

## **Anaphylaxis Awareness Effort resumes with MPs & Federal Government** *National family network working with MP Dean Allison to re-introduce motion*

May 31, 2011 - This week when Members of Parliament return to the House of Commons, **Niagara West - Glanbrook MP Dean Allison** will be picking up where he left off before the election, assisting Canadian families in raising greater awareness of the health and quality of life challenges posed by living with severe, life-threatening allergies (anaphylaxis).

With his private member's **Motion 546** of the previous Parliament, MP Allison led a drive to make MPs and the Ottawa bureaucracy more aware of the serious issues facing Canadians with anaphylaxis. The MP achieved all-Party support for his Motion, which was the subject of an hour debate in the House of Commons in March.

Anaphylaxis is a medical condition describing people with severe, life threatening allergies. Reactions are rapid in onset and may cause death without immediate treatment. Food is the most common cause of anaphylaxis, but insect stings, medicine, latex or exercise can cause reactions. In Canada, the most common food allergens are milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, soy, shellfish, fish, sesame and wheat. Anaphylaxis has no cure, although important research and efforts to find a cure are underway. Avoidance is the required preventative measure.

**Canadian Anaphylaxis Initiative (CAI)** is a volunteer group of families from across the country which has come together in the last year to inform decision-makers in Ottawa. "We are prepared to push the re-start button this week," says **Chris George, a CAI spokesperson**. "Our families are very appreciative of Dean's commitment to get the Motion back in Parliament and to make sure the Health Minister and her officials, and others, are kept focused on the positive steps they can take to improve quality of life for Canadian families living with anaphylaxis."

"Like **Health Minister Aglukkaq's** food allergen labeling announcement of February, the federal government can make a tremendous impact on the health and safety of Canadians with severe allergies," says Mr. George. "There are achievable, sensible steps that can be taken to improve the lives of those coping with anaphylaxis."

**Cindy Paskey, another CAI volunteer** explains, "More and more Canadian families face the challenges of raising children with one or multiple severe allergies. We need a coordinated, thoughtful set of government initiatives that raises public understanding of anaphylaxis." Ms. Paskey adds, "Along with Dean and the many MPs and government officials who support our initiative, we can promote responsible safety measures, educate people on the signs of a reaction and how to help a person in need. A coordinated government approach will lead to reducing risk and to safer environments not only for those living with life-threatening allergies, but also for those providing care and services. Simple steps will save lives."

Motion 546 of the last Parliament read: *That in the opinion of the House, anaphylaxis is a serious concern for an increasing number of Canadians and the government should take the appropriate measures necessary to ensure these Canadians are able to maintain a high quality of life.*

**For more information, visit the CAI FaceBook page and/or call:**

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