



# HomeCare Options

The Community Home Care Option for Over 60 Years

## HomeCare Options Provides Support for Adults Through Division of Developmental Disabilities

HomeCare Options is completing the process to become a Support Coordination Agency for the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, to provide services and support for New Jersey adults age 21 and older with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The goal is to allow these individuals to live as independently as possible.

“These are typically young people who are transitioning out of the school system,” says Alexis Barry, Executive Director, HomeCare Options. “Our trained Support Coordinators will complete an assessment and service plan with the individual and family, and connect them with approved Provider Agencies to access services. The needs may include medical, social, educational, job training and transportation.”



*MaryAnne Cannarella (center) receives a proclamation from the Passaic County Board of Freeholders for HomeCare Options' participation in the recent memory screening program. Local residents were screened for memory problems as part of the Alzheimer Foundation of America's National Memory Screening Program.*

.....

## Nominations Accepted for 2016 Caring Award

HomeCare Options is accepting nominations for its annual “Caring Award.” The award, introduced in 2004 to mark the agency’s 50th anniversary, honors those individuals who have dedicated themselves to helping others.

Recognized are both those well-known and unsung, with the winner to be introduced at the agency’s annual dinner (scheduled on Thursday, April 21st).

The award is given to an individual who has “selflessly and compassionately given of him or herself to improve the lives of others in Passaic County” through their job or in community service.

Last year’s winners were Assemblywoman Valerie Huttie, who has played a pivotal role in legislation supporting the home care industry and those it serves, and Joseph Duffy, President of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Paterson. Former U.S. Senator Bill Bradley was the award’s first recipient.

To nominate a candidate, either contact HomeCare Options for a nomination form (call 973-523-1224) or send the candidate’s name and a short paragraph on why they should be considered to: Caring Award, c/o HomeCare Options, 2 Market Street, Paterson, NJ 07501. Please include your name and telephone number.

## Volunteer Coordinator is Not Slowing Down

Virginia Statile is the 90-something (she's not always forthcoming on her age) volunteer coordinator for a program run by HomeCare Options that matches homebound seniors with volunteers who grocery shop for them and provide much-needed companionship.

In this position, Virginia keeps tabs on some 80 volunteers, who come from all walks of life and range in age from 14 to 80 years old. These volunteers annually make nearly 3,000 visits for more than 100 patients.

As a member of the Board of Trustees at HomeCare Options, Virginia was asked to monitor a small, fledgling program that the agency ran and had only seven or eight volunteers and patients. Federal cutbacks had limited the availability of aides to take care of these shopping and companionship needs, and volunteers were needed to help with these services. Virginia was asked if she would oversee the program for a week or so, or until they hired a new coordinator. She agreed.

That was 15 years ago. Today, the volunteer shoppers program remains a full-time project for Virginia. She stays on top of the volunteers and patients, contacting each on a monthly basis. Since compatibility is very important – less with regard to the actual shopping aspect, but more in terms of companionship as the volunteer shoppers become like family to patients who otherwise have little social interaction – she

makes sure patient and shopper are good matches. She looks into the backgrounds of all volunteer shopping candidates, which includes carefully checking personal and professional references. She aggressively recruits new volunteers, identifies patients who are in desperate need of the service, and keeps the program running smoothly. This includes generating referrals from hospitals, nurses, social workers and from word-of-mouth, as well as from articles that appear in local newspapers encouraging participation.

As a result of her efforts, many of the volunteers and patients stay together for years, with volunteers bringing a little light and joy into the lives of elderly, often frail people who would otherwise be alone. Responses like “she’s my angel,” and “I don’t know what I would do without him,” demonstrate the importance of the program for patients. From the volunteers’ perspective, the feeling of knowing they’ve made a difference in someone’s life is equally meaningful.

Virginia was the long-time executive director of one of the state’s largest home care agencies, with 1,000 home health aides, before retiring in 1997. In honoring her, U.S. Senator Robert Menendez called her “a woman whose dedication to and compassion for the sick, elderly and disabled is unmatched.”

Retirement, of course, did not mean she planned on taking it easy. She has continued her active involvement on a number of boards and committees.

“She never slows down,” says HomeCare Options Executive Director Alexis Barry. “She has built this program by herself and continues to grow and nurture it. No one could put the kind of love and attention into it she does. Without her involvement, this program would not have touched nearly so many people.”



*Virginia Statile (center), program coordinator, poses with award winning volunteer shoppers at the annual dinner. HomeCare Options' volunteer shoppers program provides support and companionship for many of Passaic County's homebound elderly.*

*“The greatest joy one can have is doing something for another without any thought of getting something in return.”*

Coach John Wooden