



NEWS RELEASE

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WISE & HEALTHY AGING OFFERS NEW MEDIATION SERVICE FOR FAMILIES WITH ISSUES RELATED TO THEIR ELDERS' CARE

*Collaboration with Center for Civic Mediation Brings No- or Low-Cost
Elder Care Mediation to Westside Residents*

SANTA MONICA (May 27, 2013) -- A valuable new service called Elder Care Mediation has just become available at WISE & Healthy Aging, thanks to a collaboration between the Santa Monica-based non-profit social service agency for seniors and the non-profit Center for Civic Mediation of Los Angeles, announced WISE & Healthy Aging President and CEO Grace Cheng Braun.

The mediation is now being offered on Monday afternoons at the main WISE & Healthy location at 1527 4th St., Santa Monica. The sessions with trained mediators are available by appointment or on a walk-in basis, according to Molly Davies, WISE & Healthy Aging Vice President, Elder Abuse Prevention and Ombudsman Services. "They are not limited to Santa Monica residents, but are reserved for older adults and their caregivers," she said.

"The Center for Civic Mediation is pleased to be partnering with WISE & Healthy Aging to make mediation services available for older adults across a wide spectrum of issues," said Jacklin Mizrahi, Director of the Center for Civic Mediation. "Older adults and their families face unique challenges when it comes to resolving disputes related to aging and a trained neutral party can help facilitate these discussions to ensure that everyone is working towards the best interests of the elder."

The Center for Civic Mediation's trained mediators are professionals from a wide variety of fields, including lawyers, therapists and social workers, according to the Center's Dave Focareta and Julie Ware. The mediators meet with the families in a private, confidential setting to create options for resolving differences and conflicts. Rather than deciding who is right or wrong, they listen to all parties and help them create their own solutions. The mediation is less formal than a court process and generally results in a win-win solution.

Often, families say, "All of us care—we just can't agree on what's best" for their elderly loved one. Their conflicts may be over where the elder should live, who should be responsible, whether a conservator is needed, or how to balance the family's concerns about safety with the elder's desire for independence.

"WISE & Healthy Aging is excited about making meditation services accessible to older adults and their caregivers through this collaboration with the Center," Davies said. "The need for low- to no-cost meditation services to help resolve matters that may arise as one ages is tremendous. So we are especially pleased that the first three-hour session is free of charge, and that the cost of any further sessions, if needed, can be negotiated.

"We have countless examples of when mediation would have been a viable solution to seemingly unresolvable situations—from siblings at odds over whether their parents should live at home or in a care facility, to an elder who

is being bullied by a neighbor or landlord," Davies continued. "Now, with the help of the Elder Care Mediation program, these families' situations *can* be resolved."

For more information or to make an appointment for Elder Care Mediation, please call WISE & Healthy Aging at (310) 394-9871.

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WISE & Healthy Aging is the result of the 2007 merger of WISE Senior Services and Center for Healthy Aging. With a combined 70 years' experience serving older adults, the nonprofit, social services organization, headquartered in Santa Monica, brings together a synergy of services, information, programs and support for seniors, those who care for them and the professionals who work with them. For more information, call (310) 394-9871 or visit www.wiseandhealthyaging.org