



The Bone and Joint Decade 2000-2010 **PRESS RELEASE**

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Fragility Fracture Network Helps Osteoporosis Care Stand Tall

20 October 2009 | LUND (SWEDEN) – This year the World Osteoporosis Day 'Stand Tall' theme calls on national health departments and medical professionals around the world to view osteoporosis as a health priority. In recognition of the importance of this mission, the Bone and Joint Decade (BJD) has launched the Fragility Fracture Network (FFN), an international organisation,

In recent years experts in orthopaedics and in osteoporosis have recognised the urgent need to improve the overall management of patients with fragility and osteoporosis-related fractures. According to Chairperson, Prof Kristina Akkesson, orthopaedic surgeon from Malmö, Sweden and member of the BJD International Steering Committee, the FFN, a non-profit scientific body, is dedicated to improving osteoporosis management by creating a line of care from the moment the fracture occurs, until the fracture is healed and the patient is rehabilitated. "This also includes secondary prevention of osteoporotic fractures working in collaboration with other related organisations. The focus group for this initiative began with orthopaedic surgeons but other professionals are involved in the care pathway, e.g. radiologists, rehabilitation therapists, and so on." she said.

Osteoporosis, in which the bones become fragile and fracture easily, is known as a silent killer because many of the 30 million people effected worldwide do not know they have it, and if left untreated, can be fatal. Osteoporosis affects one in every three women and one in every five men, over the age of 50 in countries throughout the world.

Headquartered in Switzerland, the Network hopes that through this initiative fracture management can be improved by increasing the competence among those persons taking care of fragility fracture patients either in hospital or in primary and extended care with the ultimate goal of preventing further fractures.

Some Facts about Osteoporosis:

- Osteoporosis-related fractures have almost doubled in the last decade. One in every three women over age 50 will suffer a fracture caused by osteoporosis.
- In the USA, more than 1.5 million fractures each year are caused by osteoporosis. Today, 10 million Americans already have osteoporosis and 18 million more have low bone mass, placing them at increased risk for this disease. The rate of osteoporosis-related fractures and the costs of caring for these fractures are expected to rise by almost 50% to more than three million fractures costing \$25.3 billion by 2025.
- A hip fracture is considered the most preventable cause of seniors' loss of independence -- up to 50% of people experiencing a hip fracture are never able to walk independently again.
- The frequency of hip fractures from osteoporosis will double in Asia and Latin America in the coming decades.

Launched in January 2000, the Bone and Joint Decade is an NGO comprised of National Action Networks in 65 countries and with the support of more than 750 related organisations globally. Its mission is to advance understanding of musculoskeletal disorders worldwide through research and to improve the quality of life for those affected. The Bone and Joint Decade initiative works closely with the United Nations and the World Health Organization. For more information, please see <http://www.bjdonline.org/> and <http://www.oflsociety.org/>

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