

Annual Report

July 1 2024 – June 30 2025



Moving forward amidst change

The OCC's environment has changed rapidly over the past year, with elections both federally and provincially, continued growth in organizations engaging with caregivers and caregiving issues, ongoing challenges in Ontario's health and social systems, and a transformed political and economic environment.

The OCC has been growing, learning and adapting to build our coalition for change and deliver on our mission and mandate: to advocate for a world in which Ontario's caregivers are recognized, valued and supported.



**Thank you to all our members &
friends**

These are your achievements



Building change together



Bringing awareness to caregiver experiences



Caregiving can be a beautiful and wondrous thing.

WANT TO CHANGE THAT?

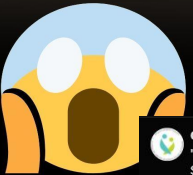
1. Tell us what makes you want to scream about caregiving

2. Post or share with us a picture of you screaming (or what makes you scream)!

BUT IT CAN ALSO BE PRETTY SCARY

OR MAKE YOU ANGRY

AND THE WAY OUR SYSTEM MAKES YOU FEEL ISOLATED CAN REALLY MAKE YOU WANT TO



Ontario Caregiver Coalition @OntCaregivers · Apr 1
"I would help my Nana walk down the stairs safely by holding her hand. Something that makes me scream is PSWs coming early and disturbing our sleep." — Jonah, 8

Caregiving affects everyone. Helping them would too. #FamilyCaregiverDay #NationalCaregiverDay



The OCC's Caregiver Day campaign theme, **"The Scariest Thing: World Without Caregivers"**

struck a chord with caregivers and highlighted pressures on caregivers and the systems they rely on

Partnerships

The OCC partnered with researchers and community to deepen understanding of caregiver experiences:

- Princess Margaret Caregiver Clinic
- Fondation Emergence (Proche-Aidants)
- Care Poverty Project Advisory Group
- York University Adult Day Program research
- Toronto Dementia Research Alliance

Making the case for meaningful change

Based on Survey analysis, member consultation and policy research, the Policy Brief Series makes the case for meaningful changes to the systems of support for caregivers. These Briefs will drive our advocacy efforts in the coming year.

Policy Brief Series: Building a Better Ontario for Caregivers

1. By listening to caregivers (June 2024)
2. By addressing financial hardship (September 2024)
3. By supporting their mental health (December 2024)
4. By giving them a break (January 2025)
5. By helping them stay in the labour force (upcoming)
6. By providing supports in the community (upcoming)



BUILDING A BETTER ONTARIO FOR CAREGIVERS

by Listening to the Voices of Caregivers

The 2024 Ontario Caregiver Coalition Survey of Caregivers:
Policy Brief #1 - An Overview of Caregiver Experiences & Needs

**"Caregiving needs to be valued by our society. It needs
to be a collaborative effort by everyone involved."**

June 2024

Raising caregiver voices in the provincial election



Our **election platform**, based on our Policy Briefs, was endorsed by OCC Members and friends

Our **election toolkit** supported caregiver engagement in the election and included:

- Party platform tracker
- Social media materials
- Tools for engaging candidates
- Information about election participation

We continue to deepen our outreach to decision-makers, building on these tools and connections



2025 Ontario Caregiver Coalition Election Platform

The Ontario Caregiver Coalition is the voice of caregivers in Ontario. Since 2009, we have been advocating for recognition and support for the family, friends and neighbours whose unpaid care is the hidden backbone of Ontario's health system.

Caregivers are the unsung heroes of our health care system. Sacrificing their own mental, physical, and financial wellbeing, caregivers provide an irreplaceable amount of work for their family members, friends, and neighbours. Their collective contributions save health care systems across Canada an estimated \$30-40 billion annually.

Around 3.3 million Ontarians are unpaid caregivers, which is nearly 30% of our province's population. Of that, 850,000 provide over ten hours of care per week. Despite this, they are not getting the support they need. One-in-three caregivers in Ontario say they need additional help, more than in any other province.

Ontario can't afford to replace caregivers, so

3. In alignment with Ontario's mental health strategy, allocate additional funding to existing mental health services for caregivers allowing for increased access to those vital programs.

Recommendation 1 – Alleviating Current Caregiver Financial Hardships:

Caregivers are struggling with the rising costs of living in our province. They often incur high costs for medical supplies, home modifications, travel, and private services not covered by public funding. Some even have to leave their jobs for their caregiver responsibilities, further adding to their financial distress. The OCC's 2024 Survey revealed that nearly half of unpaid caregivers experience financial hardships, with many dipping into savings or taking out loans to

Connecting with Policymakers



- Building our work developing the evidence and identifying recommendations for change, the OCC has continued to reach out to policymakers and government, meeting and collaborating with members of the opposition parties
- On May 28, Members of the OCC & partner organizations attended and presented at a press conference introducing Motion 20, calling for the implementation of the Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit. We will continue to build support among decision-makers for this vital reform.

Building our capacity to make change



Fulfilling our Strategic Plan



Financial Stability & Growth

1. Improve annual process for member support
2. Develop capacity to seek grant funding & sponsorships
3. Develop a 3-year revenue generation action plan

Strong Governance Foundation

1. Clarify governance structure & develop a comprehensive suite of Board policies
2. Improve internal information storage, protection and transmission
3. Strengthen Board supports
4. Strengthen Cte structures & engagement

2023-2026

Strategic Goals & Priorities

External Visibility & Awareness

1. Strengthen relationships & explore partnerships with external stakeholders
2. Build understanding of & capacity to engage communications audiences
3. Continue to raise visibility with decision-makers

Member Engagement & Growth

1. Revitalize Caregiver Advisory
2. Explore collaboration opportunities with organizational members
3. Develop membership engagement strategy

We are on track to complete our Strategic Plan goals and priorities by the end of the upcoming year.

Work on a new 5-year Strategic Plan will begin soon. Stay tuned!

Strong Governance Foundations



The Membership & Governance Committee continues to build our governance foundations, as well as overseeing current processes for financial management, membership management, and good governance.

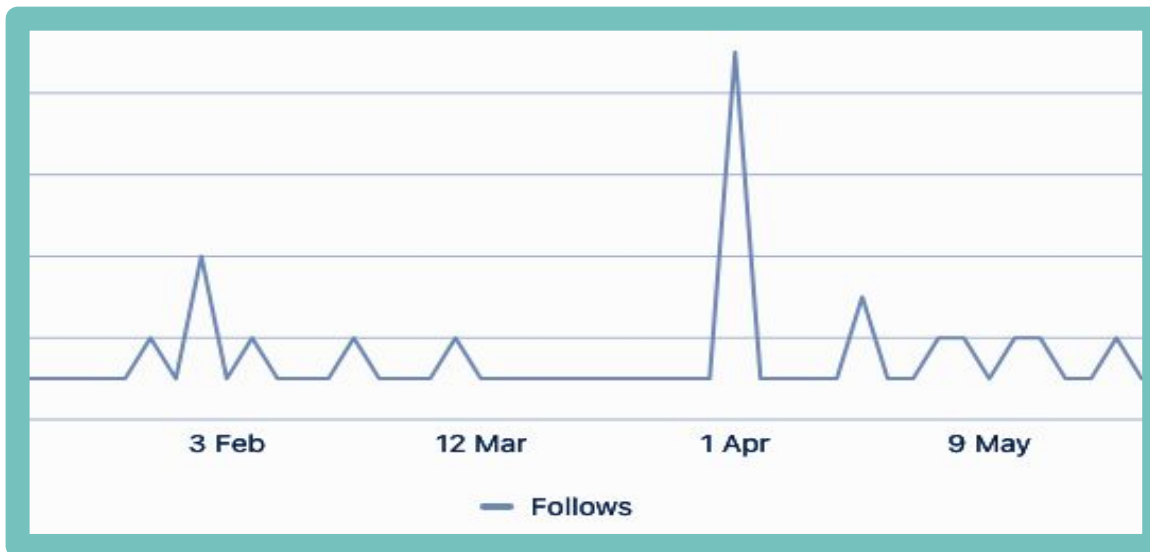
- New and Updated OCC Policies:
 - Conflicts of Interest (updated)
 - Social Media & Communications
 - Student Volunteer Programs
 - Rights and Respect
- Processes and Protocols:
 - OCC Process Manual



External visibility and awareness

In 2024-25, OCC's communications efforts had three key focuses:

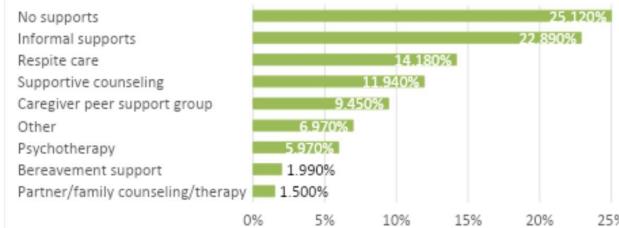
- Sharpening our communications materials
- Collaborating with our membership
- Taking advantage use of all social media platforms and tools to gain followers and increase engagement



Despite the often intense pressures of caregiving, most caregivers receive no formal mental health supports at all.



Supports caregivers have received to maintain mental, emotional and physical health



"I felt overwhelmed, so tired, saddened, to be able to meal plan, groceries, even make a bed. I worried so much about my children and coping but didn't know where to turn."

-Caregiver Survey Respondent



I volunteer for OCC's Partnership Committee because great teamwork centred around a shared vision has the potential to spark real change!

— MICHELLE BERTRAND



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Ontario Caregiver Coalition



The Ontario Caregiver Coalition (OCC) is a grassroots coalition of unpaid caregivers and organizations that support caregivers.

Guided by our members' shared vision and passion, we raise awareness, undertake research, work in partnerships and advocate for change.

VISIT THEIR WEBSITE: [ONTARIOCAREGIVERCOALITION.CA](https://ontariocaregivercoalition.ca)

Financial Stability and Growth



Our finances are stable, and we are maintaining a research fund to address emergencies. We continue to slowly grow our main revenue streams: Member Fees, and honoraria for research partnerships.

Priorities for 2025-2026

- Creation of a Resource Development Strategy
- Explore capacity to seek grant and sponsorship funding

Thank you to our Organization Members for enabling our work!

Access CSS

Advantage Ontario

Alzheimer Society of Ontario

Baycrest

CCCE

Dr. Matthias Hoben

Mosaic Home Care

MS Canada

MyCareBase Solutions

Ont Ass of Social Workers

Ont Community Support Ass

Ontario Shores

Parkinson Canada

VHA Home Healthcare

Wellspring Chinguacousy

Wesway

Young Caregivers Ass

Member Engagement and Growth



The Member Engagement Strategy developed over this year will provide direction for future efforts.

The MES was built on extensive consultation with our members, and aims to both expand our membership and deepen how we work together.

Commencing implementation will be a core priority in the upcoming year.

We continue to deepen our work together through improved member communications, and expanded opportunities to share information and partner in championing change, including through micro volunteering

Engagement in Committee work has doubled since January 2023 (37 vs **18**)

Membership continues to grow organically from 2023 levels as we build profile and partnerships.

- Caregiver members 55 (**19**)
- Organization members 23 (**10**)
- Friends 13 (**20**)
- *Total* 92 (**49**)

With special thanks to ...



Members of the Board of Directors 2024–2025

Lauren Bates
Keena Naik

Daniel Corvino
Daniel Nowoselski

Rose-Marie Fraser
Adriana Shnall

Debbi Leith
Liana Sikharulidze

Committee Members 2024–2025

Caregiver Collective

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Malene Stewart
Fabio Burritica
Suzanne Deliscar
Stefanie Kociuba
Catherine St. Louis
Dawn Vernon

Communications & Awareness

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Michelle Bertrand
Kayla Nicholls
Liana Sikharulidze

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Drake Kindred
Kelly Pasolli
Barney Savage

Daniel Corvino
Mary Chiu
Sharon Gabison
Jessica Hogle
Kayla Lauzon
Kinga Pozniak

Special Projects

Marybeth Barrett
Sean La Prairie
Kelly Pasolli

OCC Membership & Communications Coordinators

Devon Makse
Hayley Munro

and all those who shared their time and thoughts, spread the word, or financially supported the OCC this past year.