



Frightening statistic: The number of premature babies rises worldwide (Photo: EFCNI)

## Press Release

### **Chilling statistic: One million babies die globally due to premature birth each year.**

The European charity EFCNI demands more research and improved care structures for premature babies.

**Munich, 19th October 2009 – The well-known US charity March of Dimes (MOD) publishes a terrifying study result early October: More than one million children die globally each year as a result of premature births, which is due to wanting quality of care and support.**

Similarly scary is the number in Germany: with 60,000 premature babies these smallest of the smallest represent the largest children patient category. Reasons comprise the increasing number of older mothers or infections, but also the inappropriate education and information for pregnant women.

The Munich-based charity EFCNI (European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants) would like to raise the public profile of this subject with the introduction of the first international Prematurity Awareness Day on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

„A premature birth is not only a huge emotional, physical and financial problem for families. It represents also a challenge for the entire health system and society as a whole,“ emphasizes Silke Mader, EFCNI’s Executive Chairwoman of the Board.

### **„A chance for a healthy survival“**

Professor Christian Poets from the University Clinic in Tubingia, neurologist and member of EFCNI's Political Advisory Board, is concerned about the result of MOD's global study: „The report of March of Dimes highlights very clearly, that even in Europe including Germany, the number of premature births increases consistently. It is alarming, because these children are exposed to a higher risk to die or to be handicapped. We absolutely require more research on how to improve the chances of these children, but also on how to prevent premature births, and a better support and care framework whereby the smallest of our patients obtain a better opportunity for a strong survival.“

### **The Charity-song for premature babies**

Hence, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009 should be dedicated for the smallest of patients. A charity show with the Swedish top pianist Robert Wells and the German celebrity-chef Stefan Marquard in Munich on 12<sup>th</sup> November plus charity song "Sing me another song" (written by Jacob Samuel, performed by Jacob Samuel and Robert Wells) which was composed for this purpose, represent only a kick-off for several activities throughout Europe in order to highlight the situation of premature babies.

The European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (EFCNI) is a network for patients and their families, but also a forum for scientists working toward long-term improvement of care for preterm and sick newborns – helping Europe's largest population of sick children to get the attention and lobby they deserve. More information is available at [www.efcni.org](http://www.efcni.org)

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