



Family Caregiver Day: Key Messages

Use these key messages when discussing Family Caregiver Day with caregivers, clients, reporters or decision-makers in your community.

What is Family Caregiver Day?

- The Ontario Caregiver Coalition is celebrating Ontario's second annual Family Caregiver Day on April 3rd.
- There are over 3 million unpaid caregivers in the province, providing support to family, friends and neighbours facing illness, disability or challenges associated with aging.
- Family Caregiver Day is a chance to recognize, celebrate and bring awareness to the value of caregivers to Ontario's families, health care system, and economy.

Who are Ontario's caregivers?

This year, the Ontario Caregiver Coalition is highlighting three generations of caregivers:

- **Young caregivers:** There are almost 500,000 family caregivers in Ontario who are between 15 and 24 years old. There are many caregivers who are even younger.
- **'Sandwich' generation caregivers,** who provide care for both their aging parents and their own children.
- **Elderly caregivers:** Nearly 375,000 caregivers in Ontario are 65 years or older.

How can the provincial government support caregivers?

- Caregiving is often not recognized as separate from being a good friend, child, parent or spouse, but it is a distinct role with unique challenges and solutions.
- The Ontario Caregiver Coalition is asking the provincial government for the following supports:
 - **Alleviation of Financial Distress:** The Ontario government should move forward quickly with the adoption of a financial benefit for caregivers that will allow them to remain in a caregiving role. This could be most easily accomplished through a form of caregiver tax credit that is refundable – or through the introduction of a caregiver benefit allowance that is means-tested.
 - **Need for Flexible Respite Options:** That there be an emphasis in the rollout of the Self-Directed Care program by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care on evaluating the impact, both benefits and disadvantages, on caregivers of implementing this model. In particular, it should be determined, through continuing consultation with caregivers, whether the model is achieving desired results in improving the flexibility of respite options in the community.

How can the public participate in Family Caregiver Day?

- **Everyone is invited to sign our digital** thank-you card to Ontario's caregivers by visiting www.ontariocaregivercoalition.ca.
- You can also share messages of support using the hashtag **#thxcaregivers**
- Share our content on your social media platforms