



Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association of BC (ILTCCABC)

National Caregiver Month: Supporting Family Caregivers in Long-Term Care

By Sohila Sherbafi, M.A.

In recognition of National Caregiver Month, I attended two informative webinars that explored the realities of caregiving in Canada and the importance of supporting caregivers' well-being. Although many discussions focused on family members caring for loved ones at home, the information was equally relevant to families of residents living in long-term care homes.

Family members continue to play an important caregiving role even after a loved one moves into long-term care. They advocate for residents, participate in care planning, monitor their loved ones' well-being, make important decisions, and provide emotional support. Many families also experience stress, grief, guilt, financial pressures, and caregiver burnout. These webinars offered valuable insights, resources, and strategies to help caregivers navigate these challenges.

Caring in Canada 2026: The State of Caregiving in Canada

On May 6, 2026, the Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence (CCCE) launched its *Caring in Canada 2026* report during a national webinar featuring:

- **Liv Mendelsohn**, Executive Director, CCCE
- **James Gennaro**, Director of Policy and Government Relations, CCCE
- **Elizabeth Chambers**, Family Caregiver Advocate
- **Joey DeLuca**, Former Frontline Care Provider and Migrant Caregiver Advocate
- **Dr. Fiona Deller**, Director of Policy and Research, Canadian Home Care Association

Key Findings

The national survey revealed that:

- **One in four Canadians is a caregiver.**
- Nearly half of caregivers report negative impacts on their daily lives.
- More than 40% experience financial hardship.

- Many caregivers spend thousands of dollars annually on caregiving expenses.
- Full-time working caregivers provide an average of 31–36 hours of care each week.

The survey also found that:

- 77% of caregivers report impacts on their physical, mental, or financial health.
- 20% experience caregiver burnout.
- Younger caregivers and those caring for both children and aging parents face the greatest pressures.
- Despite the challenges, 91% say caregiving gives them a sense of purpose and meaning.

Challenges Facing Care Providers

The report highlighted concerns about the care workforce:

- 59% of care providers feel underpaid.
- 37% feel unsupported.
- 73% have considered leaving the sector.
- 91% said improved working conditions would encourage them to stay.

Panellists emphasized that supporting care providers is essential to improving care for seniors and reducing pressures on family caregivers.

Recommendations

The presenters called for:

- Better workplace supports for caregivers.
- Financial assistance and caregiver tax credits.
- Recognition of caregiving contributions in pension programs.
- Improved wages and working conditions for care providers.
- Increased investment in home and community care services.

The overall message was clear: caregiving is essential to Canada's health-care system and economy, and caregivers deserve greater recognition, support, and investment.

Taking Care of Yourself: Self-Compassion for Caregivers

The second webinar, "**Taking Care of Yourself: Self-Compassion for Caregivers**," was hosted by Family Caregivers of BC and facilitated by Caregiver Volunteer Ambassador **Cole Little**.

The session focused on caregiver well-being and encouraged participants to recognize signs of stress, practice self-compassion, build resilience, and take small but meaningful steps toward self-care.

A Valuable Resource for Caregivers

Family Caregivers of BC operates a **Caregiver Support Line**:

1-877-520-3267

Monday to Friday

8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (PT)

Unlike many health-care services that are focused on clinical care, the Caregiver Support Team provides dedicated emotional support and guidance for caregivers experiencing stress, overwhelm, or isolation.

Services include:

- Information and referrals to community resources
- Health-care system navigation
- Emotional support
- Access to caregiver support groups
- Educational webinars and resources

A key message from the webinar was that caregivers are not alone. Many caregivers are balancing employment, family responsibilities, financial pressures, and their own health concerns while caring for loved ones.

Caregiver Self-Assessment Tool

Family Caregivers of BC also offers a self-assessment tool, the [Caregiver Self-Assessment](#), that helps caregivers reflect on five dimensions of well-being: physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual.

The tool encourages caregivers to identify areas where they may need additional support and develop strategies to maintain their own health and resilience.

Why These Webinars Matter to Family Councils

For family council members, these webinars reinforce an important reality: caregiving does not end when a loved one enters long-term care. The caregiving role changes, but families continue to provide advocacy, emotional support, and oversight while navigating complex decisions and systems.

Family councils play an important role in supporting caregivers, sharing information, advocating for improvements, and ensuring that family voices are heard. The knowledge, resources, and connections offered through webinars such as these can help caregivers feel more informed, supported, and empowered on their caregiving journey.

Resources

Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence (CCCE)

Caring in Canada 2026 Report

Family Caregivers of BC

Caregiver Support Line: 1-877-520-3267

Website: familycaregiversbc.ca

Together, we can continue advocating for better support for caregivers, care providers, and the residents we love.