CARER’S DAY 2018

Connecting Carer’s: Recognizing Caring Canadians

April 3, 2018 marked the annual National Carer’s Day in Canada. The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA) encourages all Canadians to reflect on the importance of caregivers and to advocate for support at the provincial and national levels for caregivers.

Kelly MacLaren,
Development & Partnership Officer
Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association

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Carer’s Day 2018

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“There are only four kinds of people in the world.
Those who have been caregivers.
Those who are currently caregivers.
Those who will be caregivers and those who will need a caregiver.” Rosalyn Carter

Introduction:
The purpose of this report is to provide comprehensive details regarding the 2018 Carer’s Day awareness campaign, Connecting Carer’s: Recognizing Caring Canadians. This report contains a detailed account of the activities related to the projects that were carried out by CHPCA.

Organizational Summary:
The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA) is the national voice for hospice palliative care in Canada. It is a bilingual, national, charitable, non-profit association whose mission is the pursuit of excellence in care for persons approaching death so that the burdens of suffering, loneliness and grief are lessened. CHPCA works closely with other national organizations and will continue to move forward with the goal of ensuring that all Canadians, regardless of where they may live, have equal access to quality hospice palliative care. CHPCA is comprised of over 3000 associates, both individuals (professionals, caregivers, and volunteers) and hospice palliative care programs and services from every province and territory. The voluntary Board of Directors is made up of representation from each of the 10 provincial hospice palliative care associations as well as five at-large positions.

CHPCA focused the 2018 Carer’s Day campaign on the Canadian Compassionate Companies although all of the materials were made available on the website for anyone to use. A Canadian Compassionate Company is one that has been formally recognized by CHPCA as having specific HR policies that support employees in times of need when they must also act as caregivers to a loved one. Participating organizations were encouraged to post and tweets on April 3, 2018. The campaign was managed by the Development and Partnership Officer with assistance from the Communications team. The activities carried out included:

- Coordination of the marketing materials (as supplied by Carer’s Canada) for upload to the CHPCA website
- Coordination and execution of a social media marketing plan for the day of the campaign including Twitter and Facebook using the marketing materials supplied by Carer’s Canada
• Coordination of the recruitment of CHPCA Canadian Compassionate Company (CCC) members to encourage them to participate in the social media campaign
• Distribution of relevant quotes to the CCC for use in their campaigns
• Inclusion of the campaign materials in the monthly e-blast for April, 2018
• Evaluation of the social media campaign using web analytics
• Preparation of the final report

2018 Sponsors
GSK
Purdue
IMC (Innovative Medicines Canada)
CBI Health Group

Participating Canadian Compassionate Company members
West Island Palliative Care Residence (WIPCR)
IMC
Pfizer Canada
Human Resources Professionals Association

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Purpose:
Connecting Carer’s is a virtual campaign to raise awareness of the needs of caregivers, and to promote the importance of connecting and accessing support earlier rather than later in their care journeys.
• Health care connections: carer’s are recognized as partners in care who know where and how to access resources and supports. This connection facilitates the voice of caregivers in future planning of health and social care services.
• Social connections: caregivers are supported in balancing their personal commitments, unpaid caregiving duties and work/educational responsibilities. This connection facilitates caregivers to share their experience, knowledge and receive emotional support.

Why is this important?
National Carer’s Day is a virtual awareness campaign aimed at shining a light on the more than 8 million Canadians who act as caregivers. It is a reminder that these dedicated individuals, whose work involves caring for others, are often in need of care and empathy themselves. The Connecting Carer’s campaign raises awareness for caregivers’ needs and access to support. Using hashtag #CareConnections, Canadians were encouraged to share their experiences with the caregiving profession and participate in an online dialogue.

As a society, we are so focused on prolonging life and curing illness that very little thought is given to what happens at the end of our journeys – including to those who act as caregivers to family, friends and as a profession. CHPCA would like to help
highlight the many intricate issues faced by those caring for loved ones in their final days as well as those individuals who have made caregiving their profession.

**Key Messages:**

- Over 260,000 Canadians die each year which can include being supported by as many as five caregivers in the last year or two of life. Supporting these caregivers or “carers” is important for the patient, their family, friends, and community - and for Canada in general.
- Employers and communities have an important role to play in supporting caregivers, through both leave policies and supportive actions.
- Compassionate Care is care that recognizes the needs of both the individuals being cared for and those responsible for their care.
- The aim of National Carer’s Day is to shine a light on the important and often unseen work being done by carers in our communities and workplaces, and to encourage and provide examples of ways in which they can be supported.
- Companies need to recognize that employees may occasionally require more time off from work than is strictly accommodated by their regular leave policies in order to provide care or support to specified family members who are gravely ill and terminally ill with a significant certainty of death within twenty-six (26) weeks.
- According to the Government of Canada, compassionate care benefits are Employment Insurance (EI) benefits paid to people who have to be away from work temporarily to provide care or support to a family member who is gravely ill and who has a significant risk of death within 26 weeks (six months).
- It is a very stressful and difficult time when a loved one is dying and/or near death. The financial security of an employee’s family may be jeopardized while caring for a gravely ill family member.

**Media Pitch**

Carers are people in our workplaces and communities who spend their time caring for others, including clients or family members facing serious illnesses or coming to the end of their lives. Sometimes carers are paid, as is the case with Registered Nurses and those working in long-term care facilities. Sometimes, though, carers are family members who are caring for a relative who is gravely ill.

Compassionate companies recognize that employees may occasionally require more time off from work than is strictly accommodated by their regular leave policies in order to provide care or support to family members who are gravely ill. Compassionate
companies recognize the role that carers play, and come together to help make their lives – and the lives of the individuals for whom they are caring – easier through supportive actions both large and small.

On National Carers Day, the CHPCA is encouraging Canadians to acknowledge and celebrate the carers in their workplaces and communities. Our aim is to shine an appreciative light on the vital and compassionate work done by caregivers and to say a collective “thank you”.

Media quotes supplied by CHPCA

“National Carer’s Day provides an opportunity for the public to acknowledge the tremendous work done by people in caregiving roles, both in workplaces and in communities. It is also an important opportunity for those of us who work in healthcare and healthcare policy to reflect and reaffirm our commitment to providing supports for carers.”
- Sharon Baxter, Executive Director, CHPCA

“When we think about caregiving we often do it in the context of a profession. However, it is important to acknowledge the many hours of unpaid work done by family members who are caring for gravely ill relatives. National Carer’s Day reminds us all to be compassionate, and also provides an opportunity for employers to learn how best to support members of their teams who may be faced with caregiving responsibilities. When we approach all areas of our work and personal lives with compassion, we make it easier for carers to ask for help and to receive it.”
- Russell Williams, CHPCA Champion’s Council Chair

Social Media Campaign Results

Twitter:

CHPCA noted over 172 Tweets that included the hashtag #CareConnections. Some of the organizations participating in National Carers Day social media included Hunting Society, Canadian Nurses Association, Virtual Hospice, Canadian Home Care Association, Alzheimer’s Society, Heart and Stroke, West Island Palliative Care Residence, Innovative Medicines Canada, Government of Canada – Labour Program, and Pfizer Canada. A full list of all 172 #CareConnections Tweets is available upon request.
Facebook:

CHPCA noted over 49 posts that included the hashtag #CareConnections. Participation included Canadian Virtual Hospice, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Canadian Medical Association, and West Island Palliative Care Residence.

Sample social media posts from participating CHPCA Canadian Compassionate Company members:

Innovative Medicines Canada

[Image: Image of National Carers Day poster]

Today is #NationalCarersDay. A day to shine a light on the important and often unseen work being done by carers in our communities & workplaces. Learn more: carerscanada.ca/awareness/ #CareConnections @CanadianHPCAssn
West Island Palliative Care Residence

PalliativeCareRes @PalliativeRes · Apr 3
Today is National Carer’s Day. To know more: bit.ly/2uskTfT #CareConnections #palliativecare

PalliativeCareRes @PalliativeRes · Apr 3
Did you know that the Residence is a Canadian Compassionate Company and received the designation in January 2018#CareConnections #Palliative

Pfizer Canada

Pfizer Canada @PfizerCA · Apr 3
It’s National Carer’s Day. As a @CanadianHPCAssn Compassionate Company we’re proud of the aid we provide colleagues who are away from work to provide care to a gravely ill family member. If you’re caring for someone & need help, click for resources spr.ly/6009DXiF5

Connecting Carers
Learn how we are connecting caregivers every day

Supported by GSK, PURDUE, Innovative Medicines Canada, CBI Health Group
Thank You!

Thank you to all of those who participated in making National Carer’s Day 2018 a success. Special thanks to GSK, Purdue, Innovative Medicines Canada, and CBI Health Group for their funding and making National Carer’s Day possible at a national level. Thank you to our participating CCC members for embracing the need to support caregivers in the workplace. CHPCA looks forward to your continued support and partnership in 2019 as we strive to make hospice palliative care available to all Canadians.

List of Appendices:

Appendix A – Connecting Carer’s: Health Care Connections Infographic
Appendix B – Connecting Carer’s: Health Care Connections Key Messages
Appendix C – Connecting Carer’s: Social Connections Infographic
Appendix D – Connecting Carer’s: Social Connections Key Messages