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NFL, NHL and NHLPA Team Up in Sports Concussion Education Campaign

DENVER, Oct. 17 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The National Football League (NFL), National Hockey League (NHL) and the National Hockey League Player's Association (NHLPA) have agreed to sponsor an educational program on sports concussions developed by the National Academy of Neuropsychology (NAN) and the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA). Consisting of a series of educational DVDs, this program is targeted to amateur and professional players, parents, physicians and coaches, and will provide information on how to recognize concussive injuries, seek proper evaluation, and follow appropriate return to play guidelines.

The Centers for Disease Control estimate that 300,000 brain injuries occur in sports each year. Of these reported concussions, an estimated 63,000 occur among high school athletes. Even though these numbers alone suggest that concussions represent a significant public health concern, it is likely that many athletes with concussions fail to report their symptoms to medical personnel. These educational DVDs will increase awareness of this injury while promoting scientifically sound management guidelines that will help minimize the negative effects of traumatic brain injury.

"While we have excellent medical care and resources for managing injuries at the professional level, most high school and even college programs don't have those resources," says Dr. Ruben Echemendia, Director of the NHL's Neuropsychological Testing Program and President-elect of NAN. "We need to get education and greater resources into their hands."

"Often, brain injuries initially go unrecognized," said NATA President Chuck Kimmel, ATC. "The goal of this program is to educate individuals on the importance of rapid recognition and treatment of concussions and to ensure the athlete is ready to return to play. "

The DVD's are currently being developed and will be released in January, 2008. The DVD's will be widely distributed through leagues, sports organizations, medical organizations, NATA and NAN. Organizations interested in obtaining copies of the DVD's should contact the NAN office.

NAN is a professional association that was founded in 1975 to advance Neuropsychology as a science and health profession, as well as to generate and disseminate knowledge of brain-behavior relationships while continuing to promote human welfare. NAN has become a vibrant organization of the world's leading scientist-practitioners, academics, clinicians and researchers in the field of brain functioning. The association's current membership consists of over 3,400 representatives spanning seventeen countries. The Annual Conference is attended by an average of 1500 neuropsychologists, neuroscientists, and neurologists. For further information on sports-related concussions please contact the National Academy of Neuropsychology at (303) 691-3694.