

Contact Maureen Finan, Director, Strategic Communications, Partners in Care Foundation.
818. 837.3775 ext 125; mfinan@picf.org www.picf.org

New Family Care Partnership/Greater Hollywood Announces Its Formation

Agencies Will Coordinate Care Services “Under one roof”

(Los Angeles, Calif., Dec. 14, 2009) -- “It’s staggering how ill prepared we are,” said a spouse whose husband had suffered a debilitating stroke at the age of 63. Her effort to navigate and find long-term care services at home and in the community was a nightmare that lasted more than two years.

Taking on the responsibility to care for a disabled parent, a chronically ill spouse, partner, or other family member is a daily challenge, an overwhelming task that very few are prepared or trained for. Problem is that new caregivers don’t know where to start, where to go, or get lost in the many separate agencies to find help to care for their loved ones at home.

To remedy the situation, a one-stop service is the goal of the newly established Family Care Partnership/Greater Hollywood (FCP/GH) to help them cope with complex challenges faced by caregivers, veterans, seniors and adults with disabilities by setting up a helpline for long-term non-medical services, financial and legal advice, transportation issues, support groups, and opportunities to take a break from caregiving. FCP/GH will be housed at the Assistance League in Hollywood.

In the United States, an estimated 34 million people provide care to one or more older adults who need help. Most of these “informal” caregivers are unpaid family members, friends and neighbors - unseen and without sorely needed support.

“We want to empower everyone to age in place with dignity and hope,” explains Jody Dunn, FCP/Greater Hollywood’s Regional Director, at a recent meeting of its agency partners. “We are building on the existing community service network and share our vision with passionate collaborators including the Assistance League of Southern California, the Alzheimer’s Association Southland Chapter, the Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center, the Motion Picture and Television Fund, the Gay and Lesbian Elder Housing project (Triangle Square) in Hollywood, and the City of Los Angeles Area Agency on Aging.

The goal is to greatly enhance community capacity by creating the Family Care Partnership/Greater Hollywood, where seniors, adults with disabilities, veterans and those who care for them access to resources that support their remaining independence in their own communities longer.

“Just having people around and knowing that they have a similar lot in life, which makes a big difference,” said a woman who participated in a caregiver support group offered to people caring for persons suffering from Alzheimer’s disease. She had never discussed her problems as caregiver with anyone else and found the assistance and encouragement she needed at an Adult Day Health Care Center collaborating with another Family Care Partnership created for the same purposes in the Santa Clarita Valley of Los Angeles.

The new model of services will be designed to help care providers such as the Alzheimer’s Association or the Assistance League coordinate their services and promote easier access to these services. People toiling at the front of caregiving - family caregivers and their physicians – were asked to recommend services they needed most. Their suggestions include a call center for long-term non-medical services, financial and legal advice, better options for transportation, support groups and respite care. These recommendations will inform the continued development of the new FCP/GH whose vision it is to bring innovative, practical, and measureable solutions to the urgent and on-going needs of older adults and those who care for them.

For more information about the new Family Care Partnership/Greater Hollywood, contact Barbara Linski, Executive Director, Assistance League Hollywood Senior Center at 323.957.3906

###