



## Celebrate SPOP

More than 100 of SPOP's friends and colleagues came together to **Celebrate SPOP** – for our selection as the first recipient of the GMHF/AAGP Deirdre Johnston Award for Excellence and Innovation in Geriatric Mental Health Outreach Services and to honor Dr. Jeffrey Nichols, as he steps down as SPOP's President after 20 years.



Pictured left, Jeff Nichols and Nancy Harvey, Executive Director.

Guests enjoyed the sounds of the Chelsea Symphony.



## Free Training for Senior Center/Site Staffs

A wide range of groups throughout Manhattan have discovered that SPOP's training gives them the tools and knowledge they need to identify mental health and substance use problems in the elderly and to enable them to determine who to refer for mental health treatment. During the past year, 12 agencies – settlement houses, managed care providers, staffs of elected officials – and 211 individuals participated in SPOP's workshops, learning how to identify behavioral health disorders in older adults such as depression, anxiety, signs/symptoms of substance abuse, dementia and memory loss; how to approach an older adult to suggest the need for assistance; and how to make a referral. Training sessions use interactive methods such as role playing and are tailored to meet the specific needs of participating agencies. Many organizations request follow-up sessions that focus on a specific mental health problem or other issues such as how to engage people in treatment.

Older adults *underutilize mental health treatment more than any other age group*. SPOP's experience has shown that helping senior service providers to identify older adults in need of mental health services is crucial if older adults who suffer from mental illness are to receive treatment.

**If your organization would like to participate in a training session call Barbara Danish at 212-787-7120 ext. 520.**

## Homebound Services

Homebound older adults, who are usually frail and isolated, are the hardest to reach. Since the agency opened, SPOP has made reaching homebound older adults a priority, and remains one of the only licensed mental health clinics to provide services in the client's home. Our award-winning homebound services include mental health assessments, individual counseling, medication management and family support provided by social workers and psychiatrists with specialized understanding of the needs of older adults.

SPOP is expanding its homebound services to meet the needs of this expanding population - the number of frail older adults, age 75 and over, is the fastest growing segment of the elderly population. In addition, there is a growing recognition that mental illness in older adults is too often unrecognized and that they are an underserved group. It is also more accepted that the traditional method for providing counseling - in an office - does not work for the frail elderly, as they are often physically disabled and unable to travel.

### **Spanish Counseling, Assessments and Medication Management**

SPOP has expanded its bilingual (Spanish/English) counseling services with the addition of a bilingual psychiatrist who, in conjunction with our bilingual social workers, conducts assessments and provides medication management. Our social worker staff has also increased to meet the needs of the bilingual older adults throughout Manhattan. Group support is available to Spanish-speaking older adults at outreach sites.

SPOP remains at the forefront of targeting services to those who are most in need or are least likely to access traditional services, especially the large Latino geriatric population, for which there are insufficient culturally competent geriatric services offered in Spanish. Spanish-speaking staffs also assist clients in our Adult Day Center and Continuing Day Treatment Programs.

**To make a referral for homebound or bilingual services, call SPOP's Intake Worker at 212-787-7120 ext. 514.**