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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **MFY Legal Services Launches a New Advocacy Project for Nursing Home Residents**

### ***Residents and Family Members Can Call a Toll-Free Helpline for Assistance***

NEW YORK, N.Y., February 1, 2011—Today, MFY Legal Services, Inc. (MFY) launched the Nursing Home Residents' Project (NHRP) to provide advice and advocacy for nursing home residents and their families. The NHRP will represent nursing home residents who are facing abuse and neglect, civil rights violations, improper discharge planning, and unfair consumer practices. The NHRP will also provide know-your-rights trainings and educational sessions to nursing home residents and family councils.

The NHRP is modeled on MFY's ground-breaking Adult Home Advocacy Project, which provides trainings, advice, and legal representation that have resulted in systemic reforms that have benefited thousands of New York's adult home residents.

"In the 20 years since we launched our Adult Home Advocacy Project, MFY has helped countless adult home residents to assert their rights to dignity, respect, and care in more integrated settings," said MFY's Executive Director, Jeanette Zelhof. "Today, we undertake a similar initiative to provide those essential services for the over 40,000 New Yorkers who live in nursing homes."

The NHRP continues the work of Friends and Relatives of the Institutionalized and Aged (FRIA), which suspended its operations in 2011. MFY is launching the NHRP to fill this void.

"For over 30 years, FRIA has been a vital resource for thousands of nursing home residents and their families during times of crisis," said Cindy Katz, Esq., President of FRIA's Board of Directors. "I'm happy that MFY is joining in FRIA's legacy of fostering the dignity and independence of nursing home residents by providing advice and counsel to nursing home residents and their families."

MFY envisions a society in which no one is denied justice because he or she cannot afford an attorney. To make this vision a reality, MFY provides free legal assistance to residents of New York City on a wide range of civil legal issues, prioritizing services to vulnerable and under-

served populations, while simultaneously working to end the root causes of inequities through impact litigation, law reform, and policy advocacy. MFY is launching the NHRP to make sure that nursing home residents have access to these much needed services.

Nursing home residents and family members can call the Project's toll-free helpline at 855-444-6477 on Tuesdays from 10 am to 1 pm and on Thursdays from 2 – 5 pm.

The NHRP is supported by a generous contribution from Pfizer Inc.

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