

## **Ontario Home Care Association welcomes measure to protect jobs for family caregivers**

August 16, 2011 – The Ontario Home Care Association (OHCA) welcomes the provincial government’s proposal to introduce amendments to the Employment Standards Act that would protect jobs for workers taking time off work to provide care for a family member. The proposal would give working Ontarians up to eight weeks of unpaid time away from work.

As a founding member of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition (OCC), the OHCA supports the introduction of measures that will support families as they fulfill caregiving responsibilities. With shifting demographics, family members will be called upon more frequently to support a loved one in a time of need. While most embrace the opportunity, the reality is that balancing employment and caregiving responsibilities can be challenging. Protected time away from work is one strategy that can effectively address the needs of families.

Family caregivers are integral to providing care in the home and today’s announcement demonstrates that the Ontario government is aware of the challenges many families face. A strong formal home care system is also vitally important to sustaining those families with extraordinary caregiving demands.

The OHCA continues to encourage the government to sustain and increase the amount and flexibility of home care services and respite opportunities for families. This is critical to achieving health system transformation which is grounded in understanding the needs of individuals and tipping the balance of care provision in favour of the community so that Ontarians of all ages who are ‘on the fringe’ of admission to a facility can receive care and stay at home with confidence.

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### **About the OHCA**

The OHCA, *the voice of home care in Ontario*, is a membership association representing providers of quality home care services from across Ontario. OHCA members represent an estimated 25,000 staff collectively serving 300,000 Ontarians per year. OHCA works with families as integral partners in the delivery of home care services and as such estimates that 1.2 million Ontarians are impacted by members. OHCA is dedicated to promoting the growth and development of the home and community health care sector by helping to shape health care policy, supporting members to excel, and being a leading source of information on home and community care. OHCA members are accredited through Accreditation Canada, CARF, and/or registered with the International Standards Association (ISO).

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