
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0141-000763
April 26, 2020

Ministry of Health
Office of the Seniors Advocate

More support for family caregivers during COVID-19
Punjabi, Farsi, French, Tagalog and Chinese translations available

VICTORIA – As part of British Columbia’s emergency COVID-19 response plan, the Province is doubling this year’s funding for Family Caregivers of British Columbia to \$1 million, helping support both caregivers and seniors.

Family Caregivers of B.C. is a not-for-profit organization that supports people who are caring for elderly loved ones, family or friends. With a network of local agencies throughout B.C., Family Caregivers will increase the capacity of its helpline and offer a number of virtual connections that can bring family caregivers together.

“Many B.C. seniors count on their spouses, children and close friends to help them stay at home and manage chronic conditions,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “The circumstances of COVID-19 have added weight and worry to the task. This step to expand services builds on our commitment to support caregivers and is also a step to support the safety and wellness of seniors during this challenging time.”

This funding will allow Family Caregivers of B.C. to enhance services during the COVID-19 pandemic, so caregivers get the increased support they need to help seniors remain at home, such as expanded toll-free support line hours, emotional supports and health-care navigation.

“Family caregivers experience stress at the best of times; however, this is exacerbated during the COVID-19 restrictions,” said Isobel Mackenzie, B.C.’s seniors advocate. “The type of caregiver support found through adult day programs and a number of other community supports are not available now, and they may be restricted for many months. The impact of isolation on family caregivers is compounded by the need to stay at home with their loved one with little relief from their caregiving duties. Family Caregivers of B.C. can offer some support. The ability to share the burden of family caregiving with others even through a virtual connection will bring some comfort to many as they know they are not alone in their COVID-19 journey.”

“We are here to help these incredible caregivers making sacrifices every day with emotional support, access to tools and resources, and to assist them to navigate our complex health system,” said Barb MacLean, executive director, Family Caregivers of B.C. “Before COVID-19, many caregivers were already having sleepless nights, and now they are filling gaps for services that have been reduced to stop the transmission of the virus – like personal care and managing virtual appointments and medications.”

Seniors and people who are caring for elderly loved ones, family or friends in need of supports can call 211 or 1 877 520-3267 (toll-free).

Quick Facts:

- Over 1 million people provide unpaid care for adult family members and friends in British Columbia.
- The strategy to strengthen supports for caregivers is part of work underway to improve the quality of life for seniors in B.C.
- In 2019, 20% of B.C.'s population was 65 or over. This is expected to rise to 25% in 15 years.

Learn More:

To learn more about Family Caregivers of B.C., visit: www.familycaregiversbc.ca
Or call the toll-free caregivers support line Monday to Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. (Pacific time): 1 877 520-3267

To learn more about bc211, visit: <http://www.bc211.ca/>

To learn more about United Way Better at Home Program, visit: <http://betterathome.ca/>

Seniors and people who are well and want to volunteer can call 211 or visit: www.bc211.ca/
bc211 can also direct you to Family Caregivers of B.C. and the caregivers support line.

Translations:

For a Punjabi translation:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/2020.04.26_NR_More_Support_for_Family_Caregiver_COVID19-Punjabi.pdf

For a Farsi translation:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/2020.04.26_NR_More_Support_for_Family_Caregiver_COVID19-FARSI.pdf

For a French translation:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/2020.04.26_NR_More_Support_for_Family_Caregiver_COVID19-FR.pdf

For a Tagalog translation:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/2020.04.26_NR_More_Support_for_Family_Caregiver_COVID19-TAGALOG.pdf

For a Chinese translation:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/2020.04.26_NR_More_Support_for_Family_Caregiver_COVID19-TC.pdf

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