



MEDIA RELEASE

April 27, 2020

No caregiver left behind: more support for family and friend caregivers

Victoria – Family Caregivers of British Columbia (FCBC) is pleased to be able to expand services to support family and friend caregivers in response to the COVID crisis with a \$500,000 grant from the BC Ministry of Health.

“We are thrilled to receive this desperately needed funding to increase our services in support of BC’s 1.3 million caregivers,” says Barb MacLean, executive director of FCBC. “Before COVID-19, our provincial Caregivers Support Line volume had increased by 52%. Now as a result of the virus, caregivers are finding themselves in changing circumstances requiring increased and unprecedented levels of care. We are here to help them manage and find available resources. Our goal is that no caregiver cares alone - they will not be left behind.”

Family Caregivers of BC has been a source of support, information and education for 30 years, as well as being a voice for family and friend caregivers at regional, provincial and national levels. “We need to look behind closed doors where our family members and friends are providing the lion’s share of care – in good times it was 80%,” says Clay Barber, President of FCBC. “We know the public isn’t reaching out to the medical system, thinking it’s overwhelmed, and many of the in-person services are closed, meaning there has never been a greater need to support caregivers”.

In addition to expanding caregiver support, education and training, FCBC will work to align COVID response efforts across health and social services. “There are some powerful COVID response initiatives underway that offer new ways to reach caregivers, like BC211 and Safe Seniors,” says MacLean; “We will draw on our many partners to coordinate efforts and make sure that caregivers don’t fall through the cracks.”

CALLS TO ACTION:

- Share the **BC Caregiver Support Line: 1-877-520-3267**, M-F, 8:30 AM – 7 PM.
- Join the #CaregiverAware2020 Campaign during Family Caregiver Month in May.
- Share this link: www.familycaregiversbc.ca – virtual Caregiver Resource Center.

Contact:

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Resources:

- BC Caregiver Support Line 1-877-520-3267
- www.familycaregiversbc.ca – Virtual Caregiver Resource Center
- Caregivers in Distress: a growing problem, BC Seniors Advocate Report 2017 <https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/caregivers-in-distress-a-growing-problem-2/>
- Caring Behind Closed Doors: Forgotten families in the coronavirus outbreak, Carers UK April 2020 https://www.carersuk.org/images/News_and_campaigns/Behind_Closed_Doors_2020/Caring_behind_closed_doors_April20_pages_web_final.pdf