



Dr. Vitezslav Kolek
Czech Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases

Dear Dr. Vitezslav Kolek:

We are writing you to inform Czech Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases about an exciting new global campaign, *The Year of the Lung*, and invite you to join us as a partner in this initiative. *The Year of the Lung* goals are to raise awareness about lung health among the public, initiate action in communities worldwide, and advocate for resources to combat lung disease including resources for research and research training programs worldwide. A key objective is to begin to build a social movement for greater public awareness and policy action about lung health. This will happen through support and involvement in the campaign from organizations like Czech Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases.

[Who is Organizing the 2010 Year of the Lung Campaign?](#)

The Year of the Lung is being organized by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS). FIRS includes the Asociación Latinoamericana del Thorax (ALAT), the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP), the American Thoracic Society (ATS), the Asia Pacific Society of Respirology (APSR), the European Respiratory Society (ERS), the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), and the Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS).

[Why are We Organizing the 2010 Year of the Lung Campaign?](#)

We convened at the Union World Conference on Lung Health in Cancun, Mexico, on 6 December 2009, in recognition of the fact that hundreds of millions of people around the world are suffering each year from treatable and preventable respiratory disease. We believe that lung health has long been neglected in public discourse and that we need to unify health advocates behind one purpose; express the urgency for increased awareness and action on lung health and therefore declare 2010 The Year of the Lung.

We are organizing this campaign because we believe the lack of public awareness of lung health is an important barrier to progress in the diagnosis, treatment, and development of discoveries in lung diseases and we are calling for a major worldwide public awareness campaign. Our patients and the patient interest groups with whom we work have inspired us to address this important issue. Many of their problems, such as



delayed diagnosis, improper early treatment, difficulty in obtaining prescribed medicine, and difficulty dealing with insurance providers and governmental agencies result from this lack of recognition. Further, the lack of awareness impedes support for research in lung disease and translation of discoveries into better diagnostic methods and effective treatments.

Lung diseases are very common in all populations and all age groups worldwide--they account for 19% of total deaths and 15% of disability adjusted life years. Although lung diseases have always been an important cause of morbidity and mortality, their incidence has steadily increased presumably as a consequence of the rapid increase of risk factors such as urbanization and industrialization, tobacco use, atmospheric air pollution, and the HIV epidemic. Public awareness and therefore the political will to address the problems of lung disease, however, remains very limited by any measure.

What are We Asking Partners to Do for the 2010 Year of the Lung Campaign?

We envisage the majority of the efforts of this campaign will be carried out in collaboration with professional and lay organizations like Czech Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases around the world that join us in the campaign. The global launch of the campaign was 6 December 2009 in Cancun, Mexico during the meeting of The Union. Following the launch, comprehensive materials will be available to all partners for the *Year of the Lung* campaign through our website, www.2010yearofthelung.org. Also at the *Year of the Lung* website, we will have a range of activities listed that partners can undertake during the *Year of the Lung* from media related-activities to advocacy to participation in the World Spirometry Day.

How will we know if the 2010 Year of the Lung Campaign Worked?

The initial evaluation of the *Year of the Lung* will look at process measures such as the number of partner web site hits, media placements and stories in the media, and partners and countries participating in *Year of the Lung* activities. As you know, public awareness does not happen over night. We will look at our experience after one year and may, should this process evaluation be positive, look to a longer effort with evaluation measures that aim to monitor increased public awareness of lung health and policy changes by major governments such as increased funding for research by the U.S. and E.U. governments.

We look forward to Czech Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases joining *Year of the Lung* as a Partner. This is an important global initiative and your involvement is critical to our global success. You can become a partner in the *Year of the Lung* by contacting Fran Du Melle, American Thoracic Society at fdumelle@thoracic.org or going directly to the *Year of the Lung* website at www.2010yearofthelung.org We look forward to your partnership in this important global initiative,

Sincerely,



Nils Billo MD, MPH
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