

# Cornerstone News

National Cornerstone Healthcare

Summer 2007

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## Note from the President



### Welcome aboard...

Victor Espinosa

### Contracting effort ensures success

David S. Espinosa  
President, NCHS

Only a handful of people were part of National Cornerstone Healthcare Services (NCHS) during our first days. As with any new venture, those days were challenging. However, with the help of our few dedicated employees, including my brother, Victor, we established a successful business that has gone a long way toward providing an essential service to the hemophilia community. At long last, I'm pleased to introduce you to Victor Espinosa, our contracting administrator.

Vic joined National Cornerstone in late 2001, about six months after the company was formed. At that time his position as director of operations with a Pasadena-based skilled nursing development company was coming to a close, and we needed someone with his track record of getting things done. Vic gladly came on board and has worn a variety of hats as we've grown to become a formidable company.

"I came in initially to learn the business, and as we increased our patient base I went to work in a more focused capacity," Vic said. At first he managed the warehouse operations, these days he's responsible for securing contracts and enlisting pharmacy providers.

Vic's record of success actually goes back to his days as a baseball player at Cal-State Fullerton, where his team went to the finals of the College World Series; Vic went on to earn a BA degree in physical education. Perhaps through the baseball program as much as any endeavor, Vic learned the meaning of success—and teamwork. He has brought both a touch for succeeding and a willingness to be a team player to National Cornerstone.

As part of the NCHS team, Vic is primarily responsible for securing contracts that allow potential customers who are covered by those insurance plans to come on service. "Ideally, we'd like to contract with as many insurance plans as possible," he said. "It's my job to convince payors that it would be beneficial for them to contract with us.

Additionally, Vic helps secure contracts with pharmacies in other states. And, he hopes to help raise the company's profile by presenting in-service programs to insurance companies with whom we've contracted. Indeed, Vic is a busy representative of National Cornerstone.

When he's not working, Vic often can be found coaching baseball—something he has done for nearly 20 years. His boys, aged 18, 15 and 13, have all benefited from his expertise as a coach. His wife, Cathy, has been a longtime supporter of both his professional and his coaching endeavors.

As our sixth year winds to a close, we say 'thanks' to Vic. He, like a few others, saw the potential of NCHS early on and has remained here to celebrate our success.

## News & Updates

### NCHS Awards Two Academic Scholarships to Students from the Hemophilia Community

This year we received many applications from students throughout the U.S. We are committed to the hemophilia community and we are proud to assist these two young people as they pursue their education.



**Corey Pierce of Eugene, Oregon** is a student at Oregon State University. He has hemophilia, plays golf and enjoys playing drums. All of this while maintaining a good GPA in his major field of study; Business Administration, Health Care Management.

Here is a quote from Corey's essay: ***"I have noticed that in many ways, the hemophilia community is like a spider web. Once you become part of it you are connected to everything and everyone else in it. Each strand helps support the other and together the strands form an incredibly strong community"***



**Anna Vetter of Champaign, Illinois** will be attending Illinois State University in the fall where she will major in Sociology. She has three brothers with hemophilia who have strongly influenced her life.

Anna writes: ***"I intend on staying involved in the hemophilia community and I hope to direct my career to benefit those with bleeding disorders. I hope to use my education and the experiences in my life to encourage learning, to give guidance, and to offer hope to those that find themselves living their own adventure."***

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### Hemophilia Council of California

Future Leaders Day  
May 14-16 2007

Each year the future leaders program brings young people together from all over California to the state capital in Sacramento for a unique learning experience. Tony Maynard, Government Affairs Manager for NCHS, accompanied the group.

The young men and women ages 14 – 22 had the opportunity to learn how California government works and learned about the programs supporting people with bleeding disorders throughout the state.

The youth learned not only about the state programs but also about career choices and challenges. These newly learned skills enabled the young people to tell their stories about living with a bleeding disorder to legislators. These future leaders were articulate and told their stories to others to the benefit of the entire community.

## California Annual Legislative Day

May 16, 2007

Legislative Day is a chance for the bleeding disorders community to come together and meet with key members of the state Senate and Assembly. During this time, they were educated about hemophilia, von Willebrand's, co-diagnosis and other issues of concern to the bleeding disorder community.

This was a very busy day with a hectic schedule of Capital legislative visits as well as a special award ceremony luncheon. The Future Leaders Day youth joined the group and helped to make a difference for all Californians with bleeding disorders.

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### Mark your calendars

Join Us for the Journey

The National Hemophilia Foundation will host their 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida; November 1-3, 2007 at the Orlando World Center Marriott Resort. Plan to stop at the NCHS exhibit booth, meet new and old friends and gather some goodies along with educational information.

To make room reservations, call the Marriott Resort at 800-564-3181 and ask for the "NMO" group rate. The special discount rate is \$165 per night. Rooms at this rate are limited so hurry and book your room today. You may register for the meeting online by going to [www.hemophilia.org](http://www.hemophilia.org).

Join us for three days of programs, workshops, networking and fun social activities. There is something for everyone! See you in Florida at the NCHS booth!

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## HCV Vaccine Shows Promise in Chimpanzees

In May 2007, scientists from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the University of Freiburg in Germany and the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research in San Antonio reported progress in the development of a hepatitis C vaccine. The experimental vaccine uses pieces of the actual virus, minus the genetic material that would otherwise make it infectious.

The need for a hepatitis C vaccine is critical because of the global spread of the virus and the severe complications associated with chronic infection and subsequent long-term effects on the liver. These complications include cirrhosis (liver scarring), liver cancer and eventual degeneration of the organ's functions. It is estimated that 170 million people worldwide are infected with hepatitis C.

In the study, eight chimpanzees were injected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV); half were given the vaccine beforehand. Of the vaccinated group, one chimp developed signs of a low-level infection but quickly cleared the virus. The three other chimps, while infected with a somewhat higher level of HCV, cleared the virus within 10 weeks. In the un-vaccinated group, three chimps developed signs of chronic infection while one chimp cleared the infection on its own. The same research team is now testing the experimental vaccine against other strains of HCV.

"You want to prevent the chronic infection in disease," said T. Jake Liang, chief of the liver diseases branch at NIH's National Institute for Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. "This is the goal we are targeting, and preliminary data suggest that this is possible — although I think there are other ways that we can improve the effectiveness of this vaccine."

The report "Immunization with Hepatitis C Virus-Like Particles Results in Control of Hepatitis C Virus Infection in Chimpanzees," was published in the May 15, 2007 issue of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Source: [mysanantonio.com](http://mysanantonio.com) (online), May 2, 2007

### Did you know?

According to Randall Curtis, reporting for HUGS (Hemophilia Utilization Group Study):

Married persons score higher with responses regarding Quality of Life issues by a significant number 4:1!

A recent HUGS V study looks at a variety of data to examine cost and to understand the variations in approaches to treatment. The steering committee reports include; Distribution of joint problems in adults and children, Risk indicators associated with joint pain and Insurance and outcome data stratified by prophylaxis treatment as well as Factors associated with barriers to care.

Chocolate pudding is fun to eat -- just try to lick it off a spoon without smiling.

## Kids Corner

### Chocolate Pudding

Recipe for Kids with adult supervision

#### For the Pudding

- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 5 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 1/4 cup milk
- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/4 semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Measure out pudding ingredients before beginning. Work time: 20 minutes; chilling time: 40 minutes.

#### Directions

1. In heavy-bottom medium-size saucepan, whisk together cornstarch, sugar, cocoa powder, and salt.
2. Add the cream, milk and eggs. Whisk until combined.
3. Stir in chocolate chips.
4. Set pan over medium heat. Whisk slowly and constantly, making sure to scrape sides of pan, just until pudding begins to boil, 7 to 8 minutes.
5. A grown-up should remove saucepan from heat and transfer pudding mixture to a medium bowl.
6. Make ice bath: Fill large bowl with ice and a little water. Set bowl of pudding in ice, and stir pudding until it starts to cool, about 5 minutes. Stir in vanilla. Cover with plastic; refrigerate until thick and well chilled, about 40 minutes or overnight.

## Company Updates

### FDA Approves New Product to Treat Von Willebrand Disease

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced the approval of Factor/von Willebrand Factor Complex (Human), Alphanate®. The product is approved for patients undergoing surgery or invasive procedures with von Willebrand disease (vWD) in whom the hormone desmopressin is either ineffective or contraindicated. It is not approved for patients with severe vWD (Type 3) who are undergoing major surgery. The disease is the most common inherited bleeding disorder, affecting about one percent of the US population.

Alphanate is the first biologic product approved for treatment of surgical and invasive procedures in patients with vWD. Alphanate is already approved for the prevention and control of bleeding in patients with Factor VIII deficiency due to Hemophilia A or acquired Factor VIII deficiency.

“This approval is an important advance for patients and their surgeons, providing them access to a proven preventative therapy that can make needed surgery possible and safer” said Jesse L. Goodman, MD, MPH, director of FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research.

Men and women are equally affected by vWD, which is caused by a deficiency or defect in certain plasma proteins critical to blood clotting. In most affected people, the disease is mild, and treatment usually is not required to stop bleeding. However, about 2,000 people in the US each year suffer from moderate and severe forms of the disease in which bleeding can be excessive if not treated.

Successful management of surgery or invasive procedures in mildly, moderately and severely affected individuals requires correction of the bleeding defect. In the absence of correction of the bleeding defect, patients may suffer from prolonged bleeding and delayed wound healing.

Alphanate is purified from pooled human plasma from carefully screened and tested US donors, and contains the clotting proteins deficient or defective in vWD, which are Factor VIII (also known as Antihemophilic factor) and von Willebrand factor. Alphanate undergoes two separate steps for viral inactivation to reduce the risk for the transmission of blood-borne viruses, and theoretically, variant CJD, while very low, cannot be totally eliminated.

In clinical studies with Alphanate, 120 major, moderate and minor surgical procedures were performed in 76 patients. Based on predefined criteria for efficacy, more than 90 percent of patients had favorable outcomes. In these clinical studies, 15.8 percent of subjects and 5.7 percent of infusions were accompanied by adverse reactions, most commonly itching, pharyngitis, paresthesia (a sensation of numbness and tingling on the skin), headaches, swelling of the face, rash and chills.

Alphanate is manufactured by Grifols Biologicals, Inc., Los Angeles, CA

### Company Announces Support for Insurance Issues

If you need answers today or want assurance for tomorrow, you can simply call a toll-free Insurance Helpline to speak to a live person to answer your insurance questions.

We strongly urge everyone to consider enrollment in FACTOR ASSIST. A program that lets you earn credits toward factor therapy in the event you reach a lifetime cap or lose insurance coverage. FACTOR ASSIST is free and easy to join.

Why be without it?

In the course of your life, you may never need to use your credits, but enrollees say that having FACTOR ASSIST increases their peace of mind and gives them confidence in looking to the future.

In addition, if you have no insurance and are financially disadvantaged, you may qualify to receive a factor therapy from Baxter. Call the Baxter Insurance Helpline for more information at 1-888-BAXTER9.

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### Baxter Gets FDA OK on New ADVATE Dosage

Deerfield, IL, (AP) – Baxter Healthcare Corp., on Wednesday July 11, 2007 said the Food and Drug Administration approved a new dosage strength of its ADVATE® [Antihemophilic Factor (Recombinant) Plasma/Albumin - Free Method] treatment to prevent and control bleeding.

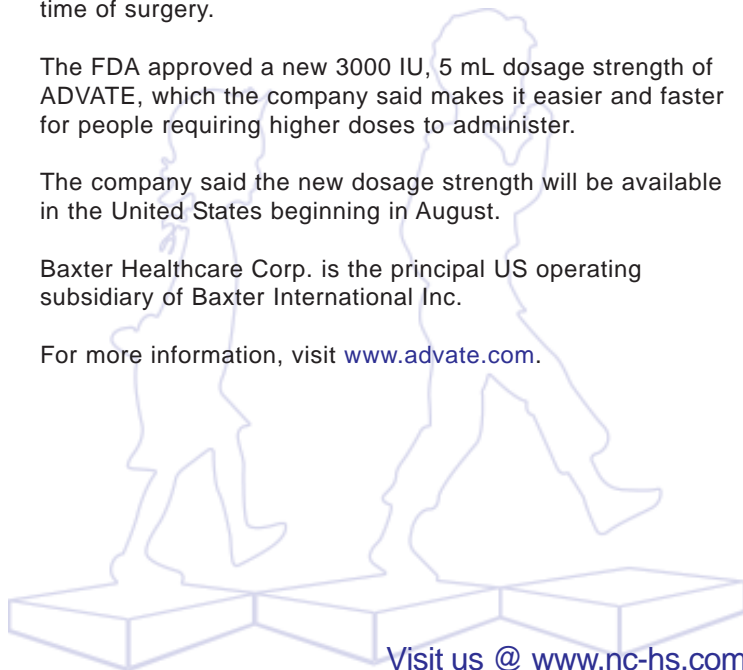
ADVATE is indicated for hemophilia A, a blood-clotting disorder, to help with bleeding episodes or for use around the time of surgery.

The FDA approved a new 3000 IU, 5 mL dosage strength of ADVATE, which the company said makes it easier and faster for people requiring higher doses to administer.

The company said the new dosage strength will be available in the United States beginning in August.

Baxter Healthcare Corp. is the principal US operating subsidiary of Baxter International Inc.

For more information, visit [www.advate.com](http://www.advate.com).



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