

# Advancing the interests of caregivers in Ontario

## Presentation to the AKE

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Tuesday, July 28th, 2009

**Ontario Caregiver Coalition**  
Advancing the interests of caregivers in Ontario

# Ontario Caregiver Coalition

Welcome  
&  
Introductions

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# Ontario Caregiver Coalition

## Overview of OCC

- History of coalition
- Relationship to Canadian Caregiver Coalition (CCC)
- Work done-to-date

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# History of OCC

- Formed in 2008
- Founding Members:
  - Alzheimer Society of Ontario
  - MS Society of Canada, Ontario Division
  - Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centre
  - Ontario Community Support Association
  - Ontario Home Care Association
  - Providence Centre
  - Saint Elizabeth Home Care

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## Context

- Approximately 3 million caregivers in Canada who provide care to spouses, children, parents, extended family members and friends.
- Canadian caregivers contribute an estimated \$5 billion in unpaid labour per year, saving Canada's formal health care system as much as \$2 billion per year.
- Caregivers provide more than 80 % of care needed by individuals with long term conditions.
- Despite this, there is limited training, compensation or support infrastructure for caregivers in Ontario and more needs to be done.

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## Caregivers Defined

For the purposes of the work of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition; caregivers are individuals who provide care and assistance to family members and friends who are in need of support because of physical, cognitive or mental health conditions.

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## Purpose

- The newly formed coalition works together around the issue of caregiver support in Ontario.
- OCC brings together several provincial organizations who have supports to caregivers in their mandate.

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## Objectives of OCC

- To advance caregiver policy initiatives to government and other key decision-makers in Ontario.
- To advocate and raise awareness around common issues.
- To initiate activities to achieve common goals.

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## Relationship to CCC

- OCC builds provincially on the work being done at the national level by the Canadian Caregiver Coalition.
- To strategically align with Canadian Caregiver Coalition efforts

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## Activities / Work Done-to-date

- Research and produce position papers and briefing notes.
- Development of policy submissions and responses to government policies.
- Presentations at forums, conferences and meetings.
- Engagement with partners and other organizations.
- Develop and implement an advocacy strategy annually.

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## MOHLTC: Caring about Caregivers

- Long Range Scenario Planning
- Development of themes and strategic options
- Policy options being explored
- OCC has worked closely with MOHLTC
- OCC will continue to provide input and vision

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## OCC Think Tank – June 2009

- New voices and perspectives
- Overview of OCC, CCC, and MOHLTC “Caring about Caregivers” initiative
- Priority setting
- Building network of partners and supporters

Change Foundation	ON Ministry of Finance
ON Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	McMaster Child Health Research Institute
Family Service Toronto	Home Instead Senior Care
CARP	Canadian Caregiver Coalition
McConnell Foundation	

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## OCC Think Tank – June 2009

### Key issues

- Safeguarding health and wellbeing of family caregivers and increasing flexibility and availability of respite care
- Minimizing financial burden placed on family caregivers
- Enabling access to user friendly information and education
- Creating flexible workplace environments that respect caregiving obligations
- Investing in research on family caregiving as a foundation for evidence-informed decision making

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## OCC Think Tank – June 2009

- Priority activity areas:
  - Develop policy paper to support key elements of MOHLTC caregiver strategy (Caring about Caregivers)
  - Encourage government to introduce financial supports (e.g. tax credits, allowances, CPP opting out)
  - Examine existing successes/best practices in caregiver support
  - Work to raise the profile of family caregivers

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## OCC: Next Steps

- Disseminate Think Tank summary
  - Participants
  - Interested groups/organizations
  - Government
- Revise and disseminate advocacy plan
- Partner and supporter development
- Hold September 28 forum (1-4:00 pm)
  - Seek endorsement for advocacy plan
  - Formally welcome new partners and supporters

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## Why OCC Now?

- Good time to undertake advocacy to advance the public policy agenda relating to caregiving.
- Initiatives such as the Caring About Caregivers long term strategy planning by MOHLTC and emphasis by some Local Health Information Networks on increasing supports for caregivers.
- Build on the work partner organizations are doing.

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## Type of Membership

- Supporters: participate in some initiatives but are not involved in day-to-day operations. May choose to be publicly listed.
- Partners: donate time and/or money to the Coalition, assume responsibility for day-to-day operations, and involved in decision-making about the Coalition. Are publicly listed.

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## Information

- Ontario Caregiver Coalition  
<http://www.ccc-ccan.ca/content.php?doc=48>
- Canadian Caregiver Coalition  
<http://www.ccc-ccan.ca>
- OCC Contact  
[Jlesmond@saintelizabeth.com](mailto:Jlesmond@saintelizabeth.com)

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# Questions and Answers

Thank You!

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