

## The PAIR Program

January 2012

Do you live alone? Do you know someone who does? Is there a concern that independence is sliding toward isolation? Is there regular daily contact with family or friends?

If you have these concerns about your own situation or that of a member of your family, a friend or a neighbour, there is a very useful program available to you in most parts of the Laurentians, and soon to be implemented in the rest of the territory.

In the MRC des Laurentides, roughly the same territory as the CSSS des Sommets, the program is called PAIR and is administered by a volunteer group, *Prévoyance envers les Aînés des Laurentides Inc.* – roughly, *Looking Out for Seniors* – which is dedicated to improving the lives of seniors in the area. In addition to the PAIR program, they work to educate the population about how to recognize and prevent elder abuse.

PAIR is a simple, non-intrusive way to keep contact with individuals in their own homes through a daily phone call. Once you subscribe and choose what time each day you wish to receive the call, you will receive an automated, computer generated phone call at that time. If, one day, you do not pick up the phone to answer, an alert is signalled and the reason for your non-response can be investigated. If the case turns out to be an emergency, a priority call is directed to the police and it is treated in the same way as a 911 call. Of course, if you know you will be absent at the time of the scheduled call, it is easy to let them know. A simple notification to the central operator 819-425-2723 will avoid a false alert being triggered.

A company called Somum Inc. created the computer program in 1986 and has seen it installed widely in communities that care about the well-being of their citizens. *Prévoyance envers les Aînés des Laurentides* organized the PAIR program for the MRC des Laurentides in 1993 and has maintained responsibility for it ever since, with the support of the cities of Mont Tremblant and Ste. Agathe des Monts. It has helped countless people maintain their independence by remaining in their own homes under the watchful eye of the community.

Enrolment is completely free. *Prévoyance envers les aînés* covers all the costs with the financial backing of Centraide and the municipalities of the MRC des Laurentides. If you would like more information, a simple phone call to 819-425-3607 will get the answers to your questions. If you are already convinced of the benefits of this service, just ask for the registration form at the same number and a volunteer will go to your home to fill it out and get your signature authorizing the daily phone call.

If you are curious about other services offered by *Prévoyance*, including the volunteer Sentinels who provide support and assistance when seniors need help, call the president, Huguette Dumay at 819-425-3607, or email her at [charmey@sympatico.ca](mailto:charmey@sympatico.ca). She speaks English and can guide you to the help you need, whether you are dealing with issues of mistreatment or ageism, if you are living through a difficult time or if you simply want to know your rights. Are you independent and available? Perhaps you are interested in helping others who are affected by loneliness, abuse or other problems related to aging.

There are many opportunities to be a volunteer to build and maintain the strength of the community you live in. Give Madame Dumay a call and see what you can do together.

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