



PRESS RELEASE

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The Bone & Joint Decade 2000-2010
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New Osteoporosis Network Aims to Break the Growing Numbers of Fragility Fractures

8 June 2009 | Vienna (AUSTRIA) – In answer to a rising need for osteoporosis expertise, the Osteoporotic Fracture Line (OFL), an international network organisation, was launched Saturday in Vienna during the European Federation of National Associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology (EFORT) Congress.

Osteoporotic Fracture Line – ‘A Network to Improve Fragility Fracture Management,’ was created to bring together experts in an environment of information exchange and thus meet the increasing global need for knowledge about fragility fracture prevention and treatment and osteoporosis management. Osteoporosis, in which the bones become fragile and fracture easily, is also known as the silent killer because many of the 30 million people effected worldwide don't know they have it, but if left untreated, can be fatal. Osteoporosis affects one in every three women and one in every five men, over the age of 50 in countries throughout the world.

Existing international programmes have proven to be inadequate to deal with this global epidemic. Professor Lars Lidgren of Sweden, Chairman of The Bone and Joint Decade, and a founder of the OFL explains: "There is a urgent requirement to ensure that people suffering from fragility fractures due to osteoporosis and other bone diseases receive appropriate treatment throughout the entire line of care, including surgery, treatment and follow-up management, all for the purpose of improving the health of patients and the prevention of further fractures."

Prof. Kristna Akesson, newly elected President of the OFL, adds that: "The OFL, a non-profit scientific body, has designed an extensive programme of work, in cooperation with leading scientific experts and relevant international, regional and national organisations, as well as in partnership with industry concerned, to meet this global need."

The OFL, headquartered in Switzerland, will hold international scientific conferences, publish technical guidelines, run training courses for physicians, promote policy change to optimise governmental and insurance policies for osteoporosis patients, encourage the development of national societies to improve fragility fracture management and provide public information with the ultimate goal of preventing further fractures.

Some facts

- Worldwide osteoporosis affects one in every three women over age 50 (more than breast cancer) and one in every five men over age 50 (more than prostate cancer).
- Osteoporosis-related fractures have almost doubled in the last decade. One in every three women over age 50 will suffer a fracture caused by osteoporosis.
- A hip fracture is considered the most preventable cause of seniors' loss of independence -- up to 50% of people experiencing a hip fracture are never able to walk independently again.
- The frequency of hip fractures from osteoporosis will double in Asia and Latin America in the coming decades, creating an urgent need for increased osteoporosis expertise in these regions.
- In the USA, more than 1.5 million fractures each year are caused by osteoporosis. Today, 10 million Americans already have osteoporosis and 18 million more have low bone mass, placing them at increased risk for this disease.
- Osteoporosis accounts for 70% of all fractures for people over 45 in the USA. The rate of osteoporosis-related fractures and the costs of caring for these fractures are expected to rise by almost 50% to more than three million fractures costing \$25.3 billion by 2025.

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To find out more

For further information please consult the Osteoporotic Fracture Line (OFL) website: www.oflsociety.org or contact Professor Akesson on +46 70 561 4720 kristina.akesson@med.lu.se