



# Key Messages

## ABOUT NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER DAY

### **What is National Family Caregiver Day?**

On the first Tuesday of April, Canadians come together to recognize family members, friends, neighbours and other significant people who take on a caring role to support someone with a diminishing physical ability, a debilitating cognitive condition or a chronic life-limiting illness.

**National Family Caregiver Day** encourages all Canadians to pay tribute to and recognize the valuable contribution of family caregivers to our lives and our society as a whole.

In 2015, we will celebrate National Family Caregiver Day on April 7.

### **History of the day**

In April 2010, the Parliament of Canada unanimously adopted a motion declaring the first Tuesday in April as “The Invisible Work Day.” This day was designated to recognize the importance of the “invisible” unpaid work carried out by parents and caregivers on behalf of their children and aging family members, as well as the volunteer work done in the community. Canada is the first country in the world to create this day.

As family caregivers are increasingly receiving public attention, the first Tuesday in April has been interchangeably known as “National Family Caregiver Day.”

### **Why is it important to recognize and support family caregivers?**

Family caregivers are the invisible back bone of our health care system and provide over 80 percent of the care needed by individuals with long-term conditions. Their dedication, selflessness and compassion not only enhance the quality of life for the person they care for, but also contribute to the sustainability of our health care system. It is estimated that family caregivers provide \$25–30 billion dollars of unpaid care every year. Over 8 million Canadians have taken on this caring role, and this number is expected to increase due to our aging population.

Although caregiving is a rewarding experience, it does not come without a cost. Family caregivers often sacrifice their own physical, financial and psychosocial well-being to provide care to loved ones. For this reason, on National Family Caregiver Day, we collectively recognize the essential role family caregivers play in the lives of patients, in the health and social care systems and in our society.



## ABOUT THE CANADIAN CAREGIVER COALITION

### Who is the Canadian Caregiver Coalition (CCC)?

Established in 2000, the Canadian Caregiver Coalition (CCC) is a virtual alliance of diverse partner organizations that work collectively and autonomously to identify and respond to the needs of caregivers in Canada. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life for family caregivers through advocacy and synergistic partnerships. Together we strive to achieve our vision of “a Canada that recognizes, respects and values the integral role of family caregivers in society.”

### Why is the CCC celebrating National Caregiver Day?

By celebrating National Family Caregiver Day, the Canadian Caregiver Coalition encourages all Canadians to recognize the contribution and strength of family caregivers, while renewing its commitment to advocate on their behalf.

## ABOUT 2015 CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER DAY

### What is the theme of National Family Caregiver Day on April 7, 2015?

Care and Work: A Balancing Act

### Why focus on employed family caregivers?

A “balancing act” is defined as *“a difficult situation in which you try to achieve several different things at the same time.”*

This is the reality of 6.1 million employed Canadians who must balance their personal commitments, caregiving duties and work responsibilities. The time and physical demands are often equivalent to working two full-time jobs. This balancing act impacts a family caregiver’s financial, emotional and personal well-being. Not only do family caregivers and patients experience negative consequences, there is also an enormous impact on Canadian employers and our economy.

In promoting “Care and Work: A Balancing Act,” the CCC and our partners will:

1. Recognize the 6.1 million employed Canadians who are balancing work and caregiving responsibilities.
2. Profile employers who have adopted a supportive workplace environment for their caregiver employees.
3. Share practical tips and tools for caregivers and employers.



## What activities will be taking place?

### Online Education Forum – Caregiver Information Day – April 7

On April 7, the Canadian Caregiver Coalition is hosting an online education forum featuring recognized leaders in supporting family caregivers. The invited guests will share strategies and tools through a series of podcasts that will be supported by a live tweet chat. Participants from across Canada are invited to log into the forum and learn about new initiatives and activities underway to support the 6.1 million Canadians currently balancing paid work and caregiving responsibilities. The live tweet chat will engage the public to join the conversation about family caregivers, create an online community of sharing and inspire others to action.

<b>Guest speakers</b>	
<b>The Honourable Alice Wong, P.C., M.P.</b>	Minister of State (Seniors)
<b>Anna Mann</b>	Alberta Caregivers Association
<b>Nadine Henningsen</b>	Canadian Caregiver Coalition
<b>Anthony Milonas</b>	CBI Health Group (Signatory Partner of the CCC)
<b>Jennifer Campagnolo</b>	Canadian Home Care Association
<b>Sharon Baxter</b>	Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association
<b>Marcella Daye</b>	Canadian Human Rights Commission
<b>Pam Orzeck</b>	CSSS Cavendish (Quebec)
<b>Barbara MacLean Glendora Scarfone Wendy Johnstone</b>	Family Caregivers Network Society (B.C.)
<b>Sara Shearkhani Carole Ann Alloway</b>	Family Caregivers Voice
<b>Connie Côté</b>	Health Charities Coalition of Canada
<b>Wendy Sutton</b>	Manitoba Caregiver Coalition
<b>Dr. Allison Williams</b>	McMaster University (CIHR)
<b>Nadine Henningsen Catherine Suridjan</b>	Mobilizing Action: Family Caregivers in Canada
<b>Lisa Levin Delia Sinclair</b>	Ontario Caregiver Coalition
<b>Nora Spinks</b>	Vanier Institute



## What can you do to participate?

- Join our Online Education Forum – Caregiver Information Day and learn what is happening across Canada to support family caregivers who are balancing paid employment and caregiving duties.  
[http://caringvoicenetwork.adobeconnect.com/care\\_and\\_work/](http://caringvoicenetwork.adobeconnect.com/care_and_work/)
- Join the national conversation about family caregivers through our tweet chat on April 7: add #care&work to your tweet and share what you learn.
- On April 7, talk, text and tweet to spark conversation about family caregivers with people in your networks.
- Share what you are doing to celebrate family caregivers.
- Write a press release or an opinion editorial in celebration of National Family Caregivers Day.

### For more information

Catherine Suridjan, MSW, RSW, Public Policy & Stakeholder Relations Lead

Tel: 289 290 4422 | E-mail: [csuridjan@cdnhomecare.ca](mailto:csuridjan@cdnhomecare.ca)

c/o Canadian Home Care Association 7111 Syntex Drive 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Mississauga, ON L5N 8C3

Website: [www.ccc-ccan.ca](http://www.ccc-ccan.ca)