



First company granted Nordic Ecolabelling for Peritoneal Dialysis Products

Stockholm, Sweden. December 3rd 2008. The first Ecolabelled peritoneal dialysis bags are now certified by Nordic Ecolabel. It is Fresenius Medical Care, who has been granted the world's first license. Use of Ecolabelled products could reduce the use of phthalates in the Nordic region by approximately 100 tonnes. The first Ecolabelling of its kind in the world, the dialysis Ecolabel applies to peritoneal dialysis bags and disposables used both in hospitals and in homes.

"We are pleased to be the first healthcare company with Ecolabelled products on the market. Reducing the negative impact on the environment has always been in the forefront in our company. We started in the nineties when PVC was a much discussed topic. It has now resurfaced, which shows how important this issue is," said Fredrik Gustafsson, Managing Director of Fresenius Medical Care in Sweden.

Ecolabelled peritoneal dialysis and intravenous infusion treatment bags have a number of environmental benefits. Most dialysis bags are made from PVC which includes harmful phthalates. A Nordic Ecolabelled dialysis bag is free of PVC, endocrine disruptors, persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances.

Use of Ecolabelled products could reduce the use of phthalates in the Nordic region by approximately 100 tonnes. Some phthalates, used as softeners for plastics, are believed to negatively affect the reproductive ability of both humans and animals.

"The healthcare sector is critically important to the goal of reducing environmental impact. Many disposable products are used in hospitals but also in patients' homes. To Ecolabel these products makes it easier for healthcare procurement staff to select the best products for the environment," said Cecilia Ehrenborg Williams, Business to Business Manager, Nordic Ecolabel.

The Ecolabel covers the entire product packaging material: the dialysis bag, its tubes or other accessories, and the outer-packaging it comes in. The Nordic Ecolabel goes beyond demonstrating that a product has a low environmental impact. It also guarantees that the manufacturing processes and quality standards for Ecolabelled products are state of the art.

Since these products are disposable, they generate an excessive amount of waste. These Ecolabelled dialysis bags generate less waste than traditional bags with the added bonus of being less hazardous to both people and the environment. In addition to reducing phthalate exposure to the human body, waste generation could be reduced by approximately one fifth compared with other PVC bags and without the toxic substances that are otherwise deposited with the trash. This reduction in waste material is a climate-related aspect since less fuel is used in the transportation and less energy is needed to dispose of these bags.

Notes to Editors:

A global study commissioned by the British Government has named Nordic Ecolabelling, the Nordic Council of Ministers ecolabelling agency as a world leader. In

three of the seven categories the Nordic Ecolabel won best practice for its certification of sustainability.

The UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has mapped and analysed worldwide standards and methods used for measuring environmental sustainability of products. The report was prepared by British-based international consultancy Environmental Resources Management Ltd. It aims to evaluate and present to the British Government the world's best practice organisations in the certification of sustainability, as an aid to government procurement policy.

Fresenius Medical Care

Fresenius Medical Care is the world's largest integrated provider of products and services for individuals undergoing dialysis because of chronic kidney failure, a condition that affects more than 1,600,000 individuals worldwide. Through its network of 2,349 dialysis clinics in North America, Europe, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Africa, Fresenius Medical Care provides dialysis treatment to 181,937 patients around the globe (as of September 30, 2008). Fresenius Medical Care is also the world's leading provider of dialysis products such as haemodialysis machines, dialyzers and related disposable products. Fresenius Medical Care is listed on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange (FME, FME3) and the New York Stock Exchange (FMS, FMS/P).

In Sweden approximately 3,600 patients are currently being treated with dialysis. This number has historically grown by 2 to 4 percent annually. Patients are either treated with a hemo-dialysis machine that cleans the blood using a filter (approx. 2,800 patients) or through so-called peritoneal dialysis (800 patients), where dialysis liquid is introduced into the abdominal cavity using the peritoneum as a filter. It is peritoneal dialysis that can now be done using ecolabelled products.

Nordic Ecolabel

The Nordic Ecolabel's vision is a sustainable society *in which future generations can benefit from the same conditions and opportunities as we ourselves have*. Our goal is to contribute to sustainable consumerism. The Nordic Ecolabel was established in 1989 as the official Nordic environmental award and is given to products and services that fulfil stringent environmental criteria. In Sweden it is the non-profit company Ecolabelling Sweden that administrates Nordic Ecolabel on consignment from the Swedish government.

Images can be downloaded at www.svanen.nu

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