



WORLD CANCER DAY, FEBRUARY 4 ERS and FIRS raise lung cancer awareness During 2010 The Year of the Lung

LAUSANNE, February 4, 2010 – As part of their 2010 The Year of the Lung campaign, the European Respiratory Society (ERS) and other members of the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) are marking World Cancer Day by raising awareness of lung cancer.

Lung cancer is the third most common cancer and is the leading cause of cancer deaths throughout the world. Prognosis is dismal for most patients as the majority are diagnosed at a late stage in the disease: every second patient already has metastases at the time of diagnosis. In Europe alone, deaths from lung cancer are estimated at about 350,000 per year.

“Increased awareness about lung cancer is vital, because this preventable disease is killing millions of people worldwide, with mortality rates still increasing in many countries, especially in women,” stresses ERS President Prof Nikolaos Siafakas.

Lung cancer can be prevented - Tobacco control and smoking cessation in Europe

Smoking is a major contributor to all-cause mortality in Europe and accounts for one-fifth of cancer-related deaths. Addressing the tobacco epidemic is a major contribution to reducing lung cancer and other smoking-related cancers.

In an attempt to support physicians in counseling their patients on the importance of smoke cessation, the European Respiratory Society is hosting a live lecture in conjunction with the Turkish Thoracic Society, on the implementation of smoking cessation and the importance of this activity for lung health professionals and their patients. Prof. Elif Dağlı, from the Turkish Thoracic Society, will be giving his presentation on tobacco control in Europe on World Cancer Day.

Of all cancers, lung cancer represents the biggest killer worldwide. It is the third most common cancer and is likely to increase faster than many other types because of the upsurge of smoking in low- and middle-income countries.

2010 The Year of the Lung

The European Respiratory Society led by ERS President Nikolaos Siafakas, together with the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) have declared 2010 to be the Year of the Lung in an effort to increase awareness of the importance of lung health globally and at national level, and to reduce lung disease morbidity and mortality.

Under the direction of its President Nikolaos Siafakas, the ERS is responsible for European region activities during 2010 The Year of the Lung. The launch of this campaign in Europe took place at the recent French-language Society of Pneumology (Société de Pneumologie de Langue Française, SPLF) conference in Marseille.

Speaking at the European launch, Professor Siafakas emphasised that: “there is an urgent need for the European Commission and member states to provide increased resources for research for improved patient care and quality of life”. He also added that: “most respiratory diseases are both preventable and treatable – treatment however is very costly, and effective prevention policies in the EU and worldwide are severely lacking”.

Know your lung function

As part of 2010 The Year of the Lung, spirometry, an easy and non invasive means of testing lung function, will be made available to the public, in an effort to raise awareness about lung health. It was recently shown that, in smokers, lung cancer risk correlates with abnormalities found on lung function testing.

A key initiative for improving respiratory health, therefore, will be the launch of the first ever World Spirometry Day on 14th October 2010. This will be a global event providing public lung testing in hospitals and clinics across the world.

Notes to Editors

About 2010 The Year of the Lung

The overall goal of 2010 The Year of the Lung is to raise awareness about lung health among the public, initiate action in communities worldwide, and advocate for resources to combat lung disease including increased investment in basic, clinical and translational research worldwide

More information on European 2010 The *Year of the Lung* activities, see: www.ersnet.org/yearofthelung

More information on worldwide 2010 The *Year of the Lung* activities, see: www.2010yearofthelung.org

About FIRS

2010 The Year of the Lung is being organised by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS). FIRS includes the Asociacion Latinoamericana del Thorax (ALAT), the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP), the American Thoracic Society (ATS), the Asia Pacific Society of Respirology (APSR), the European Respiratory Society (ERS), the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), and the Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS).

About ERS

The European Respiratory Society, ERS, is an international and medical organisation with more than 9,000 members in over 100 countries representing medical and scientific experts in the field of respiratory science and medicine. Its mission is to promote lung health through research, knowledge sharing, medical and public education. More info at: www.ersnet.org