



## MEDIA ADVISORY

# Tamil Canadians on a 'Mission' to Help Patients

*Local South Asian Group Launches Year-long Blood and Stem Cell Campaign*

For Immediate Release

FINAL

**WHAT:** The Tamil Canadian community is kicking-off a year-long blood and stem cell awareness campaign aimed directly at *'living'* their mission, *'To encourage the spirit of multi-culturalism... and understanding with other ethnic communities.'* Understanding community is at the heart of Canadian Tamil Congress' (CTC) commitment to providing over **450 units of blood during 2008. This is the largest amount of blood collected by any partner within Central Ontario region.** Building on this success the CTC have committed to 1,000 blood donations (500 during the summer and 500 over the next calendar year). Knowing the need within stem cells the CTC have expanded their generosity by including the collection of 50 DNA samples for testing in hopes of providing potential stem cell donors for South Asian Canadian patients.

The campaign will be operating out of 10 mobile and two permanent blood donor clinics across the city during July and August of which certain identified clinics will offer DNA sample (buccal swab) collection opportunities. These swabs will be tested in hopes of matching any of the 15 South Asian and 14 East Asian patients currently waiting for a stem cell transplant.

To publicly launch this campaign, the CTC will join with other South Asian representatives and Canadian Blood Services with OneMatch at a clinic/swab photo opportunity.

**WHO:** Interviews and photo opportunities with:

- Tamil Canadian donors, including survivors of July 1983 who have built a new life in Canada
- Canadian Blood Services representative Victoria Lawson, and Canadian Tamil Congress representative Manjula Selvarajah speaking to the partnership and the value of an ethnically diverse donor base in both blood and stem cells
- Dr. Prateek Lala M.D. to speak to the need for more South Asians/East Indians to become blood and stem cell donors
- DNA sample collection (swabs)
  - Donors will have the opportunity to provide DNA samples (swabbing)

**WHEN:** **1 pm, Tuesday July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**WHERE:** Canadian Blood Services, 67 College Street West in Toronto, Ontario.

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