

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Donate Life Illinois, Astellas and the Chicago Bears Partner to *Tackle the Shortage* in Honor of Bears Legend, Walter Payton

Challenge to state of Illinois: 5,000 new organ donor registrations by the end of the year

Deerfield, IL (October 26, 2009) – On November 1, 1999 Chicago Bears fans and the organ donation community experienced a great loss with the passing of Chicago Bears legend and organ donation advocate, Walter Payton. Payton, who suffered from primary sclerosing cholangitis, a rare autoimmune liver disease, passed away at the age of 45 while on the waiting list for a liver transplant.

In honor of Payton, Donate Life Illinois (DLI) and Astellas Pharma US, Inc., (Astellas) in partnership with the Chicago Bears, today issued the *Tackle the Shortage: Donate Life Challenge* encouraging Illinois residents to join the donor registry with the goal of registering 5,000 new donors by the end of the year. Through this initiative, DLI, Astellas and the Bears will work to reinforce the importance of organ donation, showcase the miracle of transplantation and provide residents with the necessary tools and information to join the state donor registry.

"My dad Walter Payton was not just a Chicago Bear legend and football hero, he was a man who inspired people by just being himself. He was hard working, determined and genuinely cared about everyone he met both on and off the football field," said Jarrett Payton, son of Walter Payton. "During the last few months of his life, my dad felt compelled to talk about organ transplantation and openly promote organ donation to benefit all those who wait for a second chance. My family is thrilled to see his legacy live on by continuing to help others through efforts like the *Tackle the Shortage Challenge*."

Growing Health Crisis

As the number of people awaiting lifesaving organ transplants in the United States continues to climb, it is more important than ever for people who support donation to become registered donors. In the 10 years since Payton's passing, the United States transplant waiting list has grown from 67,000 people to more than 100,000 people, including 4,700 Illinois residents.

"An average of 18 people die each day waiting for available organs. Therefore, it's imperative that we educate people about donation and provide information and access to allow them to register to donate," said Maribeth Landwehr, Director, Corporate Communications for Astellas. "Astellas has a long-standing commitment to the organ donation community and is proud to partner with Donate Life Illinois on initiatives like this which are aimed at prompting action in people to help address this critical issue."

To help residents meet the *Donate Life Challenge, Tackle the Shortage* information booths will be set up at the Bears Ultimate Tailgate events during the Bears home games on November 1 and November 8. Donate Life Illinois volunteers will be on-site to distribute information, answer questions and assist with donor registrations. Booth visitors will also have the opportunity to order specialized organ donor Illinois license plates, which honor Walter Payton and raise funds for DLI's educational programs.

In addition, the Bears November 1 game will be dedicated to the life and legacy of Walter Payton. Game activities will include a half-time ceremony featuring Payton's family and former teammates. Also, visitors to the *Tackle the Shortage* booth on November 1st will have the opportunity to enter a raffle for Payton memorabilia.

"After Walter Payton announced he was in need of a liver transplant, we saw a 25 percent increase in the number of registered organ donors in Illinois. Bears fans and community members came out in droves to show their support for Payton," said David Bosch, Communications Director for Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network and Co-Chair of Donate Life Illinois. "We are counting on Illinois residents to again show that support and help us honor the life and legacy of Walter Payton by meeting the *Donate Life Challenge* goal of registering 5,000 new organ donors by the end of the year."

If you registered as an organ donor prior to January 1, 2006, you need to re-register your decision. Illinois residents can join the registry or re-register by visiting www.DonateLifeIllinois.org. For more information about the *Tackle the Shortage: Donate Life Challenge*, visit www.Facebook.com/DonateLife.

About Donate Life Illinois

Donate Life Illinois is the coalition of agencies responsible for organ, tissue, eye and blood donation, as well as donor registration and education in Illinois. It is one of 45 state teams making up Donate Life America, a not-for-profit alliance that serves as a national voice and inspires all people to save and enhance lives through organ, eye and tissue donation. For more information: www.DonateLifeIllinois.org.

About Astellas

Astellas is a recognized leader in transplantation and has been committed to the field of immunology for more than 20 years. Dedicated to supporting the advancement of care for patients, Astellas continues to build upon its legacy and leadership in transplantation by investing in ongoing clinical research and new product development.

Astellas Pharma US, Inc., located in Deerfield, Illinois, is a US affiliate of Tokyo-based Astellas Pharma Inc. Astellas is a pharmaceutical company dedicated to improving the health of people around the world through the provision of innovative and reliable pharmaceutical products. The organization is committed to becoming a global category leader in focused areas by combining outstanding R&D and marketing capabilities. In the US, Astellas markets products in the areas of Immunology, Urology, Anti-Infectives, Cardiovascular and Dermatology. For more information about Astellas Pharma US, Inc., please visit our Web site at www.AstellasTransplant.com.