



The Ontario Caregiver Coalition (OCC) is the voice of caregivers in Ontario. We advocate for recognition and support for the family, friends, and neighbours whose unpaid care is the hidden backbone of Ontario's health system. Our members include both caregivers from across Ontario and organizations that support them. For more information about the OCC and our work, please see our website at www.ontariocaregivercoalition.ca, or follow us on social media.

November 2025 Newsletter

At the OCC

Please join us at our upcoming General Members Meeting!

A reminder that the OCC's December General Members Meeting will take place on Thursday, December 11th, from 11 am to 1 pm.

Topics include strategies for employment supports in Ontario for caregivers, in-person meeting opportunities, our plans for Caregiver Day 2026, and the launch of work towards the OCC's new Strategic Plan.

As with all of our Members Meeting, this meeting will be hosted virtually over Zoom. OCC Members and Friends should have received a calendar invitation with information for joining the meeting. If you have not received your invitation and wish to attend, please let us know.

Planning for the future of the OCC

The environment around caregiving has been changing rapidly over the past few years, alongside changes in our healthcare systems, Ontario's demographics, and our political and economic contexts. And the OCC has been changing too, professionalizing our systems and governance structures, expanding our coalition for change, and strengthening and deepening our advocacy efforts. We are proud of what we have accomplished in the past few years, but know that we must keep evolving and be ready to respond to continual change.

Since 2022, we have been guided by a three-year Strategic Plan that focused on improving our capacity and resiliency, engaging our membership, and raising our visibility. As the lifespan of that Plan draws to a close, it's time to begin work on a new five-year Strategic Plan that can provide us with a roadmap for the future, and help us more effectively work towards our mission. We aim to launch our new Strategic Plan at the 2026 Annual General Meeting.

Work has begun among the Board and OCC Committees. At our upcoming December General Members Meeting, you will have your first opportunity to share your thoughts. We will be

reflecting together on our strengths and challenges, and considering where our opportunities lie. We look forward to planning together the future of our coalition for change.

Making a difference for caregivers in the workforce

About two-thirds of caregivers are juggling their caregiving responsibilities with paid employment. For many, this is an intense struggle. While some caregivers are well supported by their employers, others are in workplaces without formal policies or supports for caregiving. Even where employers do have policies in place, caregivers may hesitate to share their situation and ask for help, fearing that they will be seen as less capable and committed than their colleagues. As a result, caregivers may find themselves having to scale back on their paid employment, reducing their hours, refusing opportunities and promotions, or even leaving the workforce altogether.

Improving supports in the workplace was a top policy priority in the [OCC's 2024 Caregiver Survey](#). The OCC will shortly be launching two documents that will strengthen our advocacy for caregivers in the workforce.

Independent consultant Kelly Pasolli has prepared a Report for the OCC that reviews the full range of policy options that are needed to help caregivers balance care and work and proposes a comprehensive framework for addressing the diverse needs of employed caregivers.

This will be accompanied by the fifth of the OCC's Policy Briefs, *Building a Better Ontario for Caregivers by Supporting Caregivers in the Workforce*. The Policy Brief reviews the policy case for change, and outlines three key recommendations to government that can make a real difference for caregivers in the labour force. These recommendations will be central to our advocacy efforts in 2026.

We will be sharing more information about our work on caregivers in the labour force at our December General Members Meeting, and launching the Report and the Brief soon after. Stay tuned!

Opportunities to Participate in Caregiver-Focused Research

Interview Participants Needed for Study on Minority Caregivers Providing End-of-Life Care

Researchers at the Bruyère Research Institute are seeking caregivers from linguistic/ethnic minority backgrounds who have provided end-of-life care in Ontario. Participants will take part in 1-hour interviews (offered in English, French, Mandarin or Cantonese), with participants receiving a \$25 gift card as compensation for their time. Researchers hope the study will identify areas of improvement in available supports and resources for minority caregivers.

To participate in the study, fill out this [form](#).

For more information, contact Dr. Kehoe MacLeod: kmacleod@bruyere.org

To read about the study in French or Chinese, visit the [Research Participation page](#) on our website.

Seeking Participants for Caregivers in Support Groups Study

Dr. Shannon Sibbald's team at Western University is recruiting participants to explore the lived experiences of people with COPD and their informal caregivers.

The team is seeking people with COPD and informal caregivers across Canada to discuss their experiences with support groups and how age, gender, and financial wellbeing impact these experiences. Participation involves a 90-minute virtual group interview with 4-5 other participants. All participants will be compensated.

To be eligible, participants must:

1. Have COPD or be an informal caregiver of someone with COPD,
2. Be a current or former (within 5 years) support group member,
3. Be 18 years or older,
4. Currently live in a Canadian province or territory,
5. Be able to communicate in English,
6. Have internet or phone access, and
7. Be willing to participate in audio-recorded focus groups.

To participate, fill out their [participation form](#).

For more information, contact Dr. Shannon Sibbald: ssibbald@uwo.ca

Of Interest

Home Care Updates in Ontario

Access to reliable, adequate and good quality home and community care remains a pressing issue for many of Ontario's caregivers. The OCC and many of our member organizations continue to raise the challenges with Ontario's home and community care system with the government. Earlier this year, for instance, the OCSA ran the [Everyone Needs Home and Community Care](#) advocacy campaign. And in October, [the OCC spoke with CBC's Ontario Today](#) about the need for more access to home care in the province.

On October 27, the Ontario government [announced](#) a planned investment of \$1.1 billion in home care over three years to free up beds and ease pressure on the health care system. The

funding is an 8% increase from their 2024 investment. \$170 million of the investment will be used for Ontario's Hospital to Home program.

[CTV News](#) also reported that Ontario Health at Home is launching a "High-Intensity Bundled Home Care" initiative. The program, launching by December 8th, will offer home care agencies a flat-fee to deliver hospital-level services directly in a patient's home. The two levels of fees are as follows:

- \$1,500/week for patients with mental health or addictions support needs
- \$5,000/week for high-needs seniors or complex patients

Caregiver Contributions

Make Your Voice Heard!

What kind of change do caregivers want to see in Ontario in 2026? If you're a Caregiver Member at the OCC, we encourage you to submit your answer to our monthly newsletter. Reach out to us by email and make your voice heard: ontariocaregivercoalitionocc@gmail.com.



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.