

SUPPORTING YOURSELF WHILE CAREGIVING FOR A LOVED ONE WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND/OR SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH CHALLENGES

ARE YOU A CAREGIVER?

If you support a family member, partner, friend or neighbour with mental health and/or substance use health needs, you are a caregiver. Caregiving can sometimes feel overwhelming. This resource sheet connects you with people who can help you find support for yourself.

ARE YOU EXPERIENCING A CRISIS NOW?

Call the Distress Centre Ottawa and Region at **613-238-3311** or **9-8-8** suicide helpline, French and English with interpretation available in 300 languages.

DO YOU WANT TO TAKE CRISIS TRAINING SO YOU CAN SUPPORT A LOVED ONE?

Note: The dollar sign (\$) symbol indicates that a cost is associated with the service. When there is no dollar sign (\$), that service is free.

Take **Mental Health First Aid** to learn how to support your loved one during a crisis: www.openingminds.org (\$)

LivingWorks Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) teaches you to recognize when someone may be thinking about suicide and how to respond with care and skill. You'll learn how to provide a supportive intervention and create a safety plan together to connect the person to ongoing supports. Find training in Ottawa: <https://findtraining.livingworks.net/> (\$)

WAYS TO RECHARGE AND FIND SUPPORT FOR YOURSELF

Pleo (Parents' Lifeline of Eastern Ontario) is a parent-led peer organization supporting families of children, youth, and young adults (up to age 25) facing mental health or addiction challenges.

We offer free, confidential support and guidance through our Parents' Helpline, parent support groups (in-person and virtual), and one-on-one family peer support—available in English and French. Translation available if required. 613-321-3211 | 1-855-775-7005 | www.pleo.on.ca

Psychiatric Survivors of Ottawa (PSO) – Family Peer Support Programs supports family and friends of people experiencing mental health and/or substance use challenges. No referral required and services are free. Person supported must be 16 years or older. www.pso-ottawa.ca

The Royal Client and Family Resource Hub is a welcoming space and “one-stop-shop” for clients, family members, and caregivers at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre. You can find information on how to navigate the Royal, and access community resources and peer support in English and French. Room 1113 (near reception), 1145 Carling Avenue, Ottawa. www.theroyal.ca/thehub

Ontario Caregivers Organization (OCO) supports Ottawa caregivers through its 24/7 helpline at 1-833-416-2273 (CARE) plus live chat Mon-Fri 7 am – 9 pm to give information and referrals. Find care options, local support groups and specialized programs for those you care for. Also provides 1-on-1 peer support for caregivers and information related to substitute decision-maker and power of attorney. Available in English and French.

Young caregivers If you are a young person caring for someone else, you can connect with other young people in the same situation and find resources . Available in English and French at <https://youngcaregiversconnect.ca/>

Ontario Health at Home provides care coordination and supports to patients and caregivers. Call 310-2222 (no area code required) for Ottawa services.

**I knew I wasn't alone.
I could find resources like
peer support where I could
talk about my feelings.**

— K.Conibear, caregiver

This document was created in collaboration with caregivers and service providers in response to needs identified during the Guiding Council Consultations. People who experience crisis often call caregivers first. As part of our city-wide Strategy, we are working to support friends and families who support others.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL SUPPORT

Employment Insurance (EI) has a caregiver benefit available that might work for you. Go to <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/caregiving.html> for more information.

Disability Tax Credit (DTC) You or your loved one may be eligible for the DTC which is a non-refundable credit that lowers the income tax of the person with a disability or their families. Check the Ontario Caregivers Organizations website for more details: www.ontariocaregiver.ca

Steps to Justice: Your Guide to Law in Ontario is a website connecting caregivers to several resources on legal aid, wills, powers of attorney, and other legal topics: <https://stepstojustice.ca/legal-topic/health-and-disability/substitute-decision-making/services/>

**Didn't find the resource
you're looking for?
Call 2-1-1 for help.**



**Ottawa Guiding Council for
Mental Health and Addictions**

