



# Chinese Community Launch 'Summer of Saving Lives'

*Local Chinese Group Launch Summer Long Stem Cell Awareness Campaign*

## For Immediate Release

**Toronto, June 22, 2009** – Canada's OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network is pleased to partner once again with OtherHalf - Chinese Stem Cell Initiative by announcing a series of events aimed directly at increasing the number of Chinese stem cell registrants in Canada and throughout the world. The 'Summer of Saving Lives' will include DNA sample collection (buccal swabs) at various events across the Greater Toronto Region.

Patients needing stem cells transplants include those suffering from cancers, lymphoma, myeloma and other immune and genetic disorders.

Canada's stem cell network is 82% Caucasian and **only 1.4% of Canada's stem cell registrants are from Chinese heritage**. With the likelihood of finding a match far greater within one's own ethnic group, more donors from diverse backgrounds are needed to sign up for the OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network. Equally, only 30% of patients will find a match within their own family, while the other 70 per cent must depend on the generosity of unrelated donors. At any given time at least 760 Canadian patients facing life-threatening illnesses are in need of a stem cell transplant.

The 'Summer of Saving Lives' has been organized to improve the number of Chinese stem cell donors by stem cell advocates -- OtherHalf. OtherHalf has strategically positioned three (3) awareness events to offer the Chinese community an opportunity to provide their DNA sample for testing. DNA sample collection, or buccal swabbing, is a convenient and easy way for Canadians to join the network by simply swabbing the inside of their mouths.

"OtherHalf will be present at these summer events to provide swabs and information to the Chinese community. Each event; everything from business, to youth, to faith based audiences, will be another opportunity for OtherHalf and OneMatch to get this message out to the public," informs Susan Go, Chair of OtherHalf Chinese Stem Cell Initiative.

Sue Smith, Executive Director, OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Registry recognizes and congratulates the effectiveness shown by community partners such as OtherHalf, by providing strategic opportunities to engage more Chinese Canadians to become potential stem cell donors.

"OtherHalf have shown immense success in the past and we look forward to an even more wonderful year ahead as we head into the 'Summer of Saving Lives.'

## Summer of Saving Lives Awareness Events

**CPAC** (Chinese Professional Association of Canada) Professional Day  
50 Hallcrown Place, North York  
Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> (11:30 am – 5 pm)

**Taste of Asia** – Kennedy Road between Steeles & Denison, Markham  
Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> (noon - midnight)  
Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup> (noon – 6 pm)



**Night it Up** – Metro Square, Steeles & Warden, Markham  
Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> (7 pm – 1 am)  
Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup> (1 pm – 1 am)

**Scarborough Chinese Baptist Church** – 3227 Kenney Road, Scarborough,  
Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>

**Richmond Hill Chinese Baptist Church** – 136 Hillside Drive, Richmond Hill  
Awareness Event coming in August 2009

**Guelph Cambridge Chinese Alliance Church** – Guelph, Ontario  
Awareness Event coming in September 2009

For a list of activities the group has planned over the next few months go to <http://www.chinesestemcell.ca>, and if you're interested in becoming the one match to save someone's life, join OneMatch today by logging onto [www.onematch.ca](http://www.onematch.ca) or calling Canadian Blood Services at 1 888 2 DONATE (1 888 236-6283).

#### **About OtherHalf Chinese Stem Cell Initiative**

Currently there are about 15 Chinese Canadian patients waiting for unrelated stem cell donors in Canada alone. Out of over 13 million donors registered in the Bone Marrow Donors Worldwide database less than 500,000 of these registrants are of Chinese origin.

OtherHalf—Chinese Stem Cell Initiative was started by a group of concerned citizens from diverse backgrounds who wanted to make this dire situation known to the Chinese public. In collaboration with OneMatch, the Canadian stem cell agency, our goal is to increase the number of registrants of Chinese origin in the stem cell registry. With help from OneMatch, patients, various community organizations, medical experts, and media specialists, we are conducting awareness campaigns to deflect myths and educate the public about stem cell donation. It is our sincere hope that this will motivate the Chinese community to champion this initiative and encourage all Chinese Canadians to register as stem cell donors with OneMatch.

We would like people to think how good they would feel if they could save a life... BE THE ONE. Be the 'other half' to save a life.

#### **About Canadian Blood Services/OneMatch**

Canadian Blood Services is a national, not-for-profit charitable organization that manages the supply of blood and blood products in all provinces and territories outside of Quebec. Canadian Blood Services also oversees the OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network, and provides national leadership for organ and tissue donation and transplantation. Canadian Blood Services operates 40 permanent collection sites and more than 19,000 donor clinics annually. The provincial and territorial Ministries of Health provide operational funding to Canadian Blood Services. The federal government, through Health Canada, is responsible for regulating the blood system. For more information, please visit our Web site at [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca).