

**Pre-Budget Consultation 2010**

The Alzheimer Society of Ontario asks that the Minister of Finance commit to the Ontario Caregiver Coalition's (OCC) 2008 pre-budget submission request to examine a range of options that will provide financial support to family caregivers in Ontario.

The OCC will commit to work with the Ontario Government on a joint Task Force to identify and evaluate policy options that will provide financial incentives to caregivers.

The OCC's focus is to advance the interests of caregivers in Ontario. As a group of diverse organizations, the OCC works to raise the profile of caregivers in Ontario and to promote public policy options to support caregivers.

Caregivers of people with dementia report stress levels 3 times greater than those caring for persons with other chronic diseases and depression is nearly twice as common.

Dementia is a syndrome with symptoms that include loss of memory, judgment and reasoning and changes in mood, behaviour and communication abilities.

More than 180,000 people in Ontario have dementia and in less than 25 years, the number will double.

Most Ontarians with dementia today are supported outside of institutions, in their homes with their families.

In a study of family caregiver needs, it was found that financial issues are a major concern. The following are two major reasons for this issue:

- Caregivers who are in the workforce and choose to care for their relative give up salary, career and pension prospects for many years or retire early.
- Additional expenses related to providing care for a person with dementia include, fees for home care services, transportation costs for medical appointments, drug dispensing fees, technical aids and equipment, and home modification.

January is the Alzheimer Society's awareness month. This January 2010 we will be releasing a report titled "Rising Tide". The information being released is economic and social data, which will include numbers reflecting the great need for caregiver supports. We will send along a copy of the study in January.

For more information, please contact Jacquie Micallef, Alzheimer Society of Ontario, Coordinator, Public Policy & Chapter Relations E: [jmicallef@alzheimeront.org](mailto:jmicallef@alzheimeront.org) P: (416) 847-8927