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## Alarming Statistics Validate Pines of Sarasota's Launch of the Ready & Steady Plan for Better Balance Program

### ***PRESS RELEASE***

**SARASOTA** – Sept. 9, 2015 10:30am at 1501 N. Orange Ave., Sarasota, FL

Falls are the **leading cause** of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older Americans. To help seniors assess their current risk of falling, Pines of Sarasota announces the launch of **Ready & Steady Plan for Better Balance**, a complimentary community service.

"Falls, with or without injury, are a national issue. As the oldest county in America per capita this is a major issue in Sarasota," states David Sylvester, President/CEO Pines of Sarasota. "Falls not only threaten seniors' safety and independence, but their quality of life. And it's costly. The charges for non-fatal unintentional fall-related injury hospitalization **exceeded \$3.6 billion in Florida in 2013.**

"Our Ready & Steady A Plan for Better Balance initiative is focused on preventable falls and their devastating effects. As an organization dedicated to our community, it was time for us to **take a stand to help prevent falls.**"

To kick off the campaign in support of National Falls Prevention Day on September 23rd, Pines of Sarasota has offered complimentary testing for the men and women of Sarasota's fire department and Health Department. Similar opportunities will be made available to departments in Bradenton, St. Petersburg and Tampa.

States Sarasota Mayor Willie Charles Shaw, "On behalf of the citizens of our community, I take great pride in recognizing Ready & Steady as a program dedicated to the health and wellness of everyone in our community – especially seniors."

Joel Amistoso, Therapy and Rehabilitation Director – Pines of Sarasota, explains the Ready & Steady risk assessment's four steps:

1. CDC based Health questionnaire
2. Timed, Up and Go test (T.U.G.)
3. *Biodex Balance System SD Machine™* that quickly tests balance
4. If determined at risk, a Pines of Sarasota rehabilitation therapist suggests a recommended action plan to help mitigate their risk of falling

#### **Alarming statistics include:**

- **One out of three** Americans aged 65+ fall each year
- **Every 13 seconds**, an older adult is treated in an emergency room for a fall
- Every 20 minutes, an older adult dies from a fall
- Falls result in more than 2.5 million injuries treated in emergency annually, over 734,000 hospitalizations and more than **21,700 deaths**
- In 2013, the cost of fall injuries was **\$34 billion**
- 2020 Financial projection for older adult falls may reach **\$67.7 billion**
- Those who fall once are 2 to 3 times more likely to fall again

*Based on statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

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Bette Zaret, Director of Strategic Marketing, Pines of Sarasota, notes that the organization hopes that seniors throughout the region will take advantage of the complimentary assessment. "We believe that by raising awareness of the need to proactively adopt preventative measures, we can help reduce the amount of preventable falls and potentially help seniors live more independently with the highest level of safety and comfort," states Zaret.

To determine your risk or the risk of someone you care about, please call the Pines of Sarasota Rehabilitation Center at 941-552-1882 for availability.

*Pines of Sarasota Rehabilitation and Senior Care Community provides excellent and compassionate inpatient/outpatient rehabilitation services, skilled nursing, memory care, assisted living as well as educational programs for seniors and their families in order to help enhance their quality of life. Pines of Sarasota Rehabilitation and Senior Care Community epitomizes innovative initiatives including; an on-campus child care and learning center which fosters inter-generational interaction and learning; Falls Prevention Programs which help minimize the risk of falling and; a comprehensive Volunteer Program that supports every aspect of campus life. Pines of Sarasota Rehabilitation and Senior Care Community is a not-for-profit organization that leads the way in holistic senior care.*