

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Monday, October 20, 2008**

**CONTACTS:**

Jackie Hunt Christensen: 612-325-0372 (cell) or jackiehc@gmail.com

Ted Schettler, MD, MPH: [tschettler@igc.org](mailto:tschettler@igc.org)

**URL:** [http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working\\_groups/parkinsons](http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/parkinsons)

**Parkinson's Disease Advocates and Researchers Hail  
Consensus Statement  
On What We Know and Need to Know About Environmental  
Factors in PD**

*Release of Executive Summary and "Primer" on the Science*

(Minneapolis - October 20, 2008) Representatives from the Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE) and Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) today released an executive summary of the consensus statement on "Parkinson's Disease (PD) and the Environment," which was recently published on-line in *Environmental Health Perspectives (EHP)*, the peer-reviewed journal of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. In addition, a public "primer" detailing the scientific and medical context of the consensus statement findings was released.

The consensus statement was a product of an invitation-only meeting in June 2007 that was attended by more than 40 Parkinson's disease researchers, clinicians, representatives from advocacy organizations, and people living with PD. The document itself was crafted by the 23 members of the scientific and medical communities who were in attendance.

J. William Langston, MD, CEO, and Scientific Director of the Parkinson's Institute remarked, "From its very beginning, it was clear that this truly exceptional group representing all perspectives of the PD community would come together to accomplish something extraordinary. This consensus statement provides a scientific road map of where we've been and where we need to go in the future to stop PD."

At the meeting, participants discussed many of the environmental factors currently being studied for potential links to PD and then placed them into strength-of-evidence categories based on criteria similar to those used by the Institute of Medicine (IOM).

"The meeting itself was unique because it included people who live with PD every day and representatives from national PD and environmental organizations, not just scientists," noted Jackie Hunt Christensen, one of the meeting's organizers for the Collaborative on Health and the Environment who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease ten years ago at the age of 34. "To my knowledge, this is the first time that research findings have been categorized to help identify which studies seem to be on track toward some answers for patients and which studies still need to be funded and focused on," Christensen added.

Amy Comstock Rick, CEO of the Parkinson's Action Network, concurred. "PAN is pleased to be involved in such a worthy effort," she said. "By focusing specifically on what is known and what still needs to be learned about the environmental causes of Parkinson's disease, the consensus

statement enhances PAN's ongoing advocacy efforts to ensure that the Federal investment in Parkinson's research will lead to a better understanding of how to treat and, ultimately, prevent Parkinson's disease."

In addition to the two documents released today, the *Environmental Health Perspective* article on the consensus statement (published in August 2008 on line), and the CHE factsheet on "Parkinson's Disease and the Environment" are available on the CHE website: [www.healthandenvironment.org](http://www.healthandenvironment.org).

More information on the Parkinson's Action Network, the unified policy voice of the PD community can be found at [www.parkinsonsaction.org](http://www.parkinsonsaction.org) or by contacting [info@parkinsonsaction.org](mailto:info@parkinsonsaction.org).