

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 1, 2012

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Professionals and Caregivers Look Beyond Alzheimer's Disease

BAY CITY, MI –Training in Alzheimer's behaviors, pain and communication will be held on Oct. 25 at Saginaw Valley State University sponsored by Avalon Hospice and the Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State. Two morning conferences will run concurrently: one for healthcare professionals that provides continuing education credits; the other for older adults and caregivers looking after persons with dementia. Both conferences are free.

"Looking Beyond the Disease: Empowering Persons with Dementia" unites experts from interconnected fields. Spokespersons from the Alzheimer's Association, Avalon Hospice, the Medicare and Medicaid Assistance Program, Region VIII Area Agency on Aging, and Director Peter Lichtenberg of the Institute of Gerontology fill the half-day agenda. Topics include:

- Trends and Treatments in Alzheimer's Disease and Diagnosis
- Communication Tips for Dementia
- Creating Confident Caregivers
- Pain Management with End-stage Alzheimer's

"I'm happy we could partner with Avalon Hospice to bring this continuing education to the tri-county area," said Dr. Lichtenberg. "We provide about 100 CE conferences every year, but most are in or near Detroit. This is an excellent opportunity to spread our training to central Michigan." Nurses, social workers and nursing home administrators each qualify for 3 CE credits; the pain management credit satisfies nursing and social work requirements.

A concurrent conference provides free training to seniors and caregivers in techniques for caring for persons with Alzheimer's and other dementias. "Helping a person with dementia produces enormous mental and physical stress," said Donna McDonald who organized the conference. Donna is the Institute of Gerontology's director of community outreach, where CE conferences have increased 2,500% over the past three years. "There is a huge need for quality training in issues that affect older adults," she said. "The national shortage of geriatric physicians means other health care workers must step in to satisfy the need." A full brochure is available at www.iog.wayne.edu, click Calendar and Registrations. To register, contact Donna at 313-664-2605 or donnamacdonald@wayne.edu.

The Institute of Gerontology researches the aging process, educates students in gerontology, and presents programs on aging issues relevant to professionals, caregivers and older adults in the community (www.iog.wayne.edu). *Avalon Hospice* provides whole-person care devoted to nurturing the mind, body and soul of every patient. Care is tailored to fit the needs of patients and families during this difficult time. Physicians, home health aides, nurses, social workers, clergy and volunteers work together to ensure the delivery of consistent, compassionate care filled with meaning, dignity and respect (www.avalon-hospice.com).