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The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee Meeting
Lenox Hill Neighborhood House
331 East 70th Street, Auditorium
September 13, 2012
6:30PM

Community Board members in attendance: Jacqueline Ludorf, Mary Pike, Ellen Polivy, Hattie Quarnstrom, Barbara Rudder

Public member in attendance: Jeffrey Ascherman

Community Board members excused: Molly Blayney

The meeting was called to order at 6:48 pm. Difficulties with audiovisual equipment delayed its start.

All three of the evening's speakers were from HealthOutreach, a long-standing social work initiative of New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center. A fourth presenter, Dr. Laurie Hanin, executive director of the Center for Hearing and Communication, had also been scheduled to speak but was unable to attend.

The speakers, all of whom are licensed clinical social workers, were:

- Sandy Regenbogen-Weiss, HealthOutreach Social Work Manager;
- Laura Clutz, HealthOutreach Lifeline Program Coordinator; and
- Sarah Waxse, Health Outreach Caregivers Service Coordinator.

All three presentations were highly informative. Ms. Regenbogen-Weiss provided general information about the HealthOutreach program and how one becomes a member. Ms. Clutz explained the Lifeline medical alert program and discussed technological advances that will further enhance its capacity to alert medical responders when a subscriber may be experiencing a medical emergency. Ms. Waxse discussed the support services available to individuals and families who are serving as caregivers for individuals 60 years of age and older.

The presenters made a number of useful leaflets and other printed information available. These materials contained information about HealthOutreach and other programs the hospital has implemented to better serve members of the public.

Individuals who would like to obtain additional information about any of the HealthOutreach program offerings are welcome to contact the presenters directly:

- Sandy Regenbogen-Weiss: 212-746-4351; sar9092@nyp.org;
- Laura Clutz: 212-746-6479; lac9016@nyp.org;
- Sarah Waxse: 212-746-4365; smw9001@nyp.org.

All three speakers were open to questions and discussion during the course of their presentations. The points that follow are among those made during the course of their respective presentations.

Sandy Regenbogen-Weiss, Social Work Manager, HealthOutreach, New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center:

- HealthOutreach is a free membership program, staffed by licensed social workers, which makes an array of offerings available to New York City individuals age 60 and older. Joining is simple and involves only the filling out a simple form to get on the program's mailing list. Newsletters and bulletins keep members informed about upcoming events.
- Individuals currently participating in the program range in age from 60 to 100.
- Activities and services geared toward enhancing the overall health and well-being of older adults include lectures and workshops on topics of particular relevance by physicians and other staff members, classes (art; exercise, including yoga; writing workshops); comprehensive presentations on falls and their prevention, meet-the-author events, and health insurance information counseling (including one-on-one private meetings by appointment).
- The program also provides opportunities for socializing, including holiday parties, films, and trips.

[NOTE: Many offerings are free but others, such as films, trips, and classes, are not. Charges vary depending on the event.]

Laura Clutz, HealthOutreach, Lifeline Program Coordinator, New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center:

- Lifeline is a personal emergency response system administered by the hospital's social work department and provided in partnership with Philips Lifeline.
- If serious illness or injury in the home prevents one from calling for help on his or her land line or cell, help can be summoned by pressing the button on the warning device, which is worn around the neck or on the wrist. The warning device enables immediate contact to be made with the subscriber and her/his situation to be assessed. An ambulance can be quickly dispatched to take the individual to the hospital of his or her choice, or, in a critical situation, to the nearest hospital.

- Unlike other components of HealthOutreach, age is not a factor in terms of accessing this service; there is, however, a monthly fee which varies depending on the features selected.
- All subscribers get on-site visits for installation and maintenance of the equipment and to assess whether there are safety issues in the home; in addition, staff social workers are available by telephone to answer a range of questions and to provide referrals.

Sarah Waxse, HealthOutreach, Caregivers Service Coordinator, New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center:

- The Caregivers Service is a free program providing multiple services to family members and friends serving as a caregiver for an individual 60 years of age or older.
- The service can provide much needed assistance to caregivers in coping with issues they encounter in caring for their family member or friend; these include referrals to physicians and links to community services and other resources.
- The service is also a source of authoritative information on the often complex topics caregivers commonly encounter in aiding their family member or friend, including but not limited to Medicare and Medicaid, long-term care insurance, and living wills and health care proxies.
- Additional avenues of assistance are supportive counseling for caregivers (in person or by telephone when necessary) and support groups for caregivers, including one for those who aid older individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia.
- Stress reduction workshops and seminars aimed at nurturing caregivers and keeping them well physically and emotionally are also available.

Old Business:

There was none.

New Business:

There was none.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8 pm.

**Ellen Polivy and Mary Pike
Co-Chairs, Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee**