The Ontario Caregiver Organization
The Ontario Caregiver Organization (OCO) exists to improve the lives of Ontario caregivers; ordinary people who provide physical and emotional support to a family member, partner, friend or neighbour.
Who are Ontario’s Caregivers

We define family caregivers as family members, friends or neighbours who provide care for someone, without pay, due to frailty, palliative care, long-term illness, long-term recovery from accident or surgery, degenerative disease, physical or mental disability or old age-related disorder.
Ontario Caregivers at a Glance

4 million across Ontario, including young caregivers

From every age group:
- 31% Under 35
- 57% Age 36 – 65
- 12% Age 65+

Almost evenly split female/male/non-binary (54%/45%/1%)

69% are employed
Who are they caring for?

82% care for one person, usually an older family member, often a parent. Almost 1 in 5 care for more than one person.

36% of caregivers are supporting someone with problems associated with old age frailty.

46% care for the person in the caregiver’s home, 38% in the care recipient’s home.
Impact of Caregiving

- Time
- Employment and Work-Life Balance
- Finances
- Health and Wellness: Mental, Emotional, Physical and Social
- Personal Relationships
Caregiving during COVID
(2020 vs 2021)

Spotlight Report:
https://ontariocaregiver.ca/publications/oco-spotlight-report/

58% of caregivers feel burnt out
61% of caregivers find caregiving stressful overall, up from 49%
42% of caregivers say their mental health is worse now compared to a year ago
23% of caregivers say they are not coping well, as compared to 17% the year prior

46% feel lonely, isolated, up from 43%
76% are tired, up from 66%
64% are anxious and worried, up from 57%
61% are overwhelmed, up from 53%

53% feel trapped, helpless and frustrated, up from 43%
45% feel unappreciated, up from 39%
20% took out a loan or line of credit to help pay for the expense, up from 17%
What we do

• Improve awareness and recognition of the contributions and importance of caregivers

• Connect all caregivers to information and support regardless of age, condition or location

• Avoid duplication of services that already exist and develop partnerships

• Work with caregivers to identify gaps and service needs, and to design and build new programs in response
Michaella’s Caregiving Experience

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-D9qdk7q4tQ
I am a Caregiver Toolkit

- Information for new and experienced caregivers
- Worksheets to help build your care team
- Self assessment on how you’re coping
- Other useful information

https://ontariocaregiver.ca/covid-19/starterkit/
Working Caregiver Toolkit

- 69% of caregivers are employed
- 67% are worried about balancing caregiving and work responsibilities
- 1 in 3 caregivers are worried about losing their job
- Toolkit includes information on how to assess your needs and how to talk about your needs with your manager

Caregiver and Public Information

- www.ontariocaregiver.ca
- www.youngcaregiversconnect.ca
- Monthly e-newsletter for caregivers
- Quarterly e-bulletin for care providers
- Social media
Website Resources

Financial Information
https://ontariocaregiver.ca/for-caregivers/financial-support/
Website Resources

- Tip Sheets
- Resources for Indigenous caregivers
- Resources for 2SLGBTQ+
- Covid-19 Resource Centre
- Podcasts
- Upcoming events
- And more….
Time to Talk Podcast

By The Ontario Caregiver Organization

This podcast is brought to you by The Ontario Caregiver Organization. Each week, host Michelle Jobin is joined by experts to discuss the things that matter most to caregivers. From balancing parenting and caregiving to improving your sleep, there’s an episode for you. This podcast is by caregivers, for caregivers. So sit back, relax, and take the next few minutes for yourself. We’re glad you’re here.

https://ontariocaregiver.ca/time-to-talk-podcast-for-caregivers/
Direct to Caregiver Programs and Services

Webinars For Caregivers

New topics each month (live & recorded)
Topics cover:
• Caregiver Well-Being
• Financial and Legal Tips
• Advance Care Planning
• Caregiver Skills and Development

Recordings available on OCO website
The **Ontario Caregiver Helpline** provides caregivers with a 24/7 resource for information and navigation by **phone** or 7am-9pm weekday **live chat**.
SCALE – 8-Week Program

SCALE Program includes these topics:

• Your Caregiving Journey
• How Caregiving Stress Affects You
• Becoming a Mindful Caregiver
• The Self-Compassionate Caregiver
• How Caregivers Can Overcome Sadness & Guilt
• How Caregivers Can Overcome Anxiety & Anger
• Find Your Caregiving Strengths
• Time for Self-Care While Caregiving
Young Caregivers

Microsite: Young Caregivers Connect
Dedicated online support groups and forums for young caregivers

http://youngcaregiversconnect.ca
e-Learning for Caregivers

**Caregiver 101**
45+ min. Learn about caregiving roles, conflicts in caregiving, caregiver burnout, what to expect, developing resilience, and what supports are available.

**Caregivers Partnering with Health Professionals - A Strategy that Works**
1+ hrs. Learn about the value of your caregiver role, how to effectively

**Roadmap to Caregiving: The Realities of Mental Illness and Addictions**
Coming Soon

Click to enter this course

Click to enter this course

Click to enter this course
Peer Support Groups

• Virtual peer facilitated support groups
• Emotional/social support
• Young Caregivers Support Group
• Accessible online or by phone
• Register Here
• Webpage: https://ontariocaregiver.ca/for-caregivers/peer-support-for-caregivers/online-caregiver-support-group/
1:1 Peer Support Program

Sign up for 1:1 Peer Support. An OCO peer mentor can:
- Provide encouragement, support and acceptance
- Share in your lived experiences without judgement
- Discuss your well-being and help you build a plan and a pathway to ensure your well-being stays top of mind
- Provide support in developing coping strategies
- Provide support to help you set goals that you would like meet
- Be there for you

Volunteer to be a peer mentor
Visit: ontariocaregiver.ca/peersupport/
System and Stakeholder Engagement

- We engage care providers, organizations and system leaders across many sectors
- Collaboration at provincial, regional and local levels
- Care Provider Resource Centre on OCO website
- Learning opportunities including webinars, eLearning, presentations
- Ontario Health Team support
Key Caregiver Strategies for Providers

These caregiver strategies can lead to better patient care and health outcomes and a better experience for caregivers, patients and providers.

- **INCLUDE CAREGIVERS AS PARTNER ON THE CARE TEAM**
  - PARTNERS IN CARE

- **CONNECT CAREGIVERS TO SUPPORT FOR THEIR WELL-BEING**
  - RESILIENCE & BURNOUT PREVENTION

- **ENGAGE CAREGIVERS AS EXPERTS TO INFORM CARE DESIGN AND DELIVERY**
  - ENGAGEMENT AND CO-DESIGN
e-Learning for Providers

- Free-of-charge education series for care providers
- Practical tips for providers

https://learning.ontariocaregiver.ca/

Caregivers as Partners

2+ hrs. Learn about the value of the family caregiver role and how to engage and empower them as effective care partners in your practice. Certified by the

Click to enter this course

Caregivers as Partners - Mental Health and Addiction

1.5+ hrs. Learn how to support caregivers who are caring for someone with mental illness and/or addiction. This course is

Click to enter this course
Care Provider Resource Centre

- Resources to Help You Support Caregivers
- Including Caregivers As Part of the Care Team
- Ontario Health Teams
- Meaningful Engagement and Co-Design with Caregivers
Partners in Care Pandemic Tool Kit

- Caregivers are essential and distinct from general visitors
- Practical tools and tips to enable the safe and meaningful presence of caregivers in care settings during Covid-19
- Includes:
  - Caregiver ID
  - Partners in Care Pledge
  - Communication tools and guidance
- Highlights additional benefits of Caregiver ID during the pandemic
  https://ontariocaregiver.ca/partnersincare/
Time to Talk Toolkit

• Designed to help care providers support caregiver well-being and reduce the risk of caregiver burnout
• Adaptable resources include:
  • Tip sheet for staff: 7 simple ways to recognize, engage and support caregivers
  • Pamphlet/poster to help connect caregivers to support
  • Learning video
  • Implementation Guide
    https://ontariocaregiver.ca/time-to-talk-toolkit/

Toolkit adapted from materials developed by The Change Foundation
Privacy and Consent Resources

• Ontario’s health privacy laws and rules are complex. Privacy and Consent can sometimes be a barrier to communication.

• Suite of 8 resources:
  • Educate care providers
  • Inform and empower caregivers training and education for care providers
  • Help both caregivers and care providers understand privacy and consent so they can work as partners in care

Resources originally created by The Change Foundation
Caregiver Insights & Engagement

- Research – Spotlight Report, The Caregiver Wishlist, etc.
- Understand needs, gaps and priorities for caregivers
- Caregiver engagement in OCO work – Board, Working Groups, Advisory Group, Panel
- Co-design and co-develop program and resources
- Collect and share caregiver insights to inform government, system influencers and key system initiatives
Caregiver Voices / Perspectives Aidance Naturelle

- Online platform for caregivers to share their lived experiences in English or French to help inform the work of the OCO and influence the following key areas:
  - OCO program and resource development
  - Discussions with stakeholders and partners
  - Connecting caregivers with research and other partners
Caregiver Voices / Perspectives Aidance Naturelle

How does it work?

• Caregivers can log in from anywhere that is convenient for them. All they need is a device to access the platform via the internet.
• Caregivers will receive an email when new projects are added to Caregiver Voices. We might ask caregivers to share an idea, complete a survey, or participate in a discussion.
• Caregivers are free to select which request they respond to. All responses are kept anonymous.
• All present and past caregivers living in Ontario are welcome to participate.

Caregivers can register at
EN: https://www.caregivervoices.ca/ or
FR: https://www.perspectivesaidancenaturelle.ca/
Public Awareness

- To reach more caregivers, the OCO engages in frequent public awareness campaigns
  - Public Service Announcement
  - Advertisements
  - Direct Mail to households across the province
- Share information through social media, TV and radio, etc.
Questions?

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter for updates on programs, resources and what’s new at OCO

Ontariocaregiver.ca/subscribe

Contact: Shrid Dhungel, Regional Lead (Central ON)

ShridD@ontariocaregiver.ca