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## **Call for Dialogue to solve the Chronic Lyme Disease Crisis**

*Bethesda, MD – December 8, 2010* There are an increasing number of individuals with Lyme disease and tick borne illnesses who remain chronically ill. Four National Institutes of Health (NIH) trials documented the severity of chronic Lyme disease symptoms these patients report. One trial described the pain as severe as post-surgery patients and fatigue as bad as multiple sclerosis.

Academics and clinicians who bear the responsibility to treat these patients recognize the chronicity and seriousness of these problems. “A more coordinated effort between treating physicians, researchers and governmental agencies is needed to more effectively understand the nature of chronic complex infections and the immune reactions to these infections that result in many chronic illnesses,” according to Dr. Robert Bransfield, President of the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS) and President Elect of the New Jersey Psychiatric Association.

“There are an increasing number of physicians who are successfully treating individuals with chronic Lyme disease,” stated Dr. Bransfield. “These physicians guide their patients to treatments that are effective and beneficial – allowing patients to have a better quality of life.”

In the recent International Lyme and Associated Disease Society (ILADS) professional conference, Dr. Paul Ewald, Director of the Program in Disease Evolution at the University of Louisville described a growing body of peer reviewed studies published in mainstream scientific journals, that demonstrates many common diseases of unknown origin are in fact the result of the presence of slowly acting infections caused by viruses, bacteria or protozoa.

Although some resist this forward progress, it is encouraging to see initiatives in which the patient community, researchers and physicians who treat chronic Lyme disease are coming together. Programs such as a recent Institute of Medicine and Virginia Governor’s task force on Lyme Disease and Other Tick-Borne Diseases have generated a much needed dialogue towards

the goal of reconciling differences of opinion regarding the management of this complex condition.

*About ILADS: ILADS is a nonprofit, international, multidisciplinary medical society, dedicated to the diagnosis and appropriate treatment of Lyme and its associated diseases. ILADS promotes understanding of Lyme and its associated diseases through research and education and strongly supports physicians and other health care professionals dedicated to advancing the standard of care for Lyme and its associated diseases.*