



64 Jefferson Ave.  
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September 18, 2020

Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

On behalf of our 320,000 CARP members, I want to thank you for the video message you recorded as part of our National Seniors Day online event, scheduled for October 1. We appreciate your time and good wishes, and were particularly gratified to hear you say that your government was working "to strengthen long-term, home and palliative services across the country," and that "we can't and we won't let the tragedies that occurred, happen again."

It is precisely because of these intentions, which we heartily endorse, that we write you again to express our concern that in the Safe Restart Plan you have just announced, Home Care appears to be absent.

We agree that your government must revive the economy. To that end, your officials have proffered childcare as a way to liberate working parents, especially mothers, to re-enter the work force. Children, however, are not the only recipients of care by working mothers and fathers. Many are responsible for most of the care of their own elderly parents or grandparents.

The prodigious efforts of this group must be recognized and harnessed as a vital component of any strategy to deal with both long-term care, and the return of caregivers to the economy. While it is hugely important to reform long-term care institutions, ultimately we believe Home Care is the solution to long-term care.

The proven facts are dramatic:

- Over **8 million** Canadians provide informal care to a loved one
- Over **1 million** caregivers over the age of 45 are caring for both a parent and a child
- Family caregivers provide more than **80%** of the care given to seniors in their homes, and **30%** of services provided within institutions
- These caregivers save the Canadian health care system a staggering **\$24 to \$31 billion dollars** a year

As it stands today, many caregivers must juggle job and caregiving responsibilities. Almost half report missing days of work (and the resulting pay) and being unable to accept promotions, due to the stress of their caregiving responsibilities.

In 2015, the Vanier Institute reported that every year, *Canada loses the equivalent of nearly 558,000 full-time employees from the workforce*, because of inability to handle the conflicting demands of employment and caregiving.

In summary, this letter is CARP's urgent reminder that Long-Term Care, and Home and Community Care are just as important as childcare if parents are to go back to work knowing that their own parents as well as their children are being well looked after.

Yours truly,

**Bill VanGorder**

Chief Policy Officer  
CARP – A New Vision of Ageing for Canada.

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cc. Minister of Seniors

#### **About CARP**

CARP (formerly the Canadian Association for Retired Persons) is Canada's largest advocacy association for older Canadians. Today CARP has more than 320,000 members. As a non-partisan association, CARP is committed to working with all parties in government to advocate for older Canadians. Its mission is to advocate for better healthcare, financial security, and freedom from ageism. CARP members engage in polls and petitions, email their elected representatives, connect with local chapters and share stories and opinions on urgent issues.