

**Written Submission for the Pre-Budget
Consultations in Advance of the 2019 Budget**

By: Home Instead Senior Care

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Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the government provide **funding in the amount of \$1M to establish a Senior Advisory Panel** to encourage workplace practices that are friendly to, and respectful of, older employees.

Recommendation 2: That the government provide **funding in the amount of \$10M for the establishment of a senior caregiving transition fund** expressly for testing and disseminating employer initiatives that better accommodate Canadians caring for older family members.

Recommendation 3: That the government task the Finance Committee to review and **modernize tax policy that recognizes the financial contribution of families** who provide care and support of seniors at home either directly and/or through private pay.

Ensuring Canada’s Competitiveness

The Government of Canada is working to build a prosperous economy and provide Canadians with “a real and fair chance at success”ⁱ. Integral to achieving this goal, are policy actions that recognize and respond to the changing demographics across the country – a situation where today the number of persons aged 65 years and older exceeds the number of children aged 0 to 14 years.ⁱⁱ

An older population is a testament to our success as a society and in Canada seniors are largely an untapped resource. As a country, we have not yet come to terms with how we want to engage and support our seniors. Aging will permeate our society so deeply that governments alone cannot provide all the solutions to the many challenges ahead. Every Canadian must redefine how they think about and anticipate their senior years.

First and foremost, seniors want to remain relevant as they age. Approximately 50% of seniors would prefer to remain in the workplace because they enjoy the work and the opportunity to be active and make a vital contribution.ⁱⁱⁱ Seniors who want to continue working often face a number of *disincentives*, ranging from full-time requirements, hours of work, physical demands, and caps on extended benefits and pension plans. While mandatory retirement has largely been eliminated and only 27% of Canadians expect to be fully retired as 66^{iv}, there is much that can be done to accommodate older Canadians in the workplace, thereby strengthening the capacity and competitiveness of our country.

Recommendation #1. Engage Seniors

The government should **create an Advisory Panel (recommendation 1) of seniors** to assess and share effective practices from high performing businesses that are friendly to, and respectful of, older employees. Business practices that warrant attention are those that offer older workers flex hours, senior specific education and training programs to help adoption of new technical skills, assistance in developing mentoring skills, and alternate forms of payment such as “senior care credits”. Senior Care Credits could be used to retain non-medical care at home¹ – a service that becomes necessary with aging and concomitant frailties. These are just some of the many potential strategies that businesses must consider. It is the input of seniors that is required to lead the way.

Senior friendly employment practices should be encouraged through federal policy and by the government itself, as one of Canada’s largest employers.

Recommendation #2. Best Practice

In Canada, we assume, and expect, that families and/or friends will provide the necessary support when a loved one needs care. It is typically only when needs escalate to a crisis that the formal health care

¹Non-medical care includes activities of daily living such as basic personal care, meal preparation, household maintenance, companionship, and assistance with errands and appointments. It is the type of activity, which is not typically considered “health care” but which research has shown to be an essential element to keeping people from prematurely entering an institutional setting. These services may be provided through provincial programs when a person has a health issue. However, these same services are most often provided by friends and family and can be purchased by families who are unavailable or unable to meet the demands. Most would see these to be amenities to support aging and not a health service.

system intervenes. Otherwise, family members are balancing the health, physical and social needs of those who are vulnerable while working, raising a family and caregiving. Therefore, concurrent to home care funding, the government should introduce measures to support those family caregivers who have extraordinary caregiving responsibilities.

Family caregiving is an obligation that can increase gradually over time or, in the case of a crisis, become an overnight requirement. The long-term consequence of family caregiving includes declining health and high rates of depression.^v The imputed costs of unpaid care, by family caregivers over the age of 45 years, to the elderly was conservatively estimated to be \$25-\$26 billion per year in 2009.^{vi}

Productivity impacts to business of family caregiving obligations by working Canadians are significant – estimated at \$5.5 billion.^{vii}

Findings from a recent survey by Home Instead Senior Care of 1,001 working women aged 45 to 60 who are not self-employed and are caregivers for at least one parent and/or in-law in Canada and the United States showed the impact on the economy.

- 50% sometimes feel like they must choose between being a good employee and being a good daughter
- 25% say the quality of their work has suffered because of the time they invest in being a good caregiver.^{viii}

Home Instead Senior Care recommends that the government develop a **senior caregiving transition fund (recommendation 2)** expressly for testing and disseminating employer initiatives that better accommodate Canadians caring for older family members.

Supporting family caregivers is a means of enabling them to be present at work and to continue to build their careers. Often the support required is quite basic, but it is the essential element that sustains the family member/employee. Time, understanding and service are frequently identified needs.

The services are most often “non-medical”, such as personal care, meal preparation, household maintenance, companionship, and assistance with errands and appointments. It is this type of care and support that should be affordable, planned for, and which could be normalized as part of the life course for Canadians.

Recommendation #3. Tax Policy

Facts

- One in five Canadians aged 45 and older provides some form of care to seniors living with long-term health problems.^{ix}
- A quarter of all family caregivers are seniors themselves; a third of them (more than 200,000) are older than 75.^x
- Caregivers perform a range of tasks in caring for their family member or friend, with providing transportation being the most commonly reported (73%).
- Other tasks include housework (51%), house maintenance and outdoor work (45%), scheduling and coordinating appointments (31%), managing finances (27%), helping with medical treatments (23%) and providing personal care (22%).^{xi}

The contributions of family and friends need to be acknowledged and encouraged. Without this type of support, many will have no choice but to select an institutional solution, which consumes more of the workforce and does not enhance, and actually reduces Canada's ability to compete globally. More importantly, it is not the solution that Canadians want adopted.

The government can, and must, use its tax levers to make it easier for families to continue to provide care at home – either directly or with the support of private service provider organizations - of family members as they age and become infirmed. Purchasing care from reliable service provider organizations ensures quality and mitigates risk that can occur when people opt to hire an individual without credentials, supervision and support.

Home Instead Senior Care recommends that the government task the Finance Committee to review and **modernize tax policy that recognizes the financial contribution of families (recommendation #3)** to review the impact of the current tax code on senior-care decision-making and recommend caregiver support tax policy changes / adjustments, designed to encourage home care and personal responsibility for senior care. Specific measures to address include building on the current caregiver tax credit by making it refundable and increasing the amount of deduction scaled to the intensity of caregiving required. The Commission should also examine the elimination of GST/HST on all forms of home care / non-medical senior care purchased from reliable service provider organizations. This lost tax revenue will be more than offset by reduced use of the health care system which occurs when families are exhausted. It will also help to reduce the underground caregiving economy which puts seniors at risk.

Conclusion

Seniors want to be relevant contributors to Canada's economy. And, Canadians want to age at home.^{xii} The government's role must be to establish a cohesive clear strategy to enable families, communities and businesses to realize these goals. Addressing these issues is vital to maintaining a competitive economy. Leveraging the contribution of seniors and supporting the needs of family caregivers of seniors are where innovation must occur and, where society must shift.^{xiii} The federal government must provide the leadership through policy and funding.

In order to be competitive, the approach to aging requires that government, industry and society come together. The World Health Organization connects health and aging policy to questions of personal freedom, financial planning, fiscal sustainability, and economic growth. The 2019 budget planning should integrate these factors.

For more information:

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Home Instead Senior Care is the world's trusted provider of non-medical, in-home care services for seniors. With operations in over a dozen countries worldwide, Home Instead Senior Care provides an estimated 60 million hours of service per year. Across Canada, Home Instead is in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia.

ENDNOTES

- i Trudeau, J. R.Hon. (2015) Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on the Speech from the Throne. December 4. Retrieved on July 24 from <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2015/12/04/statement-prime-minister-canada-speech-throne>
- ii Statistics Canada. Canada's population estimates: Age and sex, July1, 2015. Released 2015-09-29 Retrieved on Aug 1, 2016 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/150929/dq150929b-eng.htm>
- iii CARP – Retrieved on July 25, 2017 from <http://www.carp.ca/2014/07/15/canadian-seniors-better-still-want-work-2/>
- iv Ipsos Reid. (2013) Poll 2013, Retrieved from <http://business.financialpost.com/2013/02/20/working-longer-balances-more-retirement-years/>
- v Turcotte, M. Canadians with unmet home care needs. Statistics Canada. Retrieved on July 30, 2016 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2014001/article/14042-eng.htm#n1>
- vi Hollander,M., Lui, G., Chappell, N. (2009) Who Cares and How Much? The imputed economic contribution to the Canadian healthcare system of middle-aged and older unpaid caregivers providing care to the elderly. Healthcare Quarterly Vol 12 No 2
- vii Ceridian. (2015) Double Duty: The Caregiving Crisis in the Workplace. Results and Recommendations from Ceridian's Working Caregiver Survey. Retrieved on July 24, 2017 from <http://www.ceridian.ca/blog/2015/11/double-duty-the-caregiving-crisis-in-the-workplace/>
- viii Eisenberg, R. (2017) How Daughters Who Are Caregivers Have It Rough At Work. Forbes. June 21. Retrieved on July 24, 2017 from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2017/06/21/how-daughters-who-are-caregivers-have-it-rough-at-work/#26565f107c37>
- ix Alzheimer Society of Canada. (2010) Baby Boomer Survey: Alzheimer's disease... it's more than you think.
- x Ibid
- xi Sinha, M. (2013) Portrait of caregivers, 2012. Minister of Industry, 2013 Catalogue no. 89-652-X — No. 001, ISBN 978-1-100-22502-9
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- xiii Michael Hodin, CEO, Global Council on Aging Home Care Disrupting Innovation for Elder Caregiving http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-hodin/aging-mega-trend_b_10590264.html