



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Malden Family Benefits from Mystic Valley Elder Services Caregiver Support Program**

**(Malden, MA)**— Caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease or dementia at home is a difficult task and can become overwhelming at times. Each day brings new challenges as the caregiver copes with changing levels of ability and new patterns of behavior. It is a demanding responsibility.

Caregivers work hard year round to provide assistance to their loved ones. Devoting themselves physically and emotionally, caregivers take on enormous duties in bringing comfort to a friend or family member. Normal everyday tasks such as dressing, bathing, eating, and the basic activities of daily living often become difficult to manage for both the person in need of care and the caregiver. And, unfortunately, there is no perfect instruction manual.

“It is important for caregivers to reach out for help,” explains Mystic Valley Elder Services Caregivers Support Coordinator Kathy Learned. “Caregiving is very difficult to do on your own. They need to recognize that they need and deserve a break from their caregiving responsibilities. Many times, caregivers benefit from talking with others in similar situations.”

Nikki, 50, of Malden, is caregiver to her husband Paul, 56, who has had early onset Alzheimer's for more than two years. She attends Mystic Valley Elder Services' (MVES) Family Caregivers Support Group. She and Paul have three young sons just finishing school and Nikki is a nurse and works nights. “Finances are tight,” says Nikki, with two kids in

college and Paul having to leave his job due to the disease. “It can be difficult and very emotional,” she says.

Paul is getting direct care including mental stimulation and physical care at an adult day health center three times a week, which MVES is helping him receive, and he is very happy there. Transportation is also provided through MVES to his day care services. During this time, Nikki finds time for herself to get a haircut and do errands. She is thankful for the support of her family, such as her sons who live at home, her mom, and Paul’s dad, who stays with him during the week. They have also hired a companion who takes walks with Paul at night when she is working.

“Mystic Valley has helped us out tremendously,” said Nikki. “They have been fabulous, whether it is the support group where you talk to people going through the same situation or troubleshooting direct problems that are specific to our age and issue. Our journey is a bit different due to our age and finances, the fact that we have children in their 20's and also taking care of our aging parents all while I work.”

Mystic Valley Elder Services has a range of accessible and affordable caregiver services through its Family Caregiver Support Program, such as one-on-one assistance, family meetings, community resources, caregiver support groups and peer support, with many offered at no or low cost to caregivers. When the caregiver support coordinator meets with a new caregiver, she creates an individualized action plan. These services are provided to anyone in MVES’ service area caring for an adult age 60 or older or an adult of any age with Alzheimer’s disease or a related memory disorder.

For more information on caregivers support programs with Mystic Valley Elder Services, please call 781-324-7705.

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### **About Mystic Valley Elder Services**

*Celebrating 45 Years of giving older adults their independence, Mystic Valley Elder Services is a non-profit agency located in Malden, Mass., that provides essential home- and community-based care and resources to older adults, adults living with disabilities, and caregivers who reside in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield and Winthrop, regardless of their income level. Agency services include coordination of home care, transportation, Meals on Wheels, and information and referrals. For more information, please call (781) 324-7705 or visit [www.mves.org](http://www.mves.org).*