



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mystic Valley Elder Services Hosts Annual Legislative Briefing
Legislative priorities relating to older adults hot topics of discussion

Malden, MA-Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) recently hosted its annual legislative briefing at its headquarters, located at 300 Commercial Street in Malden. MVES Board President Kathleen Beaulieu and Chief Executive Officer Daniel J. O'Leary were joined by legislative co-hosts Senator Patricia Jehlen and Representative Christine Barber to speak to a standing-room crowd of local legislators, town officials, MVES board members and MVES staff.

Mr. O'Leary and the legislators addressed three priority legislative issues that affect older people: Bill S.358—Enough Pay to Stay Initiative to increase funding for the direct home care workforce; Bill S.355—expansion of the home care program to more effectively address behavioral and mental health issues; and Bill S.354—push for an extension of the home care program “middle income” pilot program. He also outlined budget priorities for the FY20 budget, which include supporting Senate Supplemental Budget Language for Home Care Network Technology Trust, supporting House 1 Funding for Elder Nutrition Program, including Meals on Wheels and Congregate Dining, and expanding Funding for Elder Supportive Housing.

Senators Jason Lewis and Sal DiDomenico along with Representatives Paul Brodeur, Michael Day, Paul Donato, Joseph McGonagle, RoseLee Vincent and Donald Wong participated in the event with staff from the offices of Senator Bruce Tarr and Representatives Bradley Jones and Stephen Ultrino. Medford Mayor Stephanie Burke, Melrose Mayor Gail Infurna, Chelsea City Manager Tom Ambrosino, and North Reading Town Administrator Michael Gilleberto also attended.

Joining the program this year were two special guest speakers: Lionette Jasmin, a resident of Everett and home health aide with Associated Home Care, and MVES program consumer Carole Nolan, from Malden.

Ms. Jasmin, who has been a home health aide for 30 years, spoke on the passion she has for her job and her clients but also explained the challenges she faces, such as low wages, long hours and lack of training. She cares deeply for the wellbeing of her clients but needs to work two jobs and long hours seven days a week to try to make ends meet. The financial burden Ms. Jasmin faces creates a lot of stress.

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Ms. Jasmin has noticed the burden of care for home health aides has demonstrably increased over the years. “Reliance on home health aides is growing, and there seems to be little progress on improving wages, training or career prospects,” she said.

The second guest speaker, Ms. Nolan, shared her inspirational story. Ms. Nolan has lived in the same apartment for 27 years and is grateful to still live independently in the community she loves. Some years ago, Ms. Nolan suffered from an acute attack of depression, which resulted in her being in bed for 3 weeks. Concerned about her onset of depression, she approached the MVES Residential Services Coordinator (RSC) at her building. Realizing Ms. Nolan’s difficulty, the RSC referred her to Amy Foreman, a clinical caseworker in the Clinical Programs Department at MVES. Amy, with Ms. Nolan’s permission, enrolled her into the Mobile Mental Health program, a program in which clinical caseworkers provide outreach to older adults experiencing mental health conditions that impact their functioning and ability to meet life’s daily challenges.

Since she has been enrolled in the program, her bouts of depression have declined. Ms. Nolan really likes that her counselor comes to her home once a week as part of the program. “It is much better now that my counselor comes to me. I rely on a cane now and cannot walk long distances so it works out great. I don’t have to travel as much and feel more relaxed in the setting of my own home,” she stated.

Concluding the program, Mr. O’Leary thanked those in attendance, “Each year, when we host this breakfast, I’m reminded of how fortunate we are to have representatives on Beacon Hill who truly understand the importance of home care services and behavioral and mental health issues and support our programs throughout the year.”

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Event photos:



Mystic Valley Elder Services recently hosted its Annual Legislative Briefing at its headquarters at 300 Commercial Street in Malden. Legislators who participated in the Legislative Briefing included: Representatives Paul Brodeur, Joseph McGonagle, Michael Day, Donald Wong, and RoseLee Vincent, and Senators Patricia Jehlen, Sal DiDomenico, and Jason Lewis along with Mystic Valley Elder Services CEO Daniel O’Leary.

