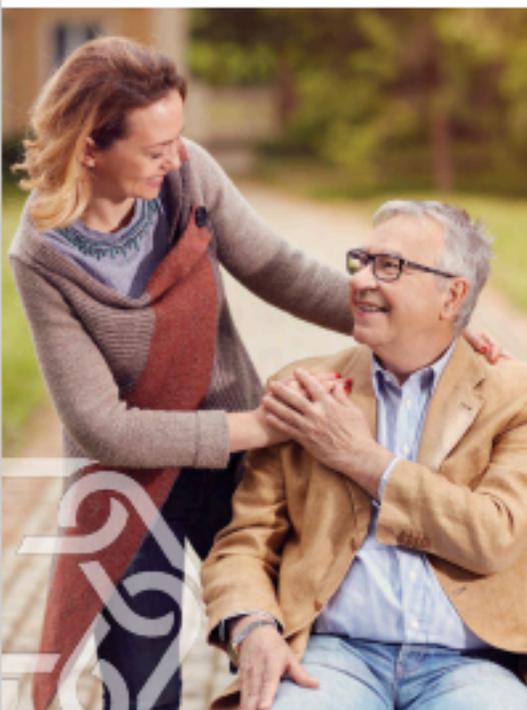




# Work/Life Balance for Caregivers



## WORK AND CAREGIVING: A BALANCING ACT

Toolkit for Working Caregivers



THE ONTARIO

**caregiver**  
ORGANIZATION

CAREGIVERS  
IN THE WORKPLACE



Across Ontario there are 3.3 million caregivers; ordinary people who are caring for family members, partners, friends and neighbours who have physical and/or mental health needs. While many find the role fulfilling, the added responsibility of providing care often impacts the physical and mental health of caregivers themselves.

The **Ontario Caregiver Organization** exists to support caregivers, regardless of age, diagnosis or where they live.

Our **24/7 Caregiver Helpline** provides a single point of access to information, support and services so caregivers are empowered with the information they need to be successful.

If you are a caregiver in need of support and information, call the **Ontario Caregiver Helpline at 1-833-416-2273**.

You can also access help through our weekday live chat and resources on our website [www.ontariocaregiver.ca](http://www.ontariocaregiver.ca).

We would like to thank the advisory group of caregivers who provided advice and input to support the development of this toolkit. We would also like to acknowledge the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario for their collaboration on our Caregivers in the Workplace initiative.



This resource is meant to provide caregivers with general information, tips and tools as they balance work and caregiving responsibilities. It is not a substitute for individual medical, financial, legal and career advice from professionals.

The views expressed in this toolkit are the views of The Ontario Caregiver Organization and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.



## IDENTIFY WHERE YOU NEED SUPPORT - CAREGIVING CHECKLIST

Take an inventory of what you do as a caregiver. Mark which tasks you manage and the resources you are currently using. This might include support you receive from other family members or community groups. This exercise will give you a better picture of all the tasks you are managing, the supports you are using and where you need extra help.

	Activities	I perform this task	Who can help?	When/How often is this done?
<b>Personal Care</b>	Bathing			
	Dressing			
	Eating/feeding			
	Foot/mouth care			
	Toileting			
	Lifting/transferring			
	Grooming (shaving, hair care)			
	Medication management			
	Medical procedures or equipment management			
<b>Help Around the House</b>	Light housekeeping			
	Cleaning bathroom and floors			
	Laundry			
	Meal planning/preparation			
	Gardening/snow shoveling			
	Care for pets/plants			
	Check mail			
	Sort recycling/waste disposal			
<b>Transportation/ Shopping</b>	Drive care recipient to activities/appointments			
	Take care recipient shopping			
	Fill prescriptions			
	Car maintenance			
	Coordinating care			
<b>Psycho-Social Support</b>	Check in by phone			
	In-person visits			
	Leisure activities			
<b>Financial/Legal Affairs</b>	Banking, pay bills			
	Legal documents			
	Income taxes			
<b>Other</b>				

# MANAGING YOUR CAREGIVING ROLE

It can be hard to accept that you can't do it all. Caregivers sometimes feel pressure or guilt for not being able to do it all. You may feel that others – at work or at home – are judging you or you may be putting pressure on yourself. Be easy on yourself – being a working caregiver may mean that you are managing two jobs at the same time! The first step is recognizing that you may need help.

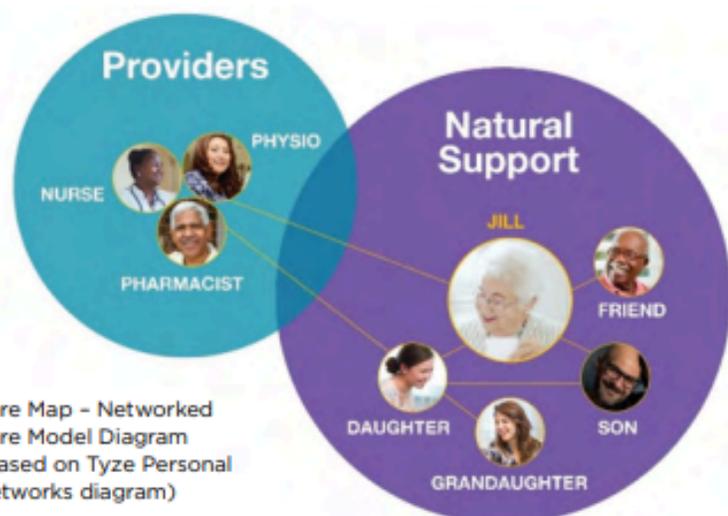
Before making adjustments at work, think about the ways to relieve the pressure of your caregiving role:

- 1) Build your care team
- 2) Identify where you need support
- 3) Find services and support that can help

## BUILDING YOUR CARE TEAM

Your care recipient can have a team of supporters. Their healthcare providers, community services, family, friends and neighbours can all contribute to providing care. If you are the primary caregiver, you are the leader of this team. It is important to think of yourself this way as you coordinate, manage and ask for the support you need in fulfilling their care needs.

Who is on your care team? Consider drawing it out as a Care Map like the one below.



Care Map - Networked Care Model Diagram (Based on Tyze Personal Networks diagram)

Often, caregiving responsibilities fall on the shoulders of one or two people. Sometimes, it's family members – daughters, sons, partners, parents, siblings and friends, or someone closer to the care recipient – geographically or emotionally. It is important for caregivers to think about whether or not they have taken on too much, and if it is time to ask for help from others to share responsibility and reduce the burden.