



The Bone & Joint Decade 2000-2010
PRESS RELEASE

The Bone & Joint Decade 2000-2010
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Time for Change when Bone and Joint Decade Hits Washington DC

20 October 2009 | WASHINGTON DC (USA) – Amidst endless health care reform talks in Washington, one group wants to be sure musculoskeletal disease comes in on the government's priority list.

The United States branch of the international initiative, the Bone and Joint Decade, endorsed by the World Health Organization and the United Nations, will host a four-day strategic planning session in Washington DC from October 21-24 to highlight the enormous burden posed by musculoskeletal disorders and develop an ambitious yet achievable roadmap for the future of bone and joint health.

Participants from across the US will be joining delegates from 56 nations for the 2009 Bone and Joint Decade World Network Conference and the Patient Advocacy Seminar. This elite group including government policy makers, doctors, researchers, NGOs and patient advocates, will focus on musculoskeletal health in the US, as well as internationally, and develop strategies to advance prevention and treatment to be implemented in the US and globally over the coming 10 years.

Prof Lars Lidgren, Chairman of the Bone and Joint Decade, and Head of the Dept of Orthopaedics at the University of Lund in Sweden, said: "Musculoskeletal disorders are the leading cause of disability around the world, affecting one in every two people and accounting for 25% of the total cost of illness. Next year we will be reaching the end of our first decade of action. Nevertheless, musculoskeletal disorders will continue to grow in significance and need on global and national health agendas. Our vision is a society where prevention, treatment and care of people with musculoskeletal disorders are of high standard and accessible around the world – and our work will continue to be focused to this end."

In concert with the health care reform talks in Congress, on October 22, there will be a special Advocacy Day event on Capitol Hill attended by several members of Congress and representatives from the Dept of Health which is posed to underline the enormity of the musculoskeletal burden by comparison to the fraction of expenditure currently directed to this area of great need.

Programme highlights include:

- **"Health Care: Opportunities and Challenges"** panel featuring Susan Blumenthal, M.D., Former Assistant Surgeon General, and Director, Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress, held on Thursday, October 22, 10:00 a.m., at the Capitol Hill Visitors Center, HVC-215;
- **"Experts in Arthritis"** panel featuring panelists Congresswoman Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.), David Borenstein, MD, Rheumatologist, and John H. Klippel, MD, president and CEO, Arthritis Foundation, in addition to moderator Amye Leong, president and CEO, Healthy Motivation held on Thursday, October 22, 1:30 p.m., at Rayburn House Office Building, Gold Room 2168, on Capitol Hill;
- **"The Urgency of Addressing the Burden of Musculoskeletal Disease"**: major conditions, geographical differences, societal impact, projection of inaction, featuring Prof Anthony Woolf, MBBS, FRCP, from the Royal Cornwall Hospital and the WHO Collaborating Centre in Lund, Sweden, Friday, October 24, 8:30 a.m., at the JW Marriot;
- **"Rehabilitation of Musculoskeletal Disorders – Social Integration and Engagement"** featuring Prof Kai-Ming Chan from the Prince of Wales Hospital in Hong Kong, Friday, October 24, 2:15 p.m., at the JW Marriot;
- **"Advancing the Health Policy Agenda"** James Weinstein, DO, MS, Director, The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice, Friday, October 24, 3:00 p.m., at the JW Marriot; and,
- **"Spotlight on Women's Health Care"** panel featuring Jill Zarin, celebrity and arthritis advocate held on Friday, October 24, 12:30 p.m., at the JW Marriot.

[The big picture:](#)
In the US

- Musculoskeletal conditions are reported by the American people more than any other health condition. It is estimated that these conditions occur in nearly one in two persons over the age of 18 or about 48% of the US population. These conditions are also the most common cause of severe long-term pain and physical disability around the world affecting hundreds of millions of people (Burden of Major Musculoskeletal Conditions, Woolf & Pfleger, *WHO Bulletin* 2003; 81: 646-56).
- Musculoskeletal conditions can lead to significant disability, resulting in lost productivity and a substantial impact on quality of life. In 2004, the estimated total cost of treatment and lost wages associated with musculoskeletal diseases in the US alone was \$849 billion.
- Musculoskeletal diseases accounted for the majority of lost work and bed days due to health conditions in 2005.
- In spite of this high cost, funding for research to reduce the pain and suffering created by these conditions is currently less than 2 % of the National Institutes of Health budget each year, mean while the burden of musculoskeletal conditions expected to escalate exponentially in the next 10-20 years due to the aging population and sedentary lifestyles.

To read more on the Burden of Musculoskeletal Diseases in the United States, please go to <http://www.boneandjointburden.org/>

Worldwide

- One in every three women over age 50 will suffer a fracture caused by osteoporosis.
- Up to 80% of people will suffer from back pain during their lives and back pain is the second leading cause of work-place sick leave.
- Every 30 seconds someone in the world dies in a road traffic accident, and in the same time frame three others are severely injured.
- Road traffic accidents are the leading cause of death and disability for people under age 45.

Background

The Bone and Joint Decade 2000 – 2010 was launched in Geneva in January 2000 during a World Health Organization conference on "The Burden of Musculoskeletal Conditions at the Start of the New Millennium." Kofi Annan, then Secretary General of the United Nations, endorsed the Bone and Joint Decade on behalf of the United Nations. The driving force behind this initiative is the recognition among healthcare professionals and patient advocates of the significant impact and the growing burden of bone and joint disorders on society, healthcare systems and individuals, and that no single organisation alone can accomplish the desired benefits. The Bone and Joint Decade is a global initiative with localised national strategies and actions. Today the Decade has the support of 63 nations and more than 750 global organisations. Please see www.bjdonline.org for more information.

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For more information or to arrange interviews, contact:

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