

For immediate release

Attention: Health/Lifestyle/Science Editors

Leading Canadian Allergy Experts Reveal Plan to Better Understand Anaphylaxis *Cross Canada anaphylaxis registry will enhance our knowledge and save lives*

Montreal, QC (20 September 2010) – Earlier today in the heart of Montreal, Canadian allergy experts shared significant research findings from a recently completed study, *Surveying Canadians to Assess the Prevalence of Common Food Allergies and Attitudes towards Food Labelling and Risk* (SCAAALAR), regarding food allergy prevalence and perceptions in Canada.

The event, hosted by AllerGen NCE Inc. (AllerGen), with special guest Dr. Samuel Godefroy of Health Canada, featured leading allergy experts Dr. Ann Clarke, a practicing allergist at McGill University Health Centre and Professor in the Department of Medicine at McGill University in Montreal and Dr. Susan Elliott, Professor and Dean in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Waterloo. Drs. Clarke and Elliott spoke about their current AllerGen-funded research project, the *Surveying Prevalence (of food) Allergy (in) All Canadian Environments* (SPAACE) Study, set to be complete in 2012. The SPAACE Study has a particular focus on vulnerable Canadian populations and will build upon their current research findings and knowledge about food allergy prevalence and perception in Canada.

“Our first Canadian food allergy prevalence project, the SCAAALAR Study showed that approximately 7.5% of Canadians report at least one food allergy and that the prevalence of food allergy differs between socioeconomic groups and geographic regions,” shared Dr. Clarke.

Dr. Elliott added, “Our research also shows that a large gap exists between Canadians perception of food allergy prevalence and actual food allergy prevalence verified through research. Food allergy is the primary trigger of anaphylaxis, which we know can be life threatening. It is, therefore, essential that through research, we compile a comprehensive picture of food allergy prevalence and perception in Canada to appropriately inform regulatory decisions and reduce the overall burden.”

Dr. Clarke also revealed a plan for a Cross Canada Anaphylaxis Registry Study (C-CARE). The Study, in collaboration with AllerGen NCE Inc. and Health Canada, will result in a national anaphylaxis registry that aims to fill significant gaps regarding anaphylaxis prevalence, triggers, development and management.

Dr. Samuel Godefroy, Director General, Food Directorate with Health Canada stated that, “Health Canada has had a very fruitful collaboration with AllerGen.” Dr. Godefroy added, “Health Canada will continue to promote its partnership with AllerGen in order to fill the knowledge gaps associated with food allergies and anaphylaxis in support of its actions to enhance the protection of food allergic consumers in Canada.”

More...

Leading Canadian Allergy Experts Con't...

The burden on Canadian society associated with anaphylaxis – the most severe expression of food allergy – remains largely unknown. Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life threatening. Food is the most common cause of anaphylaxis, but insect stings, medicine, latex or exercise can also cause a reaction.

The C-CARE Study is extremely important as it will consolidate anaphylaxis information collected by healthcare professionals across Canada. The registry will enable allergy experts to characterize anaphylaxis by identifying emerging triggers and facilitate patient follow up. C-CARE will benefit Canadians by informing the development of improved diagnostic approaches and therapeutic strategies, which will contribute to reducing the incidence and decreasing the morbidity and mortality of anaphylaxis.

Both the SPACE and C-CARE Studies are supported by AllerGen NCE Inc. in partnership with Health Canada, Anaphylaxis Canada, Association québécoise des allergies alimentaires, and the Allergy/Asthma Information Association.

AllerGen NCE Inc., the Allergy, Genes and Environment Network, (est. 2004), is a national research network dedicated to improving the quality of life for people suffering from allergic and related immune diseases. Funded by Industry Canada through the federal Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Program, the Network is hosted at McMaster University in Hamilton.

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