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National Psoriasis Foundation creates Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities *Bill aims to help patients work with their doctors to receive care they deserve*

PORTLAND, Ore. (July 12, 2011)—To ensure the 7.5 million people living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are fully and fairly treated—and to help patients develop more effective relationships with medical providers—the National Psoriasis Foundation created its Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for People with Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis.

The bill aims to help patients get the care they need and encourage doctors to stay informed about the latest treatments. Read the full text of the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities: www.psoriasis.org/billofrights.

Psoriasis, a chronic, genetic disease of the immune system that appears on the skin, causing it to crack, itch and bleed, is the most common autoimmune disease in the country—affecting as many as 7.5 million Americans. Up to 30 percent of people with psoriasis develop psoriatic arthritis, a related joint disease.

“For many generations, psoriasis was treated as basically cosmetic,” said Jerry Bagel, M.D., member of the National Psoriasis Foundation Medical Board, and lead doctor who worked with the Psoriasis Foundation Medical Board and Board of Trustees to create this bill. “Patients have a right to be treated by someone who understands that psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are actually serious conditions.”

Among its provisions is the right to be treated by a doctor who really understands psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. Other principle elements are the right to clear skin and the best treatments with the least side effects, the right to feel comfortable, and the responsibility to be actively involved in managing their disease.

“For many generations, [psoriasis] was a stepchild disease. Part of the bill is telling patients that they have the right to be comfortable, to speak to other people about psoriasis.” Bagel said.

A key component of this bill is to be a tool for doctors and to give them a new depth of understanding about the impact of psoriatic disease. The bill will help physicians realize that if they are not comfortable discussing all the treatments available for psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, their responsibility is to refer their patients to another provider.

Learn more at www.psoriasis.org.

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About Psoriasis

Psoriasis is the most prevalent autoimmune disease in the country, affecting as many as 7.5 million Americans. Appearing on the skin most often as red scaly patches that itch and bleed,

psoriasis is chronic, painful, disfiguring and disabling. Up to 30 percent of people with psoriasis develop psoriatic arthritis, a related joint disease. There is no cure for psoriasis.

About the National Psoriasis Foundation

The National Psoriasis Foundation is the world's largest nonprofit organization serving people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. Our mission is to find a cure for psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis and to eliminate their devastating effects through research, advocacy and education. For more information, call the Psoriasis Foundation, headquartered in Portland, Ore., at 800.723.9166, or visit www.psoriasis.org.