

NEWS FROM ONFCI For Immediate Release

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VETERANS & CHILDREN AMONG THOSE BATTLING BIAS

AND “PROBLEMATIC P’s”

Cleveland, OH - Gulf War and other veterans, 9/11 first responders, Hurricane Katrina victims, Valdez Oil Spill workers, schoolchildren, housewives, unsuspecting workers, and many others have one thing in common – illness and disability caused by exposures to toxins. Unlike others whose diseases are understood and acknowledged, those affected with chemical sensitization issues must “Battle the Barricades of Bias” in order to get safe medical care, disability accommodations, and support.

According to L. Christine Oliver, M.D., M.P.H., M.S., Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, Harvard Medical School:

“...physicians do not get this disease; they don’t understand this disease. Medical students are not taught about multiple chemical sensitivity.”

http://www.alisonjohnsonmcs.com/pdf/Transcript_Nov_16_Oliver_Johnson.pdf

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is an umbrella name for all illnesses caused by toxic exposures that result in chemical intolerance and ongoing reactions to low levels of chemicals present in our daily lives. MCS Awareness Month is recognized every May, in Ohio as well as internationally, in order to educate others about this devastating disability. Epidemiological studies show incident rates of 10-15% hypersensitivity to chemicals and 2-5% for diagnosable MCS.

The Ohio Network for the Chemically Injured (ONFCI), an Ohio 501-C3 organization that provides support and advocacy for those who have been harmed, urges everyone, especially hospitals and medical care facilities, to be cognizant of toxic products which may cause illness, disability, and chemical intolerance, as well as trigger more severe reactions upon re-exposure. Toxins include those contained in the “Problematic P’s”: Pesticides; Pharmaceuticals; Perfumes; Preservatives; Penicillium, and

Petrochemicals. Recognizing the dangers and avoiding the unnecessary use of questionable products serves to safeguard everyone's health and provide a safer environment for those who are ill and disabled.

Michael Connell, R.Ph and ONFCI Vice President, discussing pharmaceuticals, one of the "Problematic P's", said:

"In addition to their own potentially toxic ingredients, pharmaceuticals may contain other harmful products including dyes, preservatives, fillers, and incipients, some of which may interact with other prescription and over-the-counter drugs, foods, or other products, and result in severe and life-threatening adverse effects .

Read package inserts and warnings and do not flush unused pharmaceuticals down the drain or toilet. Most drugs, including antibiotics, anti-depressants, hormonal chemicals (including birth control pills), cancer treatments, pain killers, and tranquilizers, cannot be entirely filtered out of our drinking water."

Patty Martin, former mayor and ONFCI Board Member, urges people to:

"Make product choices by reading ingredient labels and selecting those with recognizable ingredients vs. a plethora of unknown additives, dyes, and preservatives. Making positive product choices will create market demand for safer products."

"Problematic P's" (see fact sheet) is the theme for Ohio's MCS Awareness Month in May.

Supporters preparing proclamations and resolutions for MCS Awareness include the Cuyahoga County Council; mayors including Bay Village, Beachwood, Broadview Heights, Brook Park, Brooklyn, Cleveland, Garfield Heights, Independence, Middleburg Heights, Olmsted Falls, Parma, Parma Heights, Villages of Cuyahoga Heights and Glenwillow, and some Board of Education Superintendents. Libraries including Cleveland Public, Cuyahoga County Public Library, and others throughout Ohio and nationally, will set up displays of related books and literature during May displaying local proclamations and resolutions. Related link: <http://ecowatch.org/2012/cuyahoga-council-passes-landmark-resolution/>

ONFCI encourages everyone to become more aware of the ways in which people have developed MCS and act to avoid preventable daily exposures that cause harm to themselves and others. Educating yourself and using unscented products is a healthy start.: More info: www.leapinfo.org and <http://postbythelake.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/newsletterweb4.pdf> - See Page 7

For further information about MCS visit our website at www.ohionetwork.org or contact ONFCI at 440) 845-1888. #####