



Every Day is Senior Health and Fitness Day St. Paul's PACE Participants

As our life expectancy increases, so does our realization that we must retain our personal fitness to fully enjoy an active lifestyle. For seniors at St. Paul's PACE, physical activity and health are far more than choice. For these frail seniors, health and fitness are the keys to their independence that allows them to remain in their homes and community.

St. Paul's PACE, a nonprofit organization, is a health plan for seniors age 55 and older who prefer not to move into a nursing home, but whose medical problems make it impossible for them to stay at home without help from doctors, nurses, social workers and other caregivers. PACE is designed specifically to offer an alternative to institutional living for seniors who live in San Diego and are eligible for nursing home level of care as certified by the California Department of Health Care Services.

"The philosophy of PACE," said Carol Hubbard, St. Paul's PACE Executive Director, "is to enhance the quality of life and independence of frail, older adults by providing services that help them stay in the community. Our goal is to maximize dignity and respect while preserving and supporting the family." She emphasized that PACE programs such as Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy can help restore movement and function, enabling PACE participants to achieve a higher level of independence to live life to its fullest. The PACE Adult Day Care facility offers participants with opportunities to stimulate memory and maximize physical ability through individual and group exercise programs, tai-chi, and armchair aerobics.

"With improved fitness," said Hubbard, "we have found that PACE participants sleep better and feel more relaxed. The activities lower their blood pressure, and increase energy levels and self esteem. Ultimately, their improved fitness reduces their risk of serious diseases and allows them to remain safely in their community. We've had Participants who are literally living in their wheel chairs because they can not transfer from chair to bed safely. With Physical Therapy and exercise, they gain strength and receive training to transfer safely and independently so they can sleep in their bed, use the commode, even fix their own meals – that's life changing

St. Paul's PACE is supported and regulated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services and the California Department of Health Care Services. PACE accepts Medi-CAL, a combination of Medi-CAL and Medicare or private payments and has enrollment specialists

available to assist applications. Contact PACE in San Diego at www.StPaulsPACE.org or call 619-677-3800.

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