

For Immediate Release

New 24/7 Caregiver Helpline One Place to Go For Information and Support

TORONTO – November 4, 2019. Today, The Ontario Caregiver Organization (OCO) is launching a new 24/7 confidential helpline for caregivers in Ontario. In a recent opinion poll conducted by The Change Foundation, 77% of caregivers - family members, partners, friends or neighbours who support someone with physical or mental health needs - want one place to go for information and support.

“We know caregivers are experiencing frustration, distress and even depression as a result of their caregiving responsibilities. A third of caregivers are not coping well emotionally and that number increases to more than half for caregivers supporting someone with a mental health challenge” says Amy Coupal, CEO, The Ontario Caregiver Organization. “Caregivers have told us how challenging it can be to find information and support. The new Ontario Caregiver Helpline addresses what caregivers have told us they need”

Caregivers can speak to a Community Resource Representative 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 1-833-416-2273 (CARE) or caregivers can use the convenient online chat available at www.ontariocaregiver.ca. Whether caregivers are looking for respite care in their area, a support group, information about tax credits etc., there is now a dedicated resource just for them.

Many organizations already provide great caregiver support programs, but these programs are often only available to caregivers managing a specific disease or caring for someone of a specific age or living in a certain geographical location. The new Caregiver Helpline is available to all caregivers, regardless of age, diagnosis or location, making it the only caregiver resource of its kind in Ontario.

Caregiver Quoe

The Caregiver Helpline is one of The Ontario Caregiver Organizations first initiatives. The OCO is working on other programs and services aimed at either expanding existing supports or helping to bridge the program gaps where they are identified. Future programs and services include a provincial caregiver peer support program and the expansion of resources dedicated to young caregivers; children and youth who provide support to a sibling, parent or grandparent.

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About The Ontario Caregiver Organization

The Ontario Caregiver Organization (OCO) exists to support Ontario’s 3.3 million caregivers; ordinary people who provide physical and/or emotional support to a family member, partner, friend or neighbour. The OCO will enhance the caregiving experience by providing one point of access to information, services and supports that empower and enable caregivers to be successful in their role. Where gaps exist in caregiver programs and services, the OCO partners with caregivers, health care



providers and other organizations to find new and innovative ways to bridge those gaps so all caregivers, regardless of age, disease or geographical location have access to the help they need. Established in 2018, the OCO is a not-for-profit entity funded by the Government of Ontario.

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