



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.

June 2025 Newsletter

At the OCC

Balancing Work and Caregiving – Share Your Stories

Many of us know what a struggle it is to balance work responsibilities with caregiving. Right now, many caregivers are making financial sacrifices, putting their careers on hold, or stepping away from the workforce entirely—often because the system doesn't offer enough flexibility or support.

At our General Members Meeting on June 19, we heard a presentation from Kelly Pasolli about her project to identify policy options to better support working caregivers. Kelly's project will support the OCC's policy advocacy work by exploring:

- How current employment laws and benefits impact working caregivers
- Gaps where policies aren't keeping up with people's needs
- Potential solutions that will make it easier for caregivers to access support and maintain employment

We know that no one understands these challenges better than caregivers themselves. If you are currently balancing work and caregiving, or provide support to working caregivers —we'd love to hear from you.

- What makes it easier?
- What gets in the way?
- What kinds of support (from employers, government, or others) would make a difference?

If you'd like to share your experience (or if you have any questions about the project) please contact Kelly at kelly.pasolli@gmail.com, or send us a note at the OCC general email (ontariocaregivercoalitionocc@gmail.com).

Call for Board and Committee Members: Applications Due July 4th, 2025

A reminder that the OCC is recruiting Board and Committee Members. 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 **July 4th, 2025**. For more information about applying, please visit our [website](#).

Our Board members are unpaid caregivers, organizational members, and caregiver advocates who are passionate about making change. Board members generally dedicate between 4 and 10 hours per month to the organization, and serve a 2-year, renewable term.

We also welcome applications from those who want to join one of our five Committees. Committee work is more flexible in terms of time commitment, with some Committee members dedicating a couple of hours each month, and others giving significantly more. 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. You can learn more about our committees by clicking [here](#).

June General Members Meeting Recap: Caregiver Day, OCSB Motion Press Conference Debrief, Member Engagement Strategy, and Guest Speakers

Our latest General Member's Meeting was held on March 20th, 2025. We were fortunate to have several thought-provoking presentations.

Keena Naik shared a video where she spoke about the multiple dimensions of caregiving, from her perspective as a caregiver to her father and grandfather.

Our Membership and Communications Coordinator, Hayley Munro, spoke about the efforts the OCC is taking to better collaborate with our organization members. These efforts include an event calendar, our Member Spotlight series, and connecting with our organization members' communications teams. Hayley will be reaching out to organization members with further information in the coming weeks.

Daniel Nowoselski, Chair of the Communications and Awareness Committee, reviewed the activities and results of our 2025 National Caregiver Day Campaign. He highlighted growth and engagement across our social media channels, as well as our interview with the On The Ledge podcast.

Daniel Corvino, Co-Chair of the Research and Advocacy Committee, gave a debrief on the OCSB Press Conference, held by the ONDP on May 28th and supported by the OCC. Different ways to get involved.

Debbi Leith, Board Member, gave an overview of the OCC's new Member Engagement Strategy.

Patrick Boily, on behalf of the Ontario Community Support Association, spoke about the OCSA's campaign, Everyone Needs Home and Community Care. The OCSA has developed an AI-driven letter-writing tool, where you can write to your MPP, asking them to commit to supporting home and community care in your community.

Finally, Kelly Pasolli, a Policy and Research Consultant, gave a presentation on the research she's doing for our fifth policy brief on supporting caregivers in the labour force. More information in the previous article.

Thank you to all of those who were able to attend. We appreciated the lively discussion. OCC members will receive copies of presentations as a part of the formal meeting notes, which will sent out be later this week.

Member Initiatives

OCSA Advocacy Campaign: Everyone Needs Home and Community Care

Everybody needs home and community care. Whether it's for yourself, a parent, a friend, or a neighbor, these services touch all of our lives at some point. They help people stay in their homes, remain independent, and avoid unnecessary hospital stays—but our sector is at a breaking point.

Our Member Organization, the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA), has launched an advocacy campaign called "Everyone Needs Home and Community Care." Urgent investment and policy changes are needed to ensure vital services for care recipients and caregivers remain strong. With the OCSA's new AI-powered tool, you can send a personalized letter to your MPP in just a few clicks. Your voice can make a real impact.

The campaign ends on June 30th, so don't forget to fill out your letter by the end of the month. For more information about the campaign, or to use their letter-writing tool, visit their website: <https://www.everyoneneedscare.ca/>

The OCSA also asks to help their organization spread the word by sharing their campaign within your networks.

Of Interest

[Data on Caregivers of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities or Disorders: Findings from the 2018 General Social Survey — Caregiving and Care Receiving](#) [The Public Health Agency of Canada](#) has compiled results from their 2018 General Social Survey – Caregiving and Care Receiving to examine the unique role of caregivers of those with developmental disabilities or disorders (referred to as DD in the study) and the impacts of

caregiving on those caregivers. The study found that DD caregivers were less likely to report optimal general and mental health, as opposed to non-caregivers. It also outlines a general lack of support for DD caregivers, including financial, respite, and home care resources. The study also found that more DD caregivers found their experiences rewarding, as opposed to caregivers for individuals with other conditions.

Take Action for Change

Share Your Story About the Impact of Caregiving on Your Finances

Caregivers have consistently told us that addressing the financial impact of caregiving must be a top priority for policy change. Caregivers spend thousands of dollars out of pocket each year to support their loved ones, at the same time that they must often reduce or limit their work opportunities. Caregivers are cutting back on spending on their own needs, draining their retirement savings, and taking out loans and lines of credit to pay for these needs. The OCC has been building the case for an Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit (OCSB), a monthly allowance of \$1000 for caregivers.

On May 28th, MPP Wayne Gates, the Official Opposition Critic for Long-Term Care, Homecare and Retirement Homes held a press conference at Queen's Park in support of a motion in the House to implement the Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit.

It is important to ensure that MPPs know that this motion would make a real difference in the lives of caregivers, and has the support of a broad cross-section of Ontarians. Signing the petition in favour of the motion, which you can find [here](#), or joining the Alzheimer Society of Ontario's letter writing campaign [here](#), are easy and effective contributions to change.

In our advocacy, we have found that what most effectively changes the minds of policy-makers – more than statistics, or policy reports or media coverage – is the stories of caregivers themselves. These others are essential elements of persuasive advocacy, but it is the opportunity to understand at a personal level the experience of caregiving that can make policy change a priority.

Please take a few minutes to tell us what having the Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit would mean to you. What would you be able to do, for yourself or your loved one, that you cannot do now? You can share your ideas and experiences by responding directly to our newsletter email, or by reaching out to the OCC email at 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.