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PRESS RELEASE

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WHO TAKES CARE OF THE CAREGIVERS?

NY FOUNDATION FOR SENIOR CITIZENS' NEW FREE, SHORT TERM IN-HOME RESPITE CARE SERVICE OFFERS CAREGIVERS A LIFE LINE

Caregivers often neglect their own health and wellbeing when caring for a loved one. That's why New York Foundation for Senior Citizens new free, in-home "Emergency/Extended Hours of Respite Care Program" that gives caregivers of frail elderly living throughout the five boroughs a much needed break can be a life line for caregivers.

"Many caregivers provide care for their relatives 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They have to be careful not to wear themselves out. This new program gives them an opportunity to take some time for themselves," says Jed A. Levine, Executive Vice President, Director, Programs and Services, Alzheimer's Association, New York City Chapter. "We know how grateful family members are when they can get some respite and return to the job of caring for their relative with renewed energy. New York Foundation for Senior Citizens new service is a wonderful resource for our caregivers."

Recognizing that a caregiver may need time off to go to the doctor, the gym, have lunch with a friend or attend a support group, the Foundation's newly added Respite Care Program's "Emergency/Extended Hours of Care" provides short term in-home care for the frail elderly at no charge, by trained and certified personal care aides (through a private agency). The service is available on weekends, holidays and in emergencies for those who qualify.

Like many other caregivers, Steve Savinetti of Queens, the primary caregiver for his 89 year old mother, kept postponing tests for a potentially life threatening illness because he couldn't find a reliable aide or any friends or neighbors to relieve him. A 57 year old retired teamster living in Howard Beach, Mr. Savinetti turned to the Foundation's new Emergency/Extended Hours of Respite Care Program as soon as he heard about it and the tests were arranged within a few days. His mother insisted on accompanying him to the hospital so the relief aide came with her helping with meals and providing companionship.

"I am grateful to the Foundation for making this service available in such a professional and expeditious way," says Mr. Savinetti. "Now that I know that my mother will be well cared for, I can take care of my own health care. The Foundation sent us a very nice lady. I couldn't have asked for more. When taking care of someone, the number one thing you don't do is take care of yourself. They really helped me out."

The Foundation's free Respite Care service has changed Alice Richard's life. Ms. Richards who lives with her 98 year old mother in Staten Island has a daily commute of more than an hour to her job as a secretary in a Manhattan investment firm and then returns home to care for her mother every evening, on weekends and holidays. As a result of the Emergency/Extended Hours of Care program, she now has time just for herself.

"Having six hours off on Saturday and Sunday, once a month, has made a world of difference to me. I get to do what I want to do. I had lunch with a friend in Manhattan I hadn't seen in years; I went to a movie, I had some 'me' time," says Ms. Richards. "It has also helped my relationship with mom. When I am home all weekend, it gets stressful. I feel refreshed when mom and I are not on top of each other. The women who came to care for mom are so friendly and professional. I have no qualms about leaving my mother with them. This is such a wonderful program."

Priority for the emergency/extended care service is given to caregivers who are providing assistance to frail elderly with annual incomes of \$40,000 or less. The service is available in all five boroughs.

NYFSC continues to provide its Respite Care Program's basic service which offers temporary relief for caregivers providing service to older persons able to afford short-term in-home care, starting at the low cost of \$7.15 per hour plus carfare.

For more information please contact, Amanda Forsman, Respite Care Program Director, at (212) 962-7559 or e-mail her at aforsman@nyfscitcop.org. Respite Care is funded by New York State and New York City legislators, New York State Office for the Aging, New York City Department for the Aging and private contributions.

Established in 1968, the New York Foundation for Senior Citizens is the only non-profit, non-sectarian organization serving New York's seniors in all five boroughs. NYFSC is dedicated to helping New York's seniors enjoy healthier, safer, and more productive and dignified lives. For more information, please go to www.nyfsc.org.

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