

# HomeCare Options

The Community  
Home Care Option  
For Over 50 Years

Winter 2011

## Grant Received for Fall Prevention Program

HomeCare Options is the recipient of a grant for the implementation of Good Steps, a unique program that is intended to reduce the number of falls among seniors.

The grant, from the Passaic County Department of Senior Services, Disability & Veterans Affairs, uses an exercise regimen to increase muscle strength, enhance general fitness and overall well-being, and improve balance.

"The statistics are staggering – one out of three adults age 65 and older falls every year," says Ken Wessel, Executive Director of HomeCare Options. "Falls are the leading cause of death from injury within this age group, as well as the most common cause of hospital admissions for trauma. As many as one in every three of these falls result in moderate to severe injury, such as lacerations, hip fractures or head trauma. We believe this program will make a real difference in reducing both the number of falls and number of injuries that occur as a result of falling."

The home-based, individually tailored strength and balance retraining program was designed by clinicians in New Zealand specifically to prevent falls. The exercises in Good Steps, which are individually prescribed and increase in difficulty, are taught to seniors in home visits made by HomeCare Options nurses, who were previously trained in the program by a physical therapist.

The exercises take about 30 minutes to complete, with participants expected to exercise three times weekly on their own and walk at least twice a week.

According to Alex Barry, Director of Services at HomeCare Options, the exercise program was found to be effective in reducing by 35 percent both the number of falls and the number of injuries resulting from falls. The greatest impact was found in those over 80 years old and those with a history of falls.

The program incorporates a series of dynamic exercises that focuses on those lower limb muscles that are particularly important for functional movements and walking, and recovering balance.

"Good Steps is an evidence-based program that has been

shown to work effectively with seniors," says Barry. "No other falls program has been tested in such a comprehensive way. We're very excited about offering it in Passaic County."

County residents 60 and over are invited to participate. To learn more, call 973-523-1224.

## HomeCare Options Adds New Trustee



Renee F. Pevour has been named to HomeCare Options' Board of Trustees.

Assistant to the Chairperson of Nursing at William Paterson University, Renee has worked for many years as an oncology, pain and hospice nurse, and been active in professional and community activities. She holds a Master's degree from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in nursing from Edinboro University in Pennsylvania.



Ken Wessel poses with Alison Faubert, director of the Passaic County Historical Society, and State Senator Norman Robertson at last fall's wine tasting benefit for HomeCare Options at Lambert Castle.

## Annual Dinner Scheduled

HomeCare Options will hold its annual dinner on Thursday evening, April 28th at the Brownstone in Paterson.

For more information on HomeCare Options' wellness services: Call 973-523-1224

[www.HomeCareOptions.com](http://www.HomeCareOptions.com)

## Wessel Honored for Leadership, Community Service

Ken Wessel, Executive Director of HomeCare Options, is a 2011 recipient of the NewBridge Services' Helping People Move Forward award. The annual award is presented to individuals who live or work in Passaic or Morris counties and are dedicated to improving the quality of life of New Jersey residents.

He will be honored on March 31 at a dinner with co-honorees Mario D. Cardinale, Superintendent of Schools – Butler Public School District, and Paul Boudreau, President of the Morris County Chamber of Commerce. NewBridge, based in Pompton Plains, provides mental health, substance abuse, housing, youth programs, senior services, and educational programs to area communities.

"NewBridge is pleased to recognize Ken's leadership and commitment to the people of northern New Jersey, and recognize the outstanding programs and services HomeCare Options offers," said Robert L. Parker, NewBridge Executive Director. "Ken and his staff provide the kind of compassionate and dedicated care that has made a real difference in the lives of their elderly and infirmed patients, while at the same time giving a sense of security and comfort to their families."

Wessel has held the top administrative post at HomeCare Options for over 30 years. He has served four terms on the board of the National Association of Home Care and as Chairman of the Home Care Aide Association of America, a position he has been elected to four times. He serves as

President of the Home Care Council of New Jersey, has been a four-term Board member and former Vice President of the Home Care Association of New Jersey, and was long-time Chairman of the Passaic County Human Services Advisory Council.

A licensed social worker, he has been a long-time advocate for both patients of home care and the home care workers that care for them. Wessel has been instrumental in setting the standards for care at home health agencies in New Jersey, and holds two Congressional Certificates of Merit. He has been a recipient of the Passaic County Leadership Award and been named United Way Executive of the Year and the 2005 recipient of the organization's Community Cornerstone award. He has testified before both houses of Congress and the New Jersey State Legislature in hearings involving home care issues. He frequently writes on home care topics and

speaks around the country about the value of the home care workforce.



**Lidia Vidal, a HomeCare Options nurse and social worker, screens a senior during National Memory Screening Day. Over 60 seniors were screened for Alzheimer's disease.**



**Maryann Vecchione of Little Falls (left) and Lynne Lefeler of Wayne (right), shown with Virginia Stabile, director of the Volunteer Shopper Program, were honored at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The program was developed by HomeCare Options to provide volunteer shoppers to homebound Passaic County seniors who are unable to shop for themselves.**

## HomeCare Options Receives National Accreditation

HomeCare Options has been reaccredited by The National Association for Home Care, the oldest Home Care Accreditation Program in the country. This means the agency met the 12 standards set forth by the nationally recognized accreditation body for Home Care Aide services.

Accreditation is based on a review of records, policies, patient visits, and interviews with all levels of staff, as well as customer surveys. The process is done every three years

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