



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SEPTEMBER IS SENIOR ADOPTION MONTH AT THE MARYLAND SPCA

Baltimore— Throughout the month of September, senior citizens age 60 and over can come to the Maryland SPCA and adopt a pet for free, thanks to Bravo Health. Please note that normal adoption procedures do apply for this special promotion.

Studies have shown that owning and handling animals significantly benefits health, and not just for the young. In fact, pets may help elderly owners live longer, healthier, and more enjoyable lives. A study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* in May of 1999 demonstrated that independently living seniors who have pets tend to have better physical health and mental wellbeing than those that don't. They're more active, cope better with stress, and have better overall health. A 1997 study showed that elderly pet owners had significantly lower blood pressure overall than their contemporaries without pets. Pets can be a buffer against social isolation, providing a support system for older people who don't have any family or close friends nearby. Pets can even help combat depression, one of the most common medical problems facing seniors today.

“Bravo Health is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles among the seniors we serve,” said Scott Ptacek, Bravo Health’s executive vice president, marketing. “Supporting free adoptions at the Maryland SPCA is a great way to demonstrate that commitment, since the health benefits of having pets are well-documented.”

In addition, on Friday, September 18, the Maryland SPCA will be at the Sandtown Winchester Senior Center from 11:00 a.m. to noon and the Waxter Senior Center from 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. as part of Senior Citizen Pet Adoption Month at the Maryland SPCA. These events will feature adoptable pets and a question and answer session with an SPCA veterinarian.

Founded in 1996, Bravo Health provides Medicare beneficiaries access to high quality, cost-effective health care. With more than 250,000 members, Bravo Health offers Medicare Advantage health plans in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington, D.C. Additionally, the company offers Part D Prescription Drug Plans in 46 states. For more information, visit www.bravohealth.com.

The Maryland SPCA is located at 3300 Falls Road in the Hampden area of Baltimore City. Our mission is to improve the lives of pets and people in the community by fostering healthy animal-human relationships. We are not affiliated with any national animal welfare organization, and we receive no government funding. Our programs directly benefit the people and pets in central Maryland. For more information about the Maryland SPCA, visit www.mdspca.org or call 410-235-8826.

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