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## **News Release**

**For immediate release 01/10/07**

### **HRH The Duchess of Gloucester, GCVO, Patron of The PSP Association, formally to open their new charity offices**

On Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007 HRH The Duchess of Gloucester, GCVO, will formally open the new offices of Towcester based charity, The PSP Association. Since its inception in 1994 The PSP Association has grown rapidly and the opening of PSP House at 167 Watling Street West, will mark the next step forward as the charity seeks to fulfil its long term objectives.

Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (or PSP) involves the gradual death of neurons in the brain affecting balance, mobility, vision, speech and the ability to swallow, leaving sufferers eventually unable to walk, see, feed themselves or communicate effectively with the world around them. PSP recently claimed the life of newspaper columnist Nigel Dempster and Dudley Moore died from the disease in 2002.

During her visit Her Royal Highness, who is Patron of The PSP Association, will be briefed on the progress of the charity and take a tour of the new offices and meet with staff. She will unveil a commemorative plaque and formally declare the offices open.

The PSP Association was established as a registered charity by Brigadier Michael Koe, OBE and his wife Sara after she was diagnosed as having the disease. They were appalled to learn that so little was known about this disease and established the charity to “conquer PSP through effective research, education, welfare and communication”.

Until recently, much of the work of the charity was administered by a team of part-time staff, friends and family in offices at Wappenham, the home of Michael Koe. Following an unexpected legacy from Mr William Stanley Megenis, and funds raised by the Association’s Vice-Chairman Sebastian Coe with celebrity Nell McAndrew on a charity edition of the TV show ‘Who Wants to be a Millionaire?’, the charity purchased new offices and moved to ‘PSP House’ in central Towcester on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

This move has allowed the recruitment of several new staff and volunteers to enable further growth of the charity towards its objectives of:

- promoting and sponsoring PSP research worldwide
- providing information and support for patients and their carers, and
- engendering awareness of PSP amongst relevant health and welfare professionals and the public at large.

Michael Koe comments: “This is an exciting period of change and growth for our charity. I have found it to be challenging, rewarding and therapeutic to have led the Association since its inception.”

Since 1994 huge steps have been made in making the public and relevant health and medical professionals more aware of this devastating disease. In addition, some £2m has been invested into ongoing research that, it is hoped, will lead to a greater understanding of the disease. The Association has also established a unique UK-wide Nurse Specialist Service to support PSP patients and their carers as well as a team of Development Officers who work at a local level raising awareness and developing carer/patient Support Groups.

- Ends -

For further information please contact The PSP Association on 01327 322410 or email [psp@pspeur.org](mailto:psp@pspeur.org)

### **Notes to Editors**

Since 1994 The PSP Association has helped over 2000 families across the UK, with members suffering from PSP.

Lord Coe KBE (Seb) has close experience of the devastating effects of PSP, which resulted in his mother’s death in 2005. He is a close supporter of the work of The PSP Association.

## *Working for a world free of PSP*

The PSP Association. Registered charity 1037087

**Patron:** HRH The Duchess of Gloucester GCVO **President:** General the Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank GCB,LVO, OBE  
**Vice-Presidents:** The Lord Coe KBE; Sir Michael Carleton-Smith CBE DL; Professor Colin Blakemore FRS  
**Chairman:** Brigadier Michael R Koe, OBE **Chief Executive:** Mrs Jane Hardy, FCIB, FRSA  
**Hon Treasurer:** Mr Peter Glithero, FCA