



CONNECTING CARERS is a campaign to raise awareness of carers' needs and the importance of connecting and accessing supports earlier rather than later in their care journeys. **Health care connections are about fostering connections with:**

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

so caregivers know what to expect and are supported in their role on the health care team.

POLICY PLANNERS, RESEARCHERS AND PRODUCT DEVELOPERS

so caregivers' knowledge influences more appropriate health and social supports.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

so caregivers can access the information and supports they need.

Health care connections support caregivers to:



Be partners in care

10 hours of care from family and friends for every **1 hour** of professional help.¹

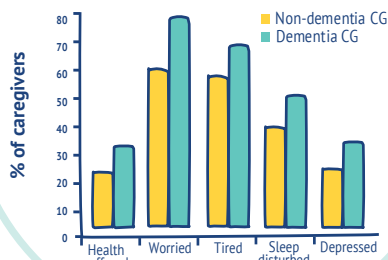


Share their knowledge and lived experiences

As **experts on their caring role**, co-designing research, policy and product development with carers will impact applicability and success.³

Care for their holistic needs

Caring takes a toll on health²



Ensure patients' well-being

Seniors are **2X as likely** to enter residential care when they live alone or when their caregiver is unable to continue providing care.⁶

Access reliable and trustworthy information

Caregivers who are better informed experience **↓ anxiety** and have **↑ positive, supportive** caregiving experience.^{4,5}

Technology connects carers



Carers use a variety of online solutions to support their caregiving tasks⁷:

- 20%** create calendars and scheduling
- 13%** create lists to track tasks
- 12%** manage prescription refill and delivery



25% of carers use technology like alarms, sensors or remote monitoring to help with caring.⁸



Telehomecare saves carers

8.5 hours per month on average in travel time by connecting to health care providers virtually and not having to visit in person.¹⁰



Digital health helps **coordinate care** among family caregivers, care recipients and health care providers.¹⁰

A CARER (also referred to as caregiver or family caregiver) is a person who takes on an unpaid caring role for someone who needs help because of a physical or cognitive condition, an injury or a chronic life-limiting illness.

(1) Fast, J. 2015. Caregiving of Older Adults with Disabilities. IRPP Study (2) RAPP. 2015. A Snapshot of Canadians Caring for Persons with Dementia: The Toll it Takes (3) Eales, J. Fast, J. & Boger, J. (2018). Designing technology that cares: Using caregivers' experiences to drive the design process. Edmonton and Waterloo: University of Alberta, Research on Aging, Policies and Practice (RAPP) and Schlegel-University of Waterloo Research Institute for Aging (RIA). (4) Statistics Canada. 2015. The Information Need of Informal Caregivers Involved in Providing Support to a Critically Ill Loved One (5) Boger, J. 2017. An online resource system for caregivers of persons with dementia. Assistive Technology for carers: Pathways to Innovation Symposium Presentation to the International Carers Conference, Adelaide Australia, October 5, 2017 (6) Canadian Institute for Health Information. 2017. Seniors in Transition: Exploring Pathways Across the Care Continuum (7) AARP. 2016. Caregivers & Technology: What They Want and Need (8) Carers UK. 2017. State of Caring (9) Ontario Telemedicine Network. 2016. OTN Telehomecare System and Use Survey Final Report (10) Canada Health Infoway. 2016. Connecting Patients for Better Health: 2016.



CONNECTING CARERS is a campaign to raise awareness of carers' needs, and the importance of connecting and accessing support earlier rather than later in their care journeys. **Social connections are about fostering connections with:**

OTHER CARERS

so they can share their experiences and benefit from each other's expertise.

EMPLOYERS AND SCHOOLS

so they can maintain balance in their caregiving duties and career/educational pursuits.

A SOCIAL NETWORK

so they can have a personal life and a support system to lean on.

Social connections support caregivers to:



Balance work and care

Collectively, annual productivity losses to employers are enormous: **9.7 million days** of absenteeism, **256 million fewer hours** of paid work, and the **loss of 557,698** skilled employees.¹



Learn from each other's lived experiences

Peer support increased caregivers' coping skills, competence, confidence, and decreased their feelings of burden and loneliness.²

Maintain social well-being

Caregiving can strain relationships.³



Care for themselves

Caregiving is time consuming, with **1 in 10** spending **30+ hours/week**; thereby, limiting their personal time.⁵



Achieve their educational potential

Education is adversely affected for **1 in 5 young caregivers** enrolled in school, often resulting in poor performance and lower than anticipated educational outcomes.⁴



Technology connects carers



Caregivers are likely to use technology for social functions⁶: **63%** connect socially with other caregivers **62%** follow social media or social networking **59%** access emotional or mental health support **52%** contribute to or view inspirational stories



Technologies to balance care, work and learning⁶: **Virtual** classrooms **Communication** and messaging technologies **Calendar** and scheduling apps



70% of employers believe that assistive technologies have the potential to help their employees fulfill their dual roles as an employee and as a family/friend caregiver.¹



Many **older workers are as well-versed** in the use of information and communication technologies as younger workers, with nearly **30%** scoring at moderate or proficient levels.⁷

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(1) Magnaye, A., Eales, J. & Fast, J., CwiC team, 2017. Connecting Working Caregivers Project Summary. (2) Saint Elizabeth. 2011. Promising Practices and Indicators for Caregivers Education and Support Programs. (3) Eales, J. & Keating, N. 2017. Social Consequences of Family Care of Adults: A Scoping Review. (4) Statistics Canada. 2012. Young Canadians Providing Care. (5) Statistics Canada. 2013. Portraits of Caregivers. (6) AARP. 2016. Caregivers & Technology: What They Want and Need. (7) RAPP. 2017. How Deep is the Digital Divide? ICT Literacy and the Role of Assistive Technology in Helping Older Workers.