

## Using Emotional Intelligence Skills to Empower Caregivers

### Caregivers' Experiences with Technology and COVID-19

Providing care for a loved-one, friend or family member can be challenging. What caregivers' think, feel and do make up their unique experiences. COVID-19 has increased the demand for caregivers, added new strains and asked caregivers to take on more responsibilities. Using technology can help caregivers stay informed and get information, build relationships, keep in touch, access supports, and connect with health and social care providers.



#### What caregivers think, feel and do



#### Technology helps caregivers increase their knowledge and understanding

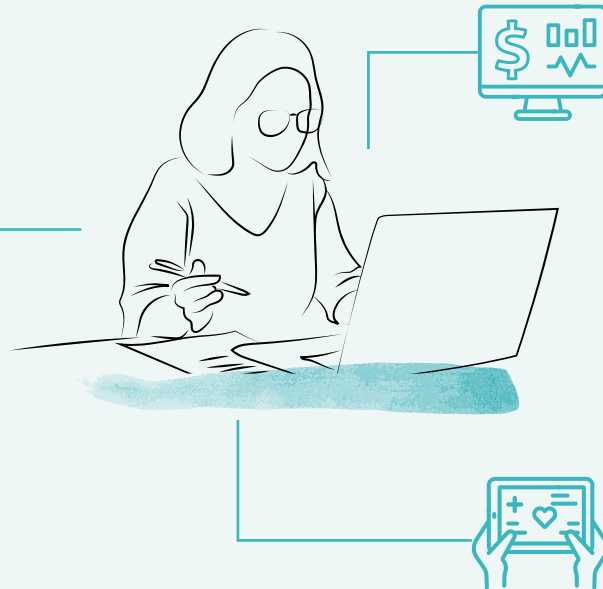
**66%** of caregivers say the pandemic has **made caregiving harder**<sup>2</sup>



**65%** of caregivers use digital **technology to integrate their care responsibilities** with the rest of their lives<sup>1</sup>



**49%** of caregivers reported **increased responsibilities managing technology** due to the pandemic<sup>2</sup>



**71%** of caregivers use **technology to manage finances** (banking, paying bills and filing personal income taxes)<sup>1</sup>

**55%** of caregivers say the pandemic has **worsened their financial well-being**<sup>2</sup>



**90%** of caregivers used **technology to access information** for themselves or the person they care for<sup>1</sup>



#### Technology supports caregivers' emotional and mental well-being

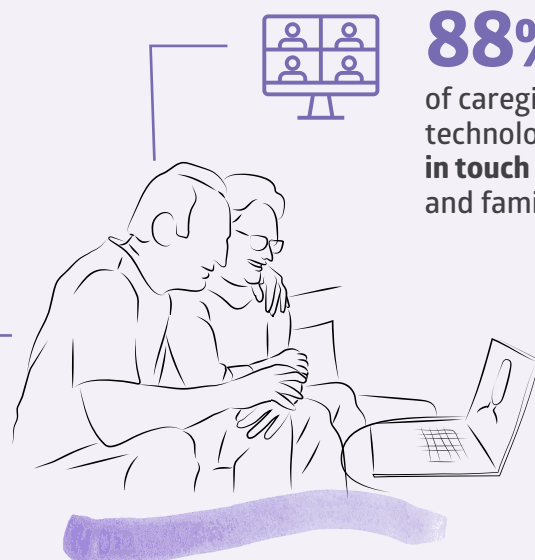
**70%** of caregivers say the pandemic has **worsened their emotional/mental health**<sup>2</sup>



**41%** of caregivers use technology to help **achieve peace of mind** while providing care<sup>1</sup>



**34%** of caregivers feel they **don't have anyone to turn to for support** during the pandemic<sup>2</sup>



**88%** of caregivers used technology to **keep in touch** with friends and family<sup>1</sup>



**44%** of caregivers say physical distancing and sequestering orders have made them **feel isolated** and alone<sup>2</sup>



*"My biggest worry was his safety—I installed cameras in the house so that I could see if my dad was safe and put a sensor that would alert my mom and I when the front door would open late at night."*

Caregiver's Experience



#### Technology helps caregivers provide care and look after themselves

**51%** of caregivers say the pandemic has **worsened their physical health**<sup>2</sup>



**64%** of caregivers identified managing doctor appointments as a **top priority during COVID-19**<sup>2</sup>



**69%** of caregivers use technology to **coordinate care** (appointments, transportation, services)<sup>1</sup>



**56%** of caregivers use technology to **monitor their own health** such as tracking steps, activity, sleep or vitals<sup>1</sup>

**58%** of caregivers are **lacking sleep** during the pandemic<sup>2</sup>



**49%** of caregivers say the person they care for is **relying on them more than ever before** due to COVID-19<sup>2</sup>



*"Knowledge is power. In this day and age, power comes from digital technology"*

Caregiver's Experience

#### 5 reasons why caregivers are not using technology<sup>3</sup>

- 1 No time
- 2 Lack of awareness
- 3 Inadequate skills
- 4 Not affordable
- 5 Limited internet access

#### Ways to help caregivers use technology

- Make sure technology is user-friendly
- Provide education and training
- Suggestion different options (e.g. facebook, websites, chat groups)
- Make technology part of the care plan
- Provide ongoing support through helplines

<sup>1</sup> Source: Magnaye et al (2020) [Improving lives through digital technology](#) (Nearly 600 caregivers surveyed)  
<sup>2</sup> Embracing Carers (2021) Canada Carer Well-Being Index, Who Cares for Carers? Perspectives on COVID-19 Pressures and Lack of Support (A survey of 755 caregivers in Canada as part of a global survey of over 9,000 caregivers). [www.carerscanada.ca](http://www.carerscanada.ca)  
<sup>3</sup> Source: Eales et al (2019) [Designing technology that cares: Barriers to Carers' Technology adoption](#)

The **Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA)** is a national not-for-profit membership association representing home and community care funders, administrators, and providers. Through Carers Canada, a priority program of the CHCA, we increase recognition and support for caregivers and vital partners in care.

**Partners in Restorative Care (PiRC)** is a CHCA capacity-building initiative for home and community care providers to enhance their abilities to recognize, understand and address the physical and emotional challenges experienced by caregivers.

Using emotional intelligence skills, such as active listening, empathy, problem-solving, coaching and flexibility; a health care provider can help caregiver cope more effectively with unexpected challenges and new issues resulting from COVID-19.



What caregivers think, feel and do