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## **Ontarians with Rare Cancer Offered New Hope**

Oakville, ON, August 4, 2009

New multiple myeloma treatment Revlimid® to be covered by Ontario Public Drug Programs

Ontario residents with multiple myeloma, a rare form of blood cancer, have received new hope with the decision by the Ontario Public Drug Programs (OPDP) to pay for a new oral treatment for the disease, Revlimid (lenalidomide), from Celgene Corporation.

This latest treatment advance has been shown to extend the overall survival of multiple myeloma patients and slow the progression of the disease for patients who have failed on other treatments.

Revlimid will be reimbursed for use in combination with dexamethasone, for patients with multiple myeloma who are not candidates for autologous stem cell transplant and are either refractory to or have relapsed after the conclusion of initial or subsequent treatments and are suitable for further chemotherapy; or have completed at least one full treatment regimen as initial therapy and are experiencing intolerance to their current chemotherapy.

"Revlimid is helping patients live much longer and have a better quality of life," says Dr. Suzanne Trudel, Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto, Division of Medical Oncology/Hematology, at Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto. "The clinical data shows that patients treated with Revlimid and dexamethasone have superior response rates and for a longer duration, experience slower progression of disease, and survive longer than we have ever seen before. The Ontario government's decision to reimburse Revlimid means that many more patients in this province can now access this important treatment."

Multiple myeloma is a rare cancer, but recent statistics indicate an increasing incidence and younger onset of the disease. Of the estimated 6,000 Canadians living with multiple myeloma, approximately 1,350 will die and 2,100 new patients will be diagnosed in Canada this year. Though there is currently no cure for multiple myeloma, recent treatment advances, such as Revlimid, continue to improve the prognosis of the disease and are transforming multiple myeloma into a manageable chronic disease and improving patient quality of life.

"Revlimid is a miracle drug. It has revolutionized the care for multiple myeloma patients," says Carolyn Henry, diagnosed with the disease in 2000. "Before Revlimid, there were few treatments for people with multiple myeloma - the diagnosis was devastating and our future was bleak. Today, our outlook is dramatically different as Revlimid gives us a greater quality of life, more independence and more time with our families. In fact, the treatment allowed me to realize one of my dreams, to be at my daughter's side when she graduated from university."

This decision by the Ontario government underlines both Ontario and Celgene's strong commitment to people living with multiple myeloma, their families and caregivers. Celgene will continue to work with other provincial governments to ensure that all patients with multiple myeloma across the country have access to this vital medicine.

"Provinces like Ontario and British Columbia, which have made Revlimid available to patients since April, 2009, are showing leadership by funding this life-extending treatment," says John Lemieux, President of Myeloma Canada. "Public access to treatments such as Revlimid is absolutely critical to patient survival and to improving their quality of life. Ensuring that all people with multiple myeloma in Canada have access to the best treatments available is what will help move this cancer from the fatal and incurable column to the column of treatable and survivable cancers. We will continue urging all other provinces to follow the lead of Ontario and British Columbia."