

Educational workshop highlights addiction, recovery in older adults

In observance of September being "Recovery Month," the Interfaith Caregivers of Mercer County will be hosting a workshop on the topic of addiction among older adults Sept. 24.

The program will be held in the cafeteria of St. Gregory the Great Academy, Hamilton Square, from 7:30 to 9 p.m., and will include informational sessions by the Mercer County Office on Aging about "Addiction Issues in Older Adults."

The presentation will be given by representatives of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – NJ, with content focusing on the causes and signs of addiction, as well as suggested strategies and resources for those impacted. The program will

include personal recovery stories from older adults who have successfully overcome their addiction challenges.

Material will include details on compulsive gambling, prescription drug abuse and alcohol abuse among seniors. Each will include a 15-minute educational component and a five-minute story of recovery. The session will feature a question and answer portion as well as other resources.

September has been designated "Recovery Month" by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and "promotes the societal benefits of prevention, treatment, and recovery for mental and

substance use disorders, celebrates people in recovery, lauds the contributions of treatment and service providers, and promotes the message that recovery in all its forms is possible."

The administration's campaign seeks to spread "the positive message ... that prevention works, treatment is effective and people can and do recover."

With a coalition of 25 Mercer County based congregations of various denominations, the Interfaith Caregivers organization works to build and strengthen the outreach ministries of area congregations, connecting them with health and social service resources and providing workshops and

trainings. The organization's mission is to support and promote the independence and dignity of homebound elderly and those with disabilities, through matching them with volunteers who assist with a variety of tasks and elements of daily life.

More than 250 volunteers currently provide free support to clients, including help with grocery shopping, respite care, transportation to medical appointments, minor home repairs, some meal preparation and house-keeping, as well as through providing visits and telephone reassurance.

Those wishing to attend the Sept. 24 workshop can reserve a seat by calling Interfaith Caregivers at (609) 393-9922 by Sept. 18.