Emergency Safety Review

(Compiled from the April 30, 2009 public panel discussion)

Speakers: Shelly Raffe, MPA (Visiting Nurse Service of New York); Detective McDonnell, 24th Precinct (NYPD); Debra Drelich, LMSW (New York Elder Care Consultants); Stephanie Maddalone, (Educator for Phillips Lifeline Co.).

If you fall in the street or have a medical emergency, you need to be just as prepared as if there were a city-wide emergency. Here are some essentials:

1. Identification (copies of ID papers, credit cards)
2. Cell phone
3. Medication list including doses and start dates.
4. Important contacts – family, physician, pharmacy (see list on other side of this sheet). Also include one out-of-town contact in case the out-of-state communication system is the only one that works.

• Make several copies. Keep one in wallet or purse, one on the refrigerator (the first place the firemen and police look), and one on a bulletin board or near a phone.

• Be sure to have your “Go bag” packed and ready because the police and firemen don’t wait. What belongs in your bag? All of the above, plus list on the other side of this sheet.

• Documents to have ready in case of medical emergencies. Forms for these are available at stationery stores like Staples.

1. Health Care Proxy. This designates someone to make health care decisions for you if you become unable to make them for yourself. The form requires two witnesses.
2. Power of Attorney. This designates someone to handle your finances if you are unable – pay your bills, for example. It must be notarized.
3. Preferred Hospital. This is a note to the ambulance company, which they will probably honor unless they deem it too much of a risk.

Give copies to your caregiver and primary care physician, and keep in a visible spot—desktop or next to address book.
• What belongs in your “Go bag”?

- Copies of important documents like insurance cards, Medicare/Medicaid cards, proof of address, birth certificate.
- Extra set of car and house keys
- Copies of credit and ATM cards, plus $100 in cash, small bills
- Bottled water and non-perishable foods, like protein bars
- Flashlight, battery- or crank-operated AM/FM radio, extra batteries (check and change every 3-6 months)
- List of medications you take, why you take them, and dosages
- Sturdy, comfortable shoes, lightweight raingear
- Contact information for your household/members of your support network
- Notepad and pen
- Backup medical equipment

• Emergency info to always carry and post on refrigerator:

- Emergency contacts
- Health care proxy info and how to contact
- Primary physician and main specialists
- Preferred hospital
- Current medications and dosages
- Current medical conditions

• For more free information:

Call 311 and request “Ready New York” for senior and disabled residents. It will be mailed or emailed to you free of charge.