



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WORLD HEMOPHILIA DAY
RECOGNIZING THE MANY FACES OF BLEEDING DISORDERS**

MONTREAL – April 16, 2010 – Today and tomorrow, the Canadian Hemophilia Society (CHS), its provincial chapters along with the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH) and over 110 other national organizations will mark World Hemophilia Day in Canada and around the world.

Montrealer Frank Schnabel had a mission close to his heart. It was to serve people with hemophilia. That was the mission he envisioned fifty-seven years ago when he first founded the Canadian Hemophilia Society and ten years later when he also established the World Federation of Hemophilia. In 2010, the mission remains and entails so much more.

Along with hemophilia, other inherited bleeding disorders also include von Willebrand disease, the most common bleeding disorder in Canada and in the world. Unfortunately, a great number of men, women and children affected with this particular condition have not yet been diagnosed. Bleeding disorders also include other more unusual conditions such as rare factor deficiencies and platelet functions disorders.

However, beyond the different types of bleeding disorders and the people affected by them, there are many other faces to bleeding disorders. Mothers who are carriers of the hemophilia gene, fathers, siblings who are so supportive but who deserve as much attention as any other child, the extended family who often plays a big role in the care of a child affected with a bleeding disorder, and the dedicated comprehensive healthcare teams.

"A generation ago, we served boys and men with hemophilia," says CHS President, Pam Wilton. "Today, our mission encompasses a variety of inherited blood clotting problems affecting tens of thousands of boys and girls, and men and women in Canada. There are truly many faces to bleeding disorders."

One in 100 Canadians carry an inherited bleeding disorder gene, and more than 35,000 of them have symptoms severe enough to require medical care. There are no cures for inherited bleeding disorders but effective treatments are available for those diagnosed. Left undiagnosed and untreated, however, bleeding disorders can be life-threatening.

"The goal of the World Federation of Hemophilia is that, one day, treatment will be available for all those with inherited bleeding disorders, regardless of where they live," said Mark Skinner, WFH president. "Our vision of *Treatment for All* means expanding services beyond hemophilia, to those with von Willebrand disease, rare factor deficiencies, and inherited platelet disorders."

On April 16 and 17, an outstanding number of awareness activities will take place in Canada. Events will be held in schools in many provinces such as Alberta and Prince Edward Island; and in public places in every Canadian province.

In what is becoming a tradition after two successful years, staff from the CHS along with volunteers from its Quebec Chapter and staff from the WFH, whose head offices are all located in Montreal, will join forces once again to host an awareness day, today, at Montreal's renowned Place Ville-Marie.

It is tragic to know that there are people suffering from an inherited bleeding disorder because of a lack of awareness. That's why the WFH and the CHS are so committed to increasing awareness and informing people about the symptoms and treatment of bleeding disorders. The goal of World Hemophilia Day is to reach out to people potentially suffering from a bleeding disorder to educate them on the benefits of early diagnosis and how to better treat and manage these disorders.

World Hemophilia Day 2010 also wants to recognize the many faces of bleeding disorders and to pay tribute to those who are instrumental in improving the life of those affected with an inherited bleeding disorder.

ABOUT THE CANADIAN HEMOPHILIA SOCIETY (CHS)

Founded in 1953, the Canadian Hemophilia Society (CHS) is a national voluntary health charity. Its mission is to strive to improve the health and quality of life for all people with inherited bleeding disorders, and to find a cure. Its vision is a world free from the pain and suffering of inherited bleeding disorders.

ABOUT THE WORLD FEDERATION OF HEMOPHILIA (WFH)

The WFH is an international not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with hemophilia and related bleeding disorders. Established in 1963, it is a global network of patient organizations in 113 countries and has official recognition from the World Health Organization.

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