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Iona Senior Services Launches Comprehensive Community-Based Memory Care Program with Generous Funding from The Washington Home

Washington, D.C. (July 17, 2024) — Iona Senior Services (Iona) has been awarded a 12-month grant totaling \$237,218 from The Washington Home (TWH), to help build a Comprehensive Community-Based Memory Care Program. Iona's **Comprehensive Community-Based Memory Care Program** seeks to address a deepening crisis in the District of Columbia (District), referred to by the Alzheimer's Association as "the silent epidemic." With more than 84,000 older adults living in the District, there are an estimated 15,100 people living with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD). According to the D.C. State Plan on Alzheimer's, one in 10 people over the age of 65, and nearly half of those over the age of 85, have Alzheimer's disease. The number of people living with a form of dementia like Alzheimer's will increase as the population ages.

In the District, the aging population is expected to grow by 24% in the next six years, with nearly 10,000 people turning 65 every day. Individuals with ADRD face the challenges of isolation, being unaware of services, lack of financial resources to pay for care, and a limited insight into their changing cognitive capacity. More than 60% of people with ADRD over 65 are not diagnosed, due to stigma, fear, and lack of access to consistent medical care, which keeps them from seeking or obtaining medical intervention. According to the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at the University of Pittsburgh, Alzheimer's Disease among people of color is more prevalent than among whites.

A comprehensive community-based program will provide equitable access to care for this growing population, especially supporting low-income communities of color. Iona seeks to expand upon current dementia-capable programs (Dementia Navigators, Aging Solo, Helpline, and Adult Day Health Program) which represent the only integrated and subsidized approach to supporting people impacted by dementia in the District today.

"We are excited to launch our program with the goals of increasing dementia education, prescreening, and assessments, deepening caregiver dementia knowledge and education, and reducing caregiver burnout" says Iona's CEO, Joon Bang. "Iona is incredibly thankful for our long-standing partnership with The Washington Home and all the ways they support older adults across the District."

"The Washington Home is honored to partner with Iona to scale and grow their vital Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias programs and services to meet the growing needs of our older adult community. We need to plan today to meet the needs for tomorrow and Iona's systemic community-based strategies are doing just that for our residents," says Crystal Carr-Townsend, CEO of The Washington Home.

For additional details on program participation or caregiver support, please reach out to Iona's Helpline at info@iona.org or call (202) 895-9448.

About Iona Senior Services:

Founded in 1975, Iona Senior Services is a nonprofit in the District of Columbia that helps more than 4,500 older adults and caregivers each year as they experience the challenges and opportunities of aging. Iona educates, advocates, and provides community-based services to help people age well and live well. For more information, visit www.iona.org.

About The Washington Home:

The Washington Home is a DC-based foundation that provides funding to entities that create and deliver

innovative, compassionate and well-managed programs to improve the quality of life for older adults and/or terminally ill residents in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Learn more at www.TheWashingtonHome.org.

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