



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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International Pediatric Transplant Association Announces New Outreach Program in Macedonia

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. – The International Pediatric Transplant Association (IPTA) has just announced the creation of a new outreach program in Skopje, Macedonia with the goal of advancing pediatric transplantation in this underserved region of South East Europe. The focus of the outreach program in Skopje will be the establishment of a pediatric liver program.

The IPTA Outreach Program is an official program of the Association aiming at identifying centers wanting to develop transplant programs in underserved areas. IPTA will work with the centers to help them identify their needs and evaluate their potential, assist in finding a sponsor institution for the training of medical and nursing personnel, and aid in the implementation of a local program with the active support of the sponsoring institution.

Cliniques Saint-Luc in Brussels, Belgium, is serving as the sponsor institution for the Macedonia program. The institution's Department of Pediatric Surgery and Transplantation is charged with training the needed personnel to start the program in Skopje.

In addition, a national foundation has been established in Skopje on October 20, 2008, to promote organ donation and transplantation in Macedonia and neighboring countries. This event was attended by the Macedonian Minister of Health and representatives of the IPTA Outreach Program, the sponsor institution, and the European Society of Organ Transplantation. The Macedonian Foundation will focus on raising awareness of the need for organ donation among the public and the medical personnel, assisting patients in need of organ transplantation and their family, educating professionals in the field of organ donation and transplantation, and promoting ethical standards along the guidelines of IPTA.

“As an association aiming to promote organ transplantation worldwide, IPTA has the responsibility to help establish programs in underserved areas of the world,” said Prof. Jean-Bernard Otte, chairperson of IPTA Outreach Program. “We’re excited to bring this program to Macedonia and allow more children to have access to transplantation globally.”

The IPTA Outreach Program was initiated through a generous grant from Novartis Pharmaceuticals. In addition to Skopje, Macedonia, outreach efforts are planned in other areas.

The International Pediatric Transplant Association (IPTA) is a professional organization of individuals in the field of pediatric transplantation. The purpose of the association is to advance the science and practice of pediatric transplantation worldwide in order to improve the health of all children who require such treatment. The association is dedicated to promoting technical and scientific advances in pediatric transplantation and advocating for the rights of all children who need transplantation.

For more information on IPTA, please visit www.iptaonline.org.

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