on the main Investor Relations web page at http://www.www.durect.com.

DUROS is a registered trademark of ALZA Corporation.

The statements in this press release regarding DURECT's products in development, product development plans, clinical trials, and expected product benefits are forward-looking statements involving risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those in such forward-looking statements. Potential risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, DURECT's ability to develop, manufacturer and commercialize its products, complete successful clinical trials, obtain product approvals from regulatory agencies, build a manufacturing facility and marketplace acceptance of DURECT's products. Further information regarding these and other risks is included in the company's S-1 registration statement, filed with the SEC on September 22, 2000 and its 424(b) prospectus filed with the SEC on September 28, 2000.

For further information please contact:

DURECT Corporation
Schond L. Greenway
Director, Investor Relations
Phone: (408) 777-1417
schond.greenway@durect.com

Noonan/Russo Communications
Tom Baker
Media Relations
Phone: (415) 677-4455 Ext. 370
t.baker@noonanrusso.com