

World Prematurity Day 2016: Combat the leading cause of death for children under five years

- **World Prematurity Day 2016 highlights the most promising innovations in the prevention, diagnosis, and management of preterm birth**
- **EFCNI's new initiative supports 150 hospitals with action packages**

Munich, Germany, 16 November 2016 – 17 November marks the 6th annual global World Prematurity Day. The day was initiated by the *European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants* (EFCNI) and partnering parent organisations. Meanwhile, countless individuals, hospitals, NGOs, parent groups, and governments are taking action this week in about 100 countries to raise awareness and spur action to prevent preterm birth and save babies' lives. The contribution of EFCNI is a large-scale initiative called *A Strong Start for Little Heroes*: EFCNI supported about 150 hospitals in Germany and Austria by providing action packages for promoting and celebrating special events.

According to the most recent estimates, preterm birth is a leading cause of death in children under five years, claiming more than 1 million lives every year. At the same time, preterm birth rates continue to rise in almost all countries. However, approximately three-quarters of these deaths could be prevented with low-cost, effective, and high-quality supportive care and neonatal intensive care.

The *Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health*, an alliance of more than 700 organizations in 77 countries, among them EFCNI, *March of Dimes*, *World Health Organization* (WHO), and *Save the Children*, developed the following demand to stop preventable child deaths: Investing in preterm birth prevention, diagnosis, and management is a smart strategy to accelerate achievement of the global goal to end all preventable newborn and child deaths by 2030. This strategy will simultaneously reduce maternal deaths and stillbirths and related health system costs.

A Strong Start for Little Heroes

EFCNI proudly presents its large-scale initiative on this year's World Prematurity Day on 17 November 2016: Neonatal intensive care units in Germany and Austria are invited to celebrate this special day with inhouse events. EFCNI offered them a diverse action package

for the celebration of this special day. More than 150 hospitals with neonatal intensive care units are participating in this initiative.

About EFCNI

The European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (EFCNI) is the first pan-European organisation to represent the interests of preterm and newborn infants and their families. It gathers parents and healthcare experts from different disciplines with the common goal of improving the long-term health of preterm and newborn children by ensuring the best possible prevention, treatment, care and support. EFCNI receives funding from its premium partners, AbbVie, Philips AVENT, Natus, Nestlé Nutrition and Shire as well as from other private companies and individual donors.

For more information please visit: www.efcni.org

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