

# National Caregiver Day Symposium

Tuesday, April 7, 2026 | 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

The Westin Harbour Castle, 1 Harbour Square, Toronto, ON M5J 1A6

## *Caregiving Across Ages and Stages*

This year's symposium will explore how caregiving evolves across the lifespan and how systems, workplaces, and communities can better respond to caregivers' changing needs at different life stages. The Symposium has been designed to foster connection across sectors and perspectives, with a focus on shared learning and system-level change.

- 8:00 AM **Breakfast & Registration**  
8:00 AM - 8:45 AM  
Arrival, registration, and informal networking over breakfast.
- 8:45 AM **Opening Remarks**  
8:45 AM - 9:00 AM  
Welcome remarks setting the context for National Caregivers Day and outlining the goals for the day.  
Liv Mendelsohn, M.A., M.Ed., Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence  
Jo-Anne Poirier, ICD.D, VON Canada, Board Chair of the Canadian Home Care Association
- 9:00 AM **National Perspective: Caregiving in Canada**  
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM  
A national-level address highlighting the importance of caregiving, current system pressures, and opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.  
Leslie Church, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities)
- 9:30 AM **Opening Keynote: A Caregiver Story**  
9:30 AM - 10:00 AM  
A lived-experience keynote grounding the day in the realities of caregiving across the lifespan.  
Daniel Scott, Caregiver
- 10:00 AM **BREAK**  
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM
- 10:30 AM **Panel 1: Aging with Dignity - Navigating Complex Care Systems Together**  
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM  
Examines the challenges older adults and caregivers face when navigating fragmented health and social care systems, highlighting opportunities for better integration, coordination, and system-level supports.  
*Moderator:* Lara deSousa, CarePartners  
*Guest Panelists:*  
Jeff Moat, Pallium Canada  
Claire Webster, McGill Dementia Education Program  
Mark Hazelden, National Institute on Aging, TMU  
Jane Rylett, Canadian Institute for Health Research

- 11:30 AM** ◆ **Panel 2: Employer Supports for Caregivers - From Evidence to Action**  
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM  
Focuses on paid care workers and employees with unpaid caregiving responsibilities, highlighting workplace policies, education, wellbeing, and workforce sustainability.  
*Moderator: Amy Coupal*, Ontario Caregiver Organization  
*Guest Panelists:*  
Allison Williams, McMaster University  
Avijeet Parmar, Caregiver  
Tyler Downey, SEIU Healthcare  
Lauren Bates, Ontario Caregiver Coalition
- 12:30 PM** ◆ **Lunch & Interactive Prioritization Activity**  
12:30 PM - 1:45 PM  
Optional dotmocracy-style activity inviting participants to identify and prioritize key caregiving and workforce priorities while networking.  
*Moderator: Katarina Busija*, ParaMed Home Health Care
- 1:45 PM** ◆ **Panel 3: Disability, Accessibility, and Inclusive Caregiving**  
1:45 PM - 2:45 PM  
Examines caregiving through a disability and accessibility lens, highlighting barriers and inclusive system responses.  
*Moderator: James Janeiro*, Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence  
*Guest Panelists:*  
Susan Bisaillon, Safehaven  
Amanda MacKenzie, March of Dimes Canada  
Brad Saunders, Community Living Toronto
- 2:45 PM** ◆ **BREAK**  
2:45 PM - 3:00 PM
- 3:00 PM** ◆ **Panel 4: Youth and Young Adult Caregiving**  
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM  
Focuses on youth and young adult caregivers, highlighting their realities, the gaps in current supports, and what better systems of care could look like.  
*Moderator: Oliver Fitzpatrick*, Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence  
*Guest Panelists:*  
Rebekah Gold, Young Caregivers Council of Canada  
Vivian Stamatopoulos, Ontario Tech University  
Chrissy Sadowski, Young Caregivers Association
- 4:00 PM** ◆ **Closing Keynote: Caregiver Results from the National Survey on Aging**  
4:00 PM - 4:30 PM  
Presents key findings from the 2025 NIA Ageing in Canada survey, with reflections on what the data reveals about caregiving across ages and stages and implications for policy, practice, and support systems.  
Talia Bronstein, National Institute on Aging
- 5:00 PM** ◆ **Networking Reception**  
An opportunity to connect, reflect, and continue conversations across sectors.

The Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) is a national membership organization committed to fostering integrated, person-centred care in home and community settings. Representing a diverse membership of public and private organizations that fund, manage, and deliver services and products, the CHCA provides a unified voice to advance the integration of health care. Through advocacy, collaboration, and knowledge sharing, the CHCA champions a vision of a seamless, accessible, accountable, and evidence-informed health care system that prioritizes patients and their families while ensuring long-term sustainability.

The Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence supports and empowers family caregivers and care providers, advances the knowledge and capacity of the caregiving field and advocates for effective and visionary social policy with a disability-informed approach. The Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence is a program of the Azrieli Foundation, which has long supported innovative initiatives to improve access to quality care.