



The Ontario Caregiver Coalition is the voice of Ontario's caregivers. We advocate for recognition and support for the family, friends, and neighbours whose unpaid care is the hidden backbone of Ontario's health system.

May 2024 Newsletter

ONDP Brings Motion in the Legislature to Adopt the Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit

The OCC has for several years had as one of its key policy priority measures to address the financial hardship experienced by caregivers as a result of their vital role. We worked closely with researchers, thought leaders and caregivers themselves to design our proposal for an [Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit](#) (OCSB), a monthly allowance of \$1000.00, intended to recognize the essential nature of caregiver work and to bring some relief for the costs of caregiving.

On Thursday, May 9th, MPP Wayne Gates, the Official Opposition Critic for Long-Term Care, Retirement Homes and Home Care brought forward in the House Motion 94, calling for the implementation of the OCSB.

At the [Press Conference](#) ahead of the introduction of the Motion, NDP MPP Wayne Gates was flanked by Liberal MPP John Fraser and Green Party MPP Mike Schreiner, showing united support for this motion across the Opposition Parties. The OCC was pleased to support the Press Conference with presentations from OCC Caregiver Member Bhavini Patel, OCC Organization Member Chrissy Sadowski on behalf of the Young Caregivers Association, and OCC Chair Lauren Bates.

While the Motion did not succeed in the House (you can read the Debate [here](#)), for the first time, we saw caregiver financial distress debated in the House, and MPPs speaking powerfully about the need for concrete steps that would meaningfully address the need.

The Office of MPP Gates is leading a [Write to Your MPP](#) campaign in favour of the Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit. The OCC will continue to press forward with this issue: please join us at our General Members Meeting on June 20th to learn more.

Special thanks go to caregiver members Bhavini Patel and Sharon Gabison, Board Members Daniel Nowoselski and Kyle Fitzgerald, and organizational members Dan Corvino (MS Canada)

and Chrissy Sadowski (Young Caregivers Association). We are building a better Ontario for caregivers, one voice at a time!



At the OCC

Calling for Board and Committee Members

The OCC's annual call for new Board and Committee members is ongoing until June 28th, 2024.

The OCC's Board plays a central role in setting the OCC strategy by ensuring good governance and organizational resilience, while overseeing the work of the various Committees. Board members generally dedicate 4 to 10 hours per month to the OCC, and serve a 2 year, renewable term.

Committee work is flexible in terms of time commitment, with some Committee members dedicating a couple of hours each month, and others giving significantly more. Committee members share their skills in advocacy, research, communications, public policy, community engagement, stakeholder relations, operations, and governance. If you have a skill that you are interested in sharing with the OCC, there is a place for you!

It is important to us to have a range of experiences and perspectives on our Board and Committees. Our organizational culture is welcoming, supportive and flexible. This is a great opportunity to contribute to change, meet like-minded people, and develop your skill sets.

We rely on our Board and Committee members to work towards our shared vision of an Ontario where caregivers are recognized, valued and supported. Please consider giving your

time to the OCC as a Board or Committee member, or reaching out to friends or colleagues who may be interested in contributing to our work.

If you are interested in Committee work, please send us an email, and we will set up a time to meet and find the right fit for you. As well, you can learn more about our committees by clicking [here](#).

If you are interested in joining the Board, please send your resume and letter of interest to ontariocaregivercoalitionocc@gmail.com, attention of the Nominating Committee, by end of day June 28th, 2024. For more information about applying, please visit our website by clicking [here](#).

Upcoming General Members Meeting

Please join us for our upcoming General Members Meeting, to be held on Thursday, June 20th, from 11.00 - 1.00. We are looking forward to another lively discussion, which will include presentations on:

- the results of the OCC's 2024 Caregiver Survey
- a study by the Ontario Securities Commission on the impact of health conditions on finances in retirement
- the Landmark Studies of the future of dementia in Canada, by the Alzheimer Society of Canada

and more! If you have not received your calendar invitation, please reach out to us at ontariocaregivercoalitionocc@gmail.com.

Launching Our Member Spotlight

The OCC is launching our Member Spotlight, an online opportunity for our Members and friends to learn more about our Member organization, who help us uplift caregiver voices across the province.

Every upcoming Tuesday and Thursday, keep your eye on our social media feeds. We will be posting about a different OCC Organization Member each day.

The Member Spotlight is both a celebration of the tireless work our Organization Members contribute to our cause, and a chance for our members and friends to learn more about the important work our Organization Members do outside the OCC.

Our posts about the Ontario Association of Social Workers and AdvantAge Ontario are already up, and there is much more to come.

We have a permanent page on our website dedicated to the Member Spotlight, which you can access [here](#). This page is your hub for information about all our Organization Members.

We expect the Member Spotlight to run until mid-July on our social media feeds. Don't miss out on the celebration!

To see our social media posts, click on the links at the end of this newsletter.

Of Interest

Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence: Caring in Canada Survey Insights

The Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence (CCCE) has released insights from its cross-Canada survey of over 3,000 caregivers and care providers, highlighting the stress, financial difficulties, and poor working conditions experienced by caregivers and care providers.

One key highlight reveals that caregivers are working an "extra-shift", providing 5.1 hours of care a day. This adds up to over 30 hours of unpaid care per week, nearly the same amount as a full-time job.

Despite working almost the equivalent of a full-time job, financial stress is far too common among caregivers. Half of the participating caregivers reported experiencing financial stress in the past year resulting from their caregiving. 22% reported spending over \$1,000 per month on out-of-pocket caregiving expenses.

Nearly one in five caregivers are aged 65 and older, and they can be the most vulnerable to the hardships of caregiving. Senior caregivers are the least likely to access support services, including home modifications, respite, and transportation services.

The report contains further insights into the reality of caregiving, along with the CCCE's policy recommendations to the federal government aimed at making Canada the greatest place in the world to give and receive care.

To read their report, please click [here](#).

Statistics Canada: Report on Those with Multiple Unpaid Caregiving Responsibilities

Statistics Canada has just released a report on the results of their study on the 1.8 million Canadians "sandwiched" between multiple caregiving responsibilities.

This type of caregiving is slightly more common among women (7%) than men (5%). It is most prevalent among adults in their prime working years, with 29% of "sandwiched" caregivers being between 35 to 44 years.

The study reports that a caregiver having multiple caregiving responsibilities is associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing negative impacts on their health and well-being. It is also associated with greater financial hardship and a greater need to reduce working hours or to give up on work opportunities due to their caregiving responsibilities.

To read the report and the study itself, please click [here](#).



If you have items that you would like to see included in future issues of this newsletter, please let us know. Sharing the accomplishments and activities of our members is part of our mandate. If you have received this newsletter in error, or no longer wish to receive it, please reply to this email to let us know, and we will remove you from our mailing list.