Dennis M. Fisher, MD Named Vice President for Medical Affairs

CUPERTINO, Calif., April 3 /PRNewswire/ —
DURECT Corporation (Nasdaq: DRRX) announced today that Dennis M. Fisher, M.D. has been promoted to the position of Vice President for Medical Affairs.

Dr. Fisher joined DURECT in June 2000 as Medical Director. Dr. Fisher, previously Professor of Anesthesia and Pediatrics at the University of California San Francisco, has over 20 years of experience in the fields of anesthesiology, pediatrics, neuromuscular pharmacology, opioids pharmacology, and pharmacokinetic modeling. During his academic career, Dr. Fisher served on a number of FDA advisory panels and also served as a reviewer of several New Drug Applications, including remifentanil and propofol, products marketed by GlaxoSmithKline and AstraZeneca, respectively. Dr. Fisher was also a consultant for numerous pharmaceutical companies including Abbott Laboratories, Baxter International and Glaxo Wellcome. Dr. Fisher has published more than 80 original research articles and numerous chapters. He also served as an editor of the journal Anesthesiology and he continues to review manuscripts for numerous medical journals.

Dr. Fisher's background includes a B.S. and Masters in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a M.D. from Yale University. His medical training includes an internship and residency in pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, a residency in anesthesia at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and fellowships in pediatric anesthesia and critical care at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and neuromuscular pharmacology at the University of California San Francisco. In 1981, Dr. Fisher joined the faculty of the Department of Anesthesia at the University of California San Francisco where he later ascended to the post of Professor of Anesthesia and Pediatrics. Dr. Fisher was also a member of the Editorial Board of Anesthesiology.

Dr. Fisher and his team played key roles in assisting in the early development of the clinical investigation plan for DUROS sufentanil and the completion of patient enrollment for the Phase II clinical trial of DUROS sufentanil. Over 50 patients at 10 clinical centers were enrolled in the trial more than one quarter ahead of schedule.

"DURECT Corporation is committed to diligently move its pharmaceutical systems products through the clinical development stages. To that effect, DURECT has assembled a formidable product development team with Dr. Fisher as head of our Medical Affairs department," said Felix Theeuwes, Chairman and Chief Scientific Officer of DURECT. "We are very fortunate to have Dr. Fisher at DURECT with his unique expertise in pharmacokinetics, clinical trial design, execution, and analysis as we progress towards moving our lead product, DUROS sufentanil for the treatment of chronic pain, into Phase III clinical studies."

DURECT Corporation is pioneering the development and commercialization of pharmaceutical systems to 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.

In addition to DUROS sufentanil, DURECT's second product in development, DUROS hydromorphone, is a DUROS-based pharmaceutical system for the delivery of hydromorphone to the spine for the treatment of end-stage cancer pain. DURECT is also selling FDA cleared catheters for the delivery of fluids to the inner ear. DURECT also manufactures, sells and distributes the ALZET(R) osmotic pump product for use in laboratory research.

Founded in 1998, DURECT 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, manufacture and commercialize its products, complete successful clinical trials, obtain product approvals from regulatory agencies, build a manufacturing facility, manage its growth and costs, as well as 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 and its Quarterly Report on Form 10Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2000 filed with the SEC on November 14, 2000.

SOURCE DURECT Corporation

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