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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Professional Baseball Player Joins 2010  
Patchwork of Hope Network™ Campaign**

***LaTroy Hawkins and the National Council on Aging Raise Awareness of Shingles and After-shingles  
Pain***

*Washington, D.C. (May 3, 2010)* -- The National Council on Aging (NCOA) today announced the launch of the **2010 Patchwork of Hope Network**, an educational campaign to raise awareness of shingles and postherpetic neuralgia (PHN). Also known as after-shingles pain, PHN is an often debilitating condition resulting from nerve damage caused by shingles infection.<sup>1</sup> Professional baseball player LaTroy Hawkins joins the campaign to share his personal story, after suffering from both conditions, which left him on the 15-day disabled list.

“As a professional pitcher, back and shoulder pain is something you deal with on a regular basis, but this was no ordinary pain,” described Hawkins, who was initially treated for a muscle strain. When a rash finally appeared on his back his doctors realized it was actually shingles and treated it with anti-viral medication. “Unfortunately for me,” Hawkins explained, “My doctor said the virus was too far along for the anti-virals to really work. The damage was already done.”

After his shingles rash healed, Hawkins’ pain persisted, which lead to another visit to his doctor, who diagnosed him with after-shingles pain. “Hugs,” he said, “were completely out of the question.” In fact, the burning sensitivity of his skin caused from the condition meant he couldn’t even be covered when lying in bed.

Through his doctor’s care and a treatment plan, Hawkins was eventually able to get back in the game. Now, he is excited to spread the word about the Patchwork of Hope Network to help shingles and PHN sufferers understand that they are not alone.

“After-shingles pain sufferers often endure debilitating pain and need to know more about ways to manage this condition,” said Stuart Spector, Senior Vice President of the NCOA. “LaTroy will greatly enhance our efforts to educate Americans about the signs, symptoms and ways to cope with after-shingles pain.”

### **About Shingles and After-shingles Pain**

Each year, shingles affects approximately 1 million Americans<sup>2</sup>, and the early signs can easily be mistaken for another illness. Some people begin by feeling burning or shooting pain, numbness, tingling or itching in one area of the body or face, or mild-like flu symptoms, such as fever, headache, chills and nausea.<sup>3</sup> In otherwise healthy people, the rash may disappear without major consequences in two to four weeks; however, one in five shingles sufferers may develop after-shingles pain.<sup>1</sup>

### **About the Patchwork of Hope Network**

The campaign kicks off today, May 3, 2010 with an educational, consumer event at the Pan Pacific Senior Center in Los Angeles, Calif. A second event will take place on June 30, 2010 at the Town & Country Senior Center in Tampa, Fla. At the events, attendees will hear presentations about PHN symptoms and ways to cope, meet others affected by PHN and have an opportunity to create individual quilt squares to tell their story about how PHN has affected their lives. The squares will be sewn together to create a Patchwork of Hope Network quilt, which will serve as a handmade testimonial to those who are affected by PHN pain. To learn more about the Patchwork of Hope Network campaign and what Hawkins is doing to support it, please visit [www.AfterShingles.com](http://www.AfterShingles.com). This campaign is made possible with support from Endo Pharmaceuticals.

### **About the National Council on Aging**

*The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is a non-profit service and advocacy organization headquartered in Washington, DC. NCOA is a national voice for older Americans - especially those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged - and the community organizations that serve them. It brings together non-profit organizations, businesses and government to develop creative solutions that improve the lives of all older adults. NCOA works with thousands of organizations across the country to help seniors find jobs and benefits improve their health, live independently and remain active in their communities. For more information, visit [www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org).*

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### **REFERENCES**

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