

Minister of Health



Ministre de la Santé

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

**Message from the Minister of Health
National Carers Day - April 2, 2019**

Today is National Carers Day. It is a day to recognize family members, friends, neighbours and other significant people who have taken on the role of caregiver for someone with a serious or life-threatening illness. The theme this year is “Caregivers’ experiences of palliative care in Canada.”

Palliative care is a crucial part of our health care system, providing much-needed support to individuals with a life-threatening illness and their families at one of the most difficult times of their lives. Families and other caregivers are a key part of patient-centered palliative care, given their unique role in supporting individuals.



In Canada, less than 30% of people who could benefit from palliative care have access to it. As more Canadians grow older, there will be increasing pressure on caregivers. Family sizes are getting smaller and family members are living further apart. This means that the responsibility of caregiving rests on health care support workers, on fewer family members, and on the community. It is no surprise that one in three caregivers reports distress and burnout.

That’s why the Government of Canada is committed to working cooperatively with provincial and territorial governments and stakeholders to improve palliative care. Last December, the Government released the [Framework on Palliative Care in Canada](#). The Framework provides a useful reference point for governments, stakeholders, caregivers and communities to help identify common directions and opportunities, to address gaps, and to share best practices.

I encourage Canadians to take the time today to recognize and thank all the compassionate people in their life who have caregiver roles. I applaud the many caring health care professionals and volunteers for their continued dedication and commitment. I would also like to thank the Canadian Home Care Association and Carers Canada for their ongoing work in recognizing and raising awareness of the integral role of caregivers.

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Health