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**Astellas Kicks Off Employee Benefits Program with  
National Caregiving Expert Sherri Snelling and Caregiver Advocate and Actress Holly Robinson Peete**

NEWPORT BEACH, CA (October 1, 2014) – Astellas, an international pharmaceutical company, is announcing its new Sandwich Generation comprehensive benefits program, StarLife, at an employee launch event featuring presentations by national caregiving expert Sherri Snelling, author of *A Cast of Caregivers – Celebrity Stories to Help You Prepare to Care* and CEO of the Caregiving Club, and celebrity Sandwich Generation caregiver, advocate and actress, Holly Robinson Peete. The event will be held at the Astellas headquarters in Northbrook, Ill. with live streaming to its other offices across the country.

Snelling, who reviewed the StarLife program prior to the speaking engagement, called it one of the most comprehensive, holistic programs to support the seven in 10 caregivers who are working today. The StarLife program includes telephonic and in-person support from professional geriatric care managers, review of certain legal documents for employees and their older parents or in-laws, identity theft protection for the entire family, counseling on caregiving issues and college planning, among other benefits. Snelling believes the program truly addresses the needs for the Sandwich Generation identified as those caring for children through college while simultaneously caring for older parents.

Telling her compelling personal story, Holly Robinson Peete shared her caregiving journey with her father who had Parkinson's disease and her son who has autism. Peete is a classic example of the Sandwich Generation – 24 million Americans who are squeezed between caring for children as well as older or ill parents. She was one of seven celebrity caregivers Snelling interviewed for her book, *A Cast of Caregivers*. In the book, Snelling showcased how Peete coped with the fear of two unknown diseases at the time her loved ones were diagnosed; the difficulty caregiving can bring to a marriage as well as the impact on other children, friendships and the caregiver's own health and wellness. Snelling took the stage after Peete to present "The 7 Ways to Caregiver Wellness" advising the audience on how to balance caregiving with self-care.

The emotional, physical and financial toll for the Sandwich Generation can be significant. Research from The Commonwealth Fund shows caregivers are twice as likely as the general population to develop chronic illnesses earlier in life due to the prolonged stress of caregiving. According to Pew Research, nearly half (47 percent) of adults in their 40s and 50s have a parent age 65 or older who needs their financial assistance while also raising a young child or financially supporting a grown child. Another study by the National Alliance for Caregiving and Evercare showed one-half of all caregivers spend on average 10 percent of their annual income on care-related costs for an older parent.

"Within our American workforce today, 15 percent of all employees are caregivers for an older parent and as these ranks grow employers will need to focus on programs that address child care as well as elder care," says Snelling. "The StarLife program is truly a best practice for caregiving employees. Astellas has recognized its employees' lifestyle challenges by offering robust services and support. In addition, it ensures its employees have an inviting environment to share their caregiving challenges. With 50 percent of working caregivers reporting they were reluctant to tell a supervisor about their caregiving role, Astellas is helping its employees overcome this hurdle."

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## SNELLING SPEAKS AT THE ASTELLAS STARLIFE PROGRAM LAUNCH FOR ITS CAREGIVING EMPLOYEES

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Snelling is a frequently sought speaker at conferences and corporate events that focus on aging, baby boomers and women's health. She has spoken at the Motion Picture & Television Fund Women's Conference, the University of Southern California's (USC) Women's Conference, the National Caregiver Expo, the Hospice & Palliative Care of New York Association Annual Conference, the American Society on Aging Conferences, the Alzheimer's Association Dementia Care Conferences, the Boomer Summit events, the Silver Summit Conference at the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES), PBS Milwaukee Forum on Caregiving, First Republic private client luncheons and numerous women's groups, senior centers and other events around the country. Snelling is represented by the American Program Bureau, a speaking agency that represents Sir Richard Branson, Mikhail Gorbachev and Diane Keaton among others.

### **About Caregiving Club and Sherri Snelling**

Sherri Snelling, CEO and founder of the Caregiving Club and author of [\*A Cast of Caregivers – Celebrities Stories to Help You Prepare to Care\*](#), is a nationally recognized expert on America's 65 million family caregivers with special emphasis on how to help caregivers balance self-care while caring for a loved one. Sherri has been honored as one of the Top 10 Influencers on Alzheimer's by Sharecare, the online health and wellness experts site created by Dr. Mehmet Oz. She is a caregiving contributor for *Huffington Post*, *PBS/Next Avenue*, *Forbes.com* and *Caring.com*. She is also a TV producer, program host and celebrity interviewer at red carpet galas, creator of the Me Time Monday<sup>SM</sup> weekly videos in support of the non-profit Healthy Mondays Campaign, and Caregiver's Network Webinar host for Lifecare's 61,000 employer clients. Snelling's health care experience is in senior executive positions with Keck Medicine of USC and UnitedHealthcare and she is the former Chairman of the National Alliance for Caregiving based in Washington, D.C.

Follow on Twitter: @SherriSnelling and @CaregivingClub and learn more at: [caregivingclub.com](http://caregivingclub.com)

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