



Get ready for Ontario's 2025 provincial election!

Ontario has officially entered an election period! The election date is set for February 27th, 2025.

In this election, we have the opportunity to elect a government who will commit to making Ontario the province leading the way in quality care, where caregiving is valued, caregivers are supported and people accessing care are central to policies and practices. When caregivers do well, so do their loved ones.

Who is eligible to vote?

To be eligible to vote, you must be:

- 18 years of age or older;
- a Canadian citizen; and
- a resident of Ontario.

How to Vote:

Elections Ontario make voting easy by offering many options, including by [mail](#), at your [local election office](#), at an [advance voting location](#), and on [election day](#).

How to find your riding and candidates:

To find everything you need to know about the election in your local riding, all you need to do is enter your [postal code](#)! You will be given the name of your riding, the list of candidates, and all the information you need on specific voting instructions locally.

How to get involved:

There are many ways to get involved in the election! You can:

- Reach out to candidates to share your priorities by phone or email

- Visit your candidates in their campaign offices
- Request meetings with your candidates to have more in depth discussions
- Volunteer on a campaign

CCCE's Caregiving Policy Priorities and Recommendations:

CCCE is actively engaging with major political parties to advocate for Ontario caregivers to be prioritized in campaign platforms. We urge all leaders and parties to improve caregivers' lives by implementing the policy recommendations below.

Remember: Candidates and their teams may come to your door!

Suggested questions to start a discussion with candidates:

1. What is your party doing to support caregivers and care providers?
2. What commitments are you making in this election?
3. What do you think about the credit being refundable?

We have also included some key messages around the issues that you can use when speaking to a candidate. These are starting points. *If you are comfortable doing so*, sharing a personal story can be the most effective way to make a real connection. **We are here and happy to help if you would like to discuss talking points or writing correspondence to your candidates.**

In this election, the Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence is calling on all leaders and political parties to improve the lives of caregivers by committing to the following three policy recommendations:

1. Making life more affordable for Ontario caregivers

CCCE calls on the next Ontario Government to support caregivers by transforming the existing non-refundable Ontario Caregiver Credit (OCC) into a refundable credit with a minimum value of \$1250.

Key messages:

- **People across the province are struggling to make ends meet, and for caregivers, financial stability is even more difficult to attain.**
- Caregivers face many additional expenses, from care services, incontinence products, dietary aids, and other medical devices, just to name a few.



- More than 65% of Ontario caregivers have reported the inability to pay their bills, a quarter of them are paying more than \$1000 per month on these expenses alone, with more than 10% reporting spending over \$3000 per month.
 - As the OCC is currently non-refundable, it can only lower the tax a person pays rather than contributing to a cash-in-hand tax refund. Making this one change would directly impact the lives of many caregivers who do not typically have taxes owing and who face significant financial strain.
2. Create a comprehensive and easy to navigate respite system for Ontario caregivers.

CCCE calls on the next Ontario Government to take concrete steps towards a coordinated respite system that ensures that caregivers can get the breaks they need to sustain their essential role.

Key messages:

- Caregiving can be an intensive, physically and mentally exhausting, and socially isolating experience.
- Caregivers who are unable to take time away from their caregiving duties are far more likely to struggle with physical and mental health issues, and when not addressed, can affect the quality of care they are able to provide to their loved ones, while ultimately requiring them to seek care themselves.
- **To best provide care, respite for caregivers is necessary.**
- Caregivers in Ontario must navigate a fragmented, confusing and reactive system.
- Only 4% of Ontario caregivers have accessed respite services, despite 27% reporting fair or poor mental health.
- While there are multiple pathways to respite in Ontario, not all care recipients and their caregivers qualify for or have access to the same services.
- The previous government commitment to expanding respite with Bill 235, Support for Seniors and Caregivers Act, 2024, promising \$20 million over 3 years to provide respite services for caregivers supporting people with dementia. However, more is still needed to expand these supports to all caregivers, regardless of the diagnosis of their loved one.
- **72% of Ontario caregivers feel so burnt out they are not sure how they will continue**



- **75% feel concerned that they will not be able to handle all of their caregiving duties going forward**
 - **73% report their caregiving responsibilities have increased over the past 2 years**
3. Providing direct support for individuals and their caregivers alongside sustainable agency funding to curb waitlists for disability services in Ontario.

CCCE calls on the next Ontario Government to prioritize reducing the waitlist by supporting service providers through sustained funding increases and implementing long-term solutions that ensure equitable access to care, while keeping in mind the rising costs of inflation.

Key messages:

- Developmental and social services budgets have not been steadily growing, while organizations are expected to do more with less as cuts across government continue.
- Although the previous government committed to a 3% increase to Developmental Service agency base budgets in Budget 2024, this commitment is insufficient as it is still not a long-term solution, keeping inflation in mind.
- **Developmental services are essential to supporting people with disabilities to thrive in their communities.**

If you wish to get involved and would like individual support, please reach out to Kayla Lauzon, Manager, Policy and Government Relations at kayla@canadiancaregiving.org. We can help you navigate finding information and work together to prepare for a fruitful discussion with candidates to support caregiving policies!

