

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2009

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CIDP TREATED WITH PLASMA-DERIVED THERAPY

Patients with rare, chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP) depend on plasma donation

ANNAPOLIS, MD—April 24, 2009—Chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP) is a debilitating, progressive neurological disorder that results in muscle weakness and fatigue and can severely impair motor skills. According to the GBS/CIDP Foundation International, CIDP affects two to seven individuals per 100,000 worldwide. The rare disease is treated with intravenous immune globulin (IVIG), a plasma-derived therapy that replaces vital missing antibodies in a person's plasma and that is manufactured by member companies of the Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association (PPTA).

As recently reported in the news, William “The Refrigerator” Perry, a former Chicago Bears lineman, has been hospitalized for treatment of CIDP, which has brought this little known disease some recognition and spurred discussion about the illness and how it is treated in the news and among football fans.

IVIG also is the subject of legislation recently introduced in Congress, The Medicare Patient IVIG Access Act (S. 701 and H.R. 2002). The bills seek adequate reimbursement for IVIG therapy in all sites of care and to complete the hollow primary immunodeficiency disease (PIDD) home infusion benefit. If passed, S.701, introduced by Sens. John Kerry (D-MA) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN), and H.R. 2002, introduced by Reps. Steve Israel (D-NY) and Kevin Brady (R-TX), will improve access to treatment and enhance the quality of life for patients who encounter hurdles to accessing their lifesaving therapy.

PIDD is treated by infusing or injecting immune globulin therapy, which works to supplant a damaged or deficient immune system. According to the Immune Deficiency Foundation, the advocacy organization leading the support for the IVIG Access Act, about 55,000 individuals in the U.S. who are antibody deficient receive the therapy.

“IVIG is produced from plasma that is donated by healthy, committed donors across the nation,” said Julie Birkofer, PPTA Vice President, North America. Plasma is the straw-colored, liquid portion of whole blood that remains when red blood cells, platelets and

other cellular components are removed. It is rich in proteins needed to fight infection, clot blood, and ensure proper lung function.

Source plasma used to produce life-saving therapies like IVIG is donated by healthy, committed individuals at 380 government licensed and [International Quality Plasma Program](#)-certified plasma collections centers in the U.S., Europe and Canada.

“Across the country, tens of thousands of individuals rely on plasma protein therapies to treat rare, chronic diseases and disorders, which include hemophilia and other bleeding disorders, primary immunodeficiency diseases, alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, Kawasaki disease, and certain autoimmune and neurological disorders like CIDP,” said Birkofer. “IVIG is a vital protein replacement therapy that treats diseases that are often life-threatening and always serious and chronic.”

To learn more about lifesaving plasma protein therapies, visit www.pptaglobal.org. To find out how to become a plasma donor and become an important part of saving someone’s life, visit www.donatingplasma.org. Visit www.gbs-cidp.org for more information about CIDP. For information about primary immunodeficiency disease, visit www.primaryimmune.org.

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The Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association (PPTA) is the trade association and standard setting organization for the world’s major producers of plasma-derived and recombinant analog therapies (collectively, “plasma protein therapies”). These therapies are used by more than 1 million people worldwide each year to treat a variety of diseases and serious medical conditions. PPTA members produce over 80 percent of the plasma therapies for the United States market and more than 60 percent worldwide. Some of the critical therapies produced by PPTA members include: blood clotting factors for people with hemophilia, immune globulin intravenous used to prevent infections in people with immune deficiencies and other serious conditions, and alpha-1 proteinase inhibitor used to treat people with alpha-1-antitrypsin deficiency, also known as genetic emphysema.