

Ontario needs to consider the contribution of family caregivers

April 14, 2009 - The Ontario Home Care Association (OHCA) urges the Ontario government to consider the contributions of family caregivers in supporting the elderly to remain at home for as long as possible. *Who Cares and How Much? The imputed economic contribution to the Canadian healthcare system of middle-aged and older unpaid caregivers providing care to the elderly*, released by Marcus J. Hollander, Guiping Liu and Neena L. Chappell today provides astounding information as to the imputed costs of unpaid care provided by Canadians to elderly family members and friends with long-term health problems.

As a founding member of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition, the OHCA calls on the Ontario government to introduce policies that recognize the contribution of Ontario families to keeping the elderly at home for as long as possible. Increasing the amount and flexibility of respite for families is an important strategy that the OHCA believes would enable families to continue to provide the care necessary to enabling their loved ones to remain in their own homes.

The health system transformation in Ontario 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. It is vital to ensure a strong home care system and support the family caregiver in order to achieve this paradigm shift.

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About the OHCA

The Ontario Home Care Association (OHCA), *the voice of home care in Ontario*, is an organization of home health and social care service providers. Association members deliver nursing care, home support services, personal care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, dietetics, speech language therapy and medical equipment and supplies in the home to individuals of all ages. OHCA members are contracted by all three levels of government, Community Care Access Centres, insurance companies, institutions, corporations and private individuals. OHCA members are accredited through the Accreditation Canada and/or the International Standards Association (ISO).

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For the latest in news and information about the home care sector in Ontario, subscribe to the Ontario Home Care Association's "House Call" at www.homecareontario.ca.