



ACCESS
FOR ALPHAS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Campaign Launched for Life-Sustaining Treatment Access Across Canada

May 31st, 2021 – Alpha-1 Canada publicly launched [Access for Alphas](#) today, a campaign aimed at raising the awareness of alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency (AATD) with provincial elected officials to approve an augmentation therapy category on the Canadian Blood Services Plasma Protein and Related Products Formulary for Canadians across the country with this progressive genetic disease.

“For decades alpha-1 patients have suffered silently without being able to access life-sustaining therapy. That ends today with the launch of Access for Alphas, which aims to finally get provinces to approve the addition of augmentation therapy within Canadian Blood Services, so that hundreds of Canadians can access this vital treatment,” began Angela Diano, Executive Director of Alpha-1 Canada.

Approximately 1 in 5,000 Canadians are affected by AATD. It occurs when there is a severe lack of a protein in the blood called alpha-1 antitrypsin (AAT). There is no cure for AATD, but the disease can be managed with augmentation therapy through plasma protein replacement, which will increase levels of alpha-1 in the blood, stopping the lung deterioration of those who have the condition.

“300 Canadian alpha-1 patients are able to receive augmentation therapy now because they are fortunate enough to live in British Columbia and Quebec, or have comprehensive employer benefits. There are still hundreds of others though that are unable to get treatment, and countless more Canadians who continue to be untreated due to lack of access,” continued Diano.

The Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) will begin evaluating augmentation therapy this summer in order to potentially develop a category on the Canadian Blood Services formulary. However, during the evaluation, alpha-1 patients without access to treatment are continuing to suffer.

“Today, we are asking for the support of every provincially-elected official to permit interim access to treatment to avoid further irreversible deterioration of alpha-1 patients’ health. This will ensure that no more alpha-1 patients die prematurely and will also support hundreds of Canadians who need access to treatment now.” concluded Diano.

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Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency Canada Inc. (Alpha-1 Canada) is a national not-for-profit organization committed to advocating on behalf of Canadians affected by Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency, providing education to patients and the healthcare community to increase awareness and testing for this genetic disease. To learn more about Access for Alphas, please visit www.accessforalphas.ca.

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