

As Ontario marks Caregiver Day this year on April 7, the Ontario Caregiver Coalition is launching our campaign **Care About Change** to highlight the work caregivers and advocates are doing to affect change in our province. Coming out of 2025, after a year where healthcare issues and caregiver concerns fell by the wayside, what caregivers need more than anything is hope. We hope to convince people that change is possible.

“Physically I can’t do it all. Emotionally I can’t do it all. It’s my partner who has Alzheimer’s and I have to do it all, his meds, keep track of appointments, advocate for better care for him, for different medications, for more services. Then do the cleaning, the laundry, the shopping, the supporting, etc. Sometimes I don’t eat all day, I forget to take my medications, I feel exhausted and don’t realize it. And I do all this without my best friend and confidant, making major decisions alone.”

Why now?

In their Preparing to Care Report, [the Ontario Caregiver Organization \(OCO\)](#) found that 75% of the care in the healthcare system is provided by caregivers. As we face an increasing aging population, the number of caregivers is expected to grow from 4 to 6.5 million people, and we need to start making systemic changes to support both this growing need and our health care system. Caregivers are vital to our health care system: according to [the Centre for Caregiving Excellence](#), if all caregivers took a week off, every Canadian would experience the collapse of our care systems before noon on the first day.

It’s imperative that caregiver issues remain at the forefront of the healthcare conversation. And with the Ontario Legislature reopening at the end of March, several motions on healthcare are expected to be tabled, including Motion 20 to implement an [Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit](#).

Who are we?

The Ontario Caregiver Coalition (OCC) is a grassroots coalition of unpaid caregivers, allies, and organizations that support caregivers. Since 2024, the OCC has been releasing a [policy brief series](#) based on feedback from over 600 caregivers of what needs to change in Ontario.

Several of our members are available for discussions:

- Our Board Chair, **Lauren Bates**, and Vice-Chair, **Daniel Nowoselski**, both former caregivers who have been with our coalition for 6+ years.
- **Cindy Diogo**, OCC Director and Co-Chair, OCC Caregiver Collective, caregiver and founder of [Consoul](#)
- **Malene Stewart**, Co-Chair, OCC Caregiver Collective, Social Worker, Educator and former caregiver who can speak to the complexities of caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s at home.
- **Chrissy Sadowski**, caregiver, OCC Director, and Organization Member representing the Young Caregivers Association, who can speak to the experiences of young carers.
- **Bhavini Patel**, OCC Communications Committee member, former caregiver who can speak to the experience of caring for someone with advanced dementia.

We know change can happen. As an advocacy organization built up of caregivers and their allies, we fight for change every day and believe that it’s possible. If you are interested in speaking with us, or would like more information, please don’t hesitate to reach out. You can reach us by email at ontariocaregivercoalitionocc@gmail.com.