

Key Messages & Advocacy Asks

On April 6, 2021, Carers Canada and its' partners are launching a national campaign to showcase Canadians' experiences in caregiving; the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on caregivers; and organizations that provide essential supports for caregivers.

SUPPORTING CARING CANADIANS

Carers Canada's goal is to ensure caregivers are recognized and supports are available—during the global pandemic and beyond—to help them in what they think, feel and do.

Support caregivers

Expand capacity in home-based long-term care services and access to primary care services.

Recognize caregivers

Prioritize caregivers' access to COVID-19 vaccinations and financial programs to safeguard their health and well-being as essential partners in care.

Empower caregivers

Use technology to empower and connect caregivers to social and health support networks.

CARING EXPERIENCES & COVID-19

- Over 8 million Canadians are caring for family members, loved-ones, friends and neighbours.
- Caregivers come from all walks of life—old and young, female (54%) and male (46%), and from all income levels.
- Most caregivers spend between 10 and 20 hours a week on caregiving responsibilities, with some providing more than 20 hours.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand for caregivers in Canada and has put added strain on their role.
 - The number of caregivers has increased by 12% and demand on carers' time has increased by 28% to an average of 16.8 to 26.6 hours of caregiving per week.

Managing Health Care Needs

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, caregivers in Canada have taken on greater responsibilities in providing and managing health care for their loved-ones with minimal supports from their health care teams.
 - 41% of caregivers report increased homecare responsibilities due to the pandemic.
- During COVID-19, Canadian caregivers have been more likely to give emotional support, provide home care and manage physician appointments compared to caregivers in other countries.
 - 29% of caregivers in Canada say the biggest challenge they have faced as a caregiver during the pandemic is the inability to take a break (compared to an average of 23% in 12 other countries).
 - 64% of caregivers in Canada say that their primary responsibility is to manage doctors' appointments (compared to an average of 57% in 12 other countries).

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Maintaining Physical, Emotional and Financial Health

- The pandemic is causing unprecedented burnout for caregivers across the country.
 - 71% of caregivers say they are feeling more burnt out than ever.
 - 70% of caregivers have worsening mental/emotional health, 55% report worsening financial health and 51% report worsening physical health.
- Canada's response to COVID-19 has increased the costs for caregivers to deal with care at home, medical supplies and other personal care items.
 - 55% of caregivers report the pandemic has worsened their financial health, with 33% saying they are spending more on providing care.
 - 23% of caregivers have reduced or cut back their paid working hours to provide care.
- Canada's response to COVID-19 has impacted caregivers' health differently compared to other countries.
 - 51% of caregivers in Canada say the pandemic has **worsened their physical health** (compared with an average of 46% in 12 other countries).
 - 70% of caregivers in Canada say the pandemic has **worsened their emotional/mental health** (compared with an average of 61% in 12 other countries).
 - 55% of caregivers in Canada say the pandemic has **worsened their financial health** (compared with an average of 54% in 12 other countries).

Learning and Using Technology

Technology is an integral part of our lives and has a significant impact on what caregivers know (accessing information and supports), feel (networking and social connections) and do (accessing health and social care providers).

- During the pandemic, caregivers have used more technology for homecare and to connect with health and social supports, such as for information/visual learning, accessing support groups and connecting with other healthcare providers.
 - 52% report having an increased responsibility in managing technology due to the pandemic.
 - 55% indicate they need additional guidance/training on how to use telehealth/online tools/mobile apps for caregiving.

ABOUT CARERS CANADA

Carers Canada is a national coalition dedicated to increasing recognition and support for caregivers. Through collaborative engagement, members work to build awareness and recognition of the role of caregivers and the challenges they face. Carers Canada is a priority program of the Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA). www.carerscanada.ca.

ABOUT THE CARER WELL-BEING INDEX

The global study was done as part of EMD Serono's global Embracing Carers initiative in collaboration with international partners, including Carers Canada. The survey included 9,044 caregivers across 12 countries, with 755 unpaid carers from Canada. The countries participating in the survey were: United States, Canada, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Australia, Brazil, Taiwan, India and China. The study was conducted between September 3 and October 27, 2020, using online and phone methodologies. The Canada caregiver sample has a margin of error of +/-3.6 percentage points. https://www.embracingcarers.com/en_US/home.html

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