



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.

May 2025 Newsletter

ONDP to Hold Press Conference May 28th Announcing Motion for Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit

The OCC has in recent years focused much of our advocacy work on reducing the financial hardship of caregivers in Ontario. We worked closely with researchers, thought leaders, and caregivers themselves to design our proposal for an [Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit](#) (OCSB), a monthly allowance of \$1000.00, intended to recognize the essential nature of caregiver work and to bring some relief for the costs of caregiving.

On Wednesday, May 28th at 9:30 a.m., MPP Wayne Gates, the Official Opposition Critic for Long-Term Care, Homecare and Retirement Homes will be holding a press conference at Queen's Park in support of a motion in the House to implement the Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit.

The OCC will be supporting this press conference, with presentations from OCC Caregiver Member Bhavini Patel, OCC Organization Member Chrissy Sadowski on behalf of the Young Caregivers Association, and OCC Chair Lauren Bates. A link to join virtually will be circulated to our members before the press conference.

This motion is a great opportunity to bring greater awareness to the need for direct financial supports for caregivers, and build momentum for policy change. You can support this initiative by:

- Completing the non-partisan petition in support of the OCSB developed by MPP Gates' Office. You can find that petition [here](#).
- Call or write to your MPP asking for their support for the motion
- On the day of the press conference, please take the opportunity to share the petition and link to the press conference with your networks.

At the OCC

Call for Board and Committee Members

The OCC has begun our call for Board and Committee Members, ongoing until July 4th, 2025.

Our Board members are unpaid caregivers, organizational members, and caregiver advocates who are passionate about making change. The OCC's Board plays a central role in setting the OCC strategy by ensuring good governance and organizational resilience, while overseeing the work of the various Committees. Board members generally dedicate between 4 and 10 hours per month to the organization, and serve a 2-year, renewable term. It is important to us to have a range of experiences and perspectives on our Board and Committees. Our organizational culture is welcoming, supportive, and flexible. This is a great opportunity to contribute to change, meet like-minded people, and develop your skill sets.

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](#).

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. As well, you can learn more about our committees by clicking [here](#).

We rely on our Board and Committee members to work towards our shared vision of an Ontario where caregivers are recognized, valued, and supported. Please consider giving your time to the OCC as a Board or Committee member, or reaching out to friends or colleagues who may be interested in contributing to our work.

OCC General Members Meeting on June 19, 2025

Our next General Members Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 19th, from 11.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. As always, we will be welcoming a diverse array of speakers on issues and initiatives related to unpaid caregiving, as well as working together on the OCC's advocacy efforts. An agenda and meeting materials will be shared early in June. We hope to see you there! If you have not received your calendar invitation, please reach out to us at ontariocaregivercoalitionocc@gmail.com. We will also send out a reminder email with a Zoom link to join before the meeting.

2025 Member Spotlight Series

Calling all of our Member Organizations! Would you like your organization featured on our website and social media pages?

Beginning in June, the OCC will be promoting our second annual [Member Spotlight Series](#). The Member Spotlight is both a celebration of the tireless work our Organization Members contribute to our cause, and a chance for our members and friends to learn more about the important work our Organization Members do outside the OCC.

If you haven't already done so, please confirm your organization's participation with our Membership and Communications Coordinator, Hayley, at our general email address: ontariocaregivercoalitionocc@gmail.com.

If you participated with us last year, we would be happy to provide you with your 2024 materials to see if you'd like anything updated or changed.

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. Write to your MPP today:

<https://www.everyoneneedscafe.ca/>

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

This National Caregiver Month, Let's Stand Up for Ontario's Unpaid Caregivers

For National Caregiver Month, the Alzheimer Society of Ontario (ASO) is shining a spotlight on the unpaid caregivers who form the backbone of our healthcare system—often family members or close friends who provide essential, day-to-day support for people living with dementia.

In Canada, unpaid caregivers deliver over [5.7 billion hours of care annually, valued at more than \\$97 billion](#). Despite their enormous contribution, they receive little support. As Ontario's

population ages and dementia diagnoses rise, the pressure on caregivers is becoming unsustainable. Caregiver burnout is a growing crisis, leading to avoidable hospitalizations and premature admissions to long-term care. We must act now to better support those who are keeping loved ones safe at home.

That's why the Alzheimer Society is one of many organizations calling on MPPs to support the creation of a Caregiver Benefit—a direct financial support that would recognize and empower unpaid caregivers.

Visit actionfordementia.ca— ASO's advocacy platform— to send a message to your MPP and stay updated on dementia-related issues.

Of Interest

Ontario Taking Action to Support Seniors and their Caregivers

On May 8th, the Ministry of Long-Term Care introduced the [Support for Seniors and Caregivers Act, 2025](#). If passed, this legislation aims to increase seniors' access to complex care programs.

The proposed legislation aims to amend the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*, and the *Retirement Homes Act, 2010*. It would introduce new requirements for long-term care homes, such as mandatory dementia care and service programs and increasing available information in French for residents. Additionally, the legislation proposes requirements for increased cultural competency in LTC homes for cultural, spiritual, and religious needs of residents, and protecting the rights of residents' continued support from family and friends providing care.



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.