



PRESS RELEASE

“PREPARING FOR LIFE”

REDUCING CHILDHOOD AND MATERNAL MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY

IMPROVING CHILD AND MATERNAL HEALTH WORLDWIDE

The death of up to 30.000 (*) infants and children every day is a tragedy on every level – from the parents losing a child to the society who loses a citizen.

Many of these deaths are preventable through the adoption of affordable strategies that ensure women’s health and wellbeing, including adequate nutrition, before and in early pregnancy, in order to maximise life chances for newborns, infants and children. This will help ensure that middle- and low-income nations are able to meet targets set out in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

At Biovision – the World Life Sciences Forum in Lyon, France, a new initiative to promote maternal and child wellbeing and reduce childhood and maternal deaths has been presented, called “Preparing for Life”. This brings together academics, policy makers, patient organisations, industry and doctors in a joint programme supported by Rotary. This initiative will promote the systematic provision of high quality services to support women’s health, including nutrition, globally.

Announcing this initiative Professor Arnold Christianson (**) said: “This is a significant step forward. Implementing this programme could save the lives of thousands of babies and children every day and significantly reduce the deaths of women in pregnancy and childbirth. Bringing patients and families together with all the other stakeholders in a coherent initiative will create the critical mass necessary to ensure that this is a practical, realistic and achievable humanitarian goal”.

ENDS

Notes for editors.

(*) Reference: United Nations Millennium Development Goals Report 2009.

(**) Prof. Arnold Christianson is chair of the International Scientific Consortium of the Preparing for Life Initiative and Head of the Department of Human Genetics at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa,

“Preparing for Life” is a worldwide joint venture of patients/parents support groups (IGA), science (academia) and service (Rotary) and open to international organisations, governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations, academics, industry and committed individuals.

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