Media contact:

Karyn Odway
CyanPoint Communications
karyn@cyanpoint.com
(312) 479-1271

FINANCIAL PROFESSIONALS BUILD BUSINESS, REDUCE RISKS THROUGH WEB-BASED PROGRAM FROM PROTECTED TOMORROWS

LINCOLNSHIRE, IL (July 5, 2011) – Protected Tomorrows, Inc., a leader in enhancing the lives of families with special needs, has launched a new program for financial professionals to help them manage some key business risks and assist in growing their practice.

Protected Tomorrows Financial Professional Membership Program addresses an increasing concern: advisors are putting themselves at risk as they face more families that have a loved one with special needs, whether that “special need” be autism, bipolar disorder or Alzheimer’s disease. All of these developmental, mental and cognitive disabilities are on the rise, and in some cases, are expected to continue to grow in number, especially as medical advances allow people to live longer. An estimated 20 percent of Americans have some sort of disability.

The web-based Financial Professional Membership Program provides information, tools and insights—including quarterly Webinars with the latest need-to-know information (an educational series with CFP continuing education credit)—to help a financial professional manage these risks and build better relationships with existing clients who have special needs. The program also is designed to nurture new client relationships with this important segment of the population. It is best suited for financial planners, investment advisors, insurance providers, bank officers, CPAs, trust officers, real estate brokers or mortgage brokers who may not know much about the special needs community but are interested in deepening their client relationships, managing their business risks and growing their firm.

“Since most financial advisors do not have the time to develop additional expertise in this unique arena, our web-based program efficiently provides the fundamental knowledge they need to understand the underlying issues for these families,” said Mary Anne Ehlert, president and founder of Protected Tomorrows, who has specialized in special needs planning for more than 20 years.

These clients need a special kind of advice, planning, products or services from financial professionals. “Many professionals do not account for these particular needs as they conduct their work,” Ehlert said. “As such, most are shouldering a huge potential business liability without even knowing it.”

Having the necessary special needs planning knowledge enables financial professionals to handle the conversations, recognize the key technical information, connect clients to the proper resources and acknowledge when Protected Tomorrows needs to step in to assist. The advocacy firm also works with financial professionals and their clients by offering a proven, proprietary 8-step life planning model for special needs families. "Ultimately, our goal is to help these professionals in any way possible so that they can improve the lives of these families," Ehlert added.

"Some financial professionals don't know what they don't know," Ehlert said. The program shows them what they don't know about special needs and special needs planning while helping them manage their business risks and build better relationships with their clients.

Families who have members with special needs represent a very unique arena for the financial professional. The laws, issues and opportunities are complex and constantly changing. Regulations are cumbersome, so getting services can be difficult and not everyone knows how the government is willing to help. Protected Tomorrows serves as a partner and referral base for financial professionals in this area.

In addition, disabilities don't discriminate. Families with wealth are faced with special needs issues just as much as families that are more economically challenged. What they share in common is the trusted professionals they seek to overcome the many obstacles they face.

"There is a great deal of misinformation in the marketplace regarding special needs," Ehlert noted. "These families tend to be terrific clients for the financial professional because the emotional toll of managing a family like this can be very high. Due to these demands, the families are typically very loyal and highly supportive of anyone who can offer authentic assistance."

To learn more about the Financial Professional Member Program or Protected Tomorrows, call (847) 522.8086 or www.protectedtomorrows.com.

About Protected Tomorrows

Protected Tomorrows, Inc., headquartered in the Chicago suburb of Lincolnshire, is the leader in enhancing the lives of families with members who have special needs. By guiding families through its comprehensive, proprietary planning process, Protected Tomorrows helps families plan a safe and fulfilling life for a loved one by creating a Future Care Plan™. Through their work with clients and the family's advisors, and alongside of other advocates and legislators, Protected Tomorrows addresses many concerns of families with special needs such as: future care funding, government benefits, legal considerations, residential options, employment opportunities, recreational choices, education options and family communication. For questions, contact us at info@protectedtomorrows.com or visit www.protectedtomorrows.com .

\# # #