



News Release

More accessible and flexible Compassionate Care Benefits worthy of election discussion declare three national healthcare coalitions

TORONTO, ON, August 20, 2015 – The **Canadian Caregiver Coalition (CCC)**, **Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC)** and **Neurological Health Charities Canada (NHCC)** applaud today’s announcement that brings to light the needs of *all* Canadian caregivers during the federal election campaign.

This important issue was highlighted today when the Liberal Party of Canada announced its intention to expand the Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefit to include caregivers who support loved ones with serious illnesses and to offer more of the flexibility often needed to deal with the episodic nature of caring for seriously ill family members.

The April federal budget increased the length of the Compassionate Care Benefit from six weeks to six months coming into effect January 1, 2016, but the benefit is only accessible to caregivers who are supporting a dying family member. The leave must also be taken all at one time. These eligibility restrictions leave many caregivers without support.

“Caregiving does not come without a cost,” says Nadine Henningsen, President of CCC and Executive Director, Canadian Home Care Association. “Employed family caregivers often face the challenge of two full-time jobs, spending 40 hours a week in their paid employment and another 30 hours a week providing unpaid care to their loved ones. The impact of this situation is often missed work days, reduced work hours, or lost job opportunities, resulting in increased financial burden for the caregiver.”

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“The proposed extended measures to the Compassionate Care Benefit would provide much needed financial support for Canadians who take on a caring role to support someone with a diminishing physical ability, a debilitating cognitive condition or a chronic life-threatening illness,” says Connie Côté, Executive Director, HCCC.

“Our three national healthcare coalitions have been advocating for the expansion of the Compassionate Care Benefit for years,” says Deanna Groetzinger, Manager of member relations, policy and partnerships, for NHCC. “Caregivers who support loved ones who are gravely ill, though not necessarily in palliative care, such as people living with cancer or multiple sclerosis, currently don’t have access to the Compassionate Care Benefit. This is also the case for caregivers who support a dying relative but due to the nature of the disease, have difficulty getting an end-of-life diagnosis, as is often the case with Parkinson’s disease.”

The Canadian Caregiver Coalition, Health Charities Coalition of Canada and Neurological Health Charities Canada, are pleased that caregivers and healthcare are emerging as important issues in the national election campaign, and they hope all parties commit to improving support to caregivers and the health of all Canadians.

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For further information, contact:

Nadine Henningsen
President
Canadian Caregiver Coalition
nhenningsen@cdnhomecare.ca
Office: 289-290-4376
Cell: 647-824-1962
www.ccc-ccan.ca

Connie Côté
Executive Director
Health Charities Coalition of Canada
ccote@healthcharities.ca
Office: 613-440-4411
Cell: 613-914-4622
www.healthcharities.ca

Deanna Groetzinger
Manager, Policy and Partnerships
Neurological Health Charities Canada
info@mybrainmatters.ca
Office: 416-227-9700, ext. 3501
www.mybrainmatters.ca

About the Canadian Caregiver Coalition

Established in 2000, the Canadian Caregiver Coalition (CCC) is a virtual coalition of diverse partner organizations that work collectively, and autonomously, to identify and respond to the needs of caregivers in Canada. Through our network of partners we ensure the realities and needs of family caregivers are reflected in our advocacy activities that influence policy and programming across the country.

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CCC Members:

Alberta Caregivers Association
The Alliance of Francophone Women (AFFC)
Alzheimer Society of Canada
Bayshore Home Health
Caregivers Nova Scotia
Canadian Cancer Action Network
Canadian Cancer Society
Canadian Home Care Association (Signatory Partner)
Canadian Nurses Association
Canadian Red Cross
Canadian Virtual Hospice
Care Link Advantage
CARP
CBI Health Group/We Care Home Health Services (Signatory Partner)
Childhood Cancer Foundation
Candlelighters
CSSS Cavendish Installation CLSC René-Cassin (Signatory Partner)
Family Caregivers Network Society
Family Caregiver News Magazine
Home Care Ontario
Home Instead Senior Care
Huntington Society of Canada
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada
Muscular Dystrophy Canada
One to One Home Health
ParaMed
Parkinson Society Canada
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
Procura
RAANM (Regroupement des aidant(e)s naturel(el)s de Montréal)
RANQ (Regroupement des aidant(e)s naturel(el)s du Québec)
Revera Home Health
Saint Elizabeth Health Care (Signatory Partner)
Schizophrenia Society
SEIU Canada
Spectrum Health Care
The Care Tools
The Caring Voice Network
The Lighthouse, Children and Families
VON Canada
Young Carers

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About Health Charities Coalition of Canada:

Founded in 2000, the Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC) is a member-based organization, dedicated to advocating for sound public policy on health issues and promoting the highest quality health research. HCCC strives for excellence in health policy and seeks to ensure that the federal government and policy makers look to the Coalition and its members for timely advice and leadership on major health issues of concern to Canadians; and that they recognize the competence, commitment and contributions of health charities in improving the health and well-being of Canadians.

HCCC Members:

Alzheimer Society Canada www.alzheimer.ca
Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Society of Canada (ALS Canada) www.als.ca
The Arthritis Society - www.arthritis.ca
The Asthma Society of Canada – www.asthma.ca
Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation - www.cbcbf.org
Canadian Cancer Society - <http://www.cancer.ca>
The Canadian Continence Foundation – www.canadiancontinence.ca
Canadian Diabetes Association - www.diabetes.ca
Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association – www.chpca.net
Canadian Liver Foundation - www.liver.ca
Canadian Lung Association – www.lung.ca/home-accueil_e.php
Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation - www.canorth.org/
Crohn's and Colitis Canada - www.chronsandcolitis.ca
Cystic Fibrosis Canada - www.cysticfibrosis.ca
The Foundation Fighting Blindness - www.ffb.ca
Heart and Stroke Foundation - <http://www.heartandstroke.ca>
Hope Air – www.hopeair.org
Huntington Society of Canada - www.huntingtonsociety.ca
Kidney Cancer Canada - www.kidneycancerCanada.ca
The Kidney Foundation of Canada - www.kidney.ca
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada – www.mssociety.ca
Muscular Dystrophy Canada – www.muscle.ca
Osteoporosis Canada - www.osteoporosis.ca
Ovarian Cancer Canada - www.ovarianCanada.org
Parkinson Society Canada - www.parkinson.ca
Patients' Association of Canada – www.patientsassociation.ca
Prostate Cancer Canada - www.prostatecancer.ca
Sickle Cell Disease Association of Canada – www.sicklecelldisease.ca

About Neurological Health Charities Canada

Neurological Health Charities Canada (NHCC) is a coalition of 24 organizations that represent people with brain diseases, disorders and injuries in Canada. NHCC works collaboratively to increase awareness, education and research and improve diagnosis and treatment to benefit people affected by brain conditions.

NHCC Members:

ALS Society of Canada
Alzheimer Society Canada

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Alzheimer Society of Ontario
Brain Injury Canada
Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada
Canadian Epilepsy Alliance
Canadian Neurological Sciences Federation
Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation Canada
The Foundation Fighting Blindness
Headache Network Canada
Heart and Stroke Foundation
Huntington Society of Canada
March of Dimes Canada
Mood Disorders Society of Canada
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada
Muscular Dystrophy Canada
Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy
Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation
Ontario Rett Syndrome Association
Parkinson Society Canada
Parkinson Society Ontario
Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario
Tourette Canada