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For Immediate Release

ATLANTIC NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE TOUTS BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS FROM NEW JERSEY TO WASHINGTON AND BACK ATLANTIC HEALTH EXPERTS DISCUSS CONCUSSION SAFETY WITH LAWMAKERS, PUBLIC

MORRISTOWN, NJ APRIL 2009 – Seeking to educate our nation’s lawmakers, New Jersey’s athletic community and the public alike on the often overlooked dangers of head injuries, representatives from the Atlantic Neuroscience Institute were featured at a set of events to mark March as Brain Injury Awareness Month.

ANI Representatives first travelled to Washington D.C., to take part in the 2009 Brain Injury Awareness Month Fair on Capitol Hill, on March 25. The event was hosted by the National Brain Injury Task Force, which is chaired by Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr., (D-NJ-08). Atlantic Neuroscience Institute members operated a booth providing information to legislators and other Washington officials with information on brain injuries.

On March 30, experts from Atlantic Neuroscience Institute were featured at a press conference by the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, announcing their campaign to raise more awareness among the public and the athletic community. At the press conference, held at Yogi Berra Stadium at Montclair State University, Dr. Joseph Rempson, co-medical director of ANI’s Concussion Center at Overlook Hospital, spoke about concussions and their symptoms as well as methods of treating concussions. He was joined by Alex Lucaci, a young soccer player who was treated at the Atlantic Neuroscience Institute after a concussion and officials from the Athletic Trainer Society of New Jersey.

At both events, Atlantic Neuroscience Institute representatives stressed that athletes must make a safe return to play, meaning that athletes should be thoroughly examined after a head injury before being allowed to continue playing, and that concussions can often have symptoms that are not readily apparent or recognizable.

“A common misconception most people have about concussions is that a young athlete has to have fallen unconscious,” said Dr. Joseph Rempson, co-director of ANI’s Concussion Center. “In fact, an athlete can be conscious, but still have suffered a concussion. There are a number of smaller, less obvious indicators, including just being confused and not remembering what the next play should be, as well as heightened sensitivity to light and headaches.”

“The rule of thumb that we try to impress upon others has been ‘when in doubt, keep them out,’” said Christina Manata, coordinator of Outpatient Neuroscience Services for ANI.

(more)

T H E P A S S I O N T O L E A D

The group from ANI also promoted the use of Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing, or ImPACT™. The computer-based test, which is offered through the Atlantic Neuroscience Institute's Concussion Center at Overlook Hospital, is given to players before they sustain a concussion to create a baseline measure of their cognitive ability. That baseline is compared to post-injury testing to determine if there has been a loss of cognition after a head injury, and is one of the tools utilized to determine when it is safe for a player to resume activity.

The two-year-old ImPACT™ program at Overlook Hospital has already tested hundreds of young athletes in more than a dozen school districts and recreational leagues in New Jersey. Earlier this year, the Morris United Soccer organization partnered with Atlantic Neuroscience Institute and Atlantic Sports Health to mandate ImPACT testing for players on their travelling league.

The CDC estimates that about 1-3 million sports-and-recreation-related concussions occur in the United States each year. There were more than 17,000 cases of head injuries related to soccer treated at emergency departments in hospitals in the United States in 2007, according to the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. The CDC reports that an average of 1.5 deaths each year are attributed to sports-related concussions. In most cases, a concussion, usually undiagnosed, had occurred prior to the final one.

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