



National
PACE
Association

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Media Release

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The National PACE Association Encourages Seniors to Consider Options During “Older Americans Month”

NPA launches new Web site to help seniors and their families learn about PACE®

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 13, 2009 – The May celebration of Older Americans Month is traditionally a time when many families pause to learn more about the long term care options that are available in their communities. To assist families better understand their long term care options, the National PACE Association recently launched www.PACE4You.org, an easy-to-understand Web site that provides background on the Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) model of care.

Too often families avoid the important conversations about where and how they want to live and age until the moment a crisis forces them to confront the issue. When the time comes to make these difficult decisions many people are unaware that PACE programs exist as an option that will allow a loved one in need of nursing home care to remain at home. PACE is rapidly growing as an innovative model of care that provides older Americans with the care services and supports that enables them to live in their own homes and age with dignity.

Developed more than 30 years ago, the PACE model of care provides an innovative alternative to nursing homes paid for by Medicare and Medicaid. The common sense approach that the PACE team uses to provide medical care and coordinate support services helps keep people in their homes so they can be near friends and family. It is the hands-on approach and individualized patient attention that makes PACE unique from every other long term care option and so successful in helping seniors remain healthy and independent.

To help families understand and learn more about PACE programs, The National PACE Association's Web site, www.PACE4You.org, is an easy-to-understand portal that provides background on the PACE model of long term care. Visitors can view a PACE video that tells the stories of PACE participants and their families, read testimonials and access a PACE Program Finder that helps people find a PACE program in their community.

“As society gets older and 77 million Baby Boomers near retirement, it's crucial to provide education on long term care options. Technological advancements have allowed people of all ages, from seniors to caregivers, access to medical care information online,” said Shawn Bloom, executive director of NPA. “Because of this, www.PACE4You.org was created to offer a straight-forward, yet comprehensive resource featuring the benefits of coordinated care to improved quality of life that a PACE program offers.”

With 68 PACE programs now operating in 31 states, older Americans around the country have an even greater opportunity to benefit from the PACE approach. The popularity of these programs has increased so quickly because PACE effectively maintains the health, independence and dignity of seniors with long term care needs as they age by emphasizing preventive and primary care as well as nutrition, transportation and most other services that support the health and well-being of program participants.,

Amy Minnich, Center Director for LIFE Geisinger, a PACE program in Pennsylvania, notes how the positive benefits of a PACE program is clearly demonstrated in something as simple as in an enrollee's photo ID experience. “We've had some of our participants request to have their photo retaken after only three months because they are not satisfied with how they look in their original photo,” says Minnich. “The differences we see in the two photos are visibly noticeable and confirms what numerous studies have shown: the PACE model really improves the quality of life for enrollees.”

PACE programs' documented results in preserving wellness, supporting healthy outcomes, and promoting quality of life help reduce hospital visits and avoid nursing home admissions. By avoiding these costs, PACE programs reduce expensive care interventions and provide families with piece of mind that their loved one is receiving the best possible care in the most appropriate setting.

“Older Americans Month is a great opportunity for Americans to begin talking with their loved ones about where and how they want to receive care when the time comes,” said Bloom. “By going to www.PACE4You.org, people can learn more about PACE, its availability, and why it may be the best care option for them.”

About NPA:

The National PACE Association works to advance the efforts of Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) to support, maintain, safeguard and promote the provision of quality, comprehensive and cost-effective health care services for frail older adults. More information on NPA and PACE is available at www.npaonline.org.

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