



Caregiver-Centered Care

Supporting Family Caregivers in Healthcare



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

Developed in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Alberta, this is a program of applied research and innovation in health services delivery.

Education for health and social care providers to support family caregivers.

ABOUT THE EDUCATION

Caregiver-Centered Care Education is co-designed to equip health and community care providers with the knowledge, skills, and resources to provide person-centered care to family caregivers. Person-centered care, that respects and involves family caregivers in the planning and delivery of support services for the care receiver, while also recognizing and addressing the family caregiver's own needs, preferences, and wellbeing. It is crucial for fostering meaningful and positive care outcomes for all involved in the care journey—providers, family caregivers, and the people they care for.

Caregiver-Centered Care is a Program of Applied Research & Innovation in Health Services Delivery in Family Caregiving led by Dr. Jasneet Parmar, Professor from the Department of Family Medicine, University of Alberta. Dr. Parmar and a team of over 130 multi-level interdisciplinary team of researchers, educators, health providers and leaders, educational designers, and family caregivers co-produced the [Caregiver Centered Care Competency Framework](#)© in a Modified Delphi Process in 2019[1,2]; the Foundational Education in 2019-2020[3]; Advanced Education in 2021-2023; and Champions Education in 2023-2024.

WHY EDUCATION FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS ABOUT FAMILY CAREGIVERS? Family caregivers (carers, care-partners) are currently the largest care workforce. We define family caregiver broadly as any person who takes on an unpaid caring role, providing health, social, emotional, and practical support for people with mental or physical illness, disability, or frailty from aging.

In 2018, Statistics Canada General Social Survey confirmed that one in four (26 %, 7.8 million) Canadians age 15+ contributed to 5.7 billion hours of unpaid care, the equivalent of 2.8 million full-time workers and an annual economic value of \$97.1 billion [4]. Health providers rely heavily on caregivers to carry out care plans and discharge recommendations, reduce length of hospitalizations, reduce emergency and acute care wait times [5,6]. Home care and chronic disease pathways depend on caregiver support. However, because of advancements in medicine, longer lifespans, and cost-cutting measures that shift care responsibilities onto families, caregiving trajectories are much longer and more challenging. Caregivers now shoulder not only personal care and extended activities of daily living and care-coordination, but also medical and nursing duties traditionally done by regulated health professionals[7,8].

Without systemic support, family caregiver distress rates are soaring. Statistics Canada reported 44% of family caregivers were distressed in July-August 2022 [9]. Much of family caregiver burden is related to interactions with health providers and the health system [10-12]. American caregivers of older adults who helped with medical appointments or coordinated care between providers were significantly more likely to report burden compared to those who did not assist with these health care interactions [12,13] A recent study involving Canadian employees from various industries (automotive, manufacturing, insurance, research and development, health and social services, municipal government), highlighted that the number of hours spent organizing and coordinating healthcare tasks, rather than other family care tasks like housework, was associated with increased family-work conflict[14]. It is essential that health and social care systems and providers find ways for care interactions to be less burdensome for family caregivers.

Healthcare providers should see family caregivers not just as resources to carry out treatment plans, support the person, or a way to reduce health costs, but as a partner in that enterprise who may need information, training, care, and support [15-17]. The Editor of the Canadian Family Physician noted, "family caregivers are under recognized, under-supported, and underused. Few health care professionals have received training in caregiver engagement, and typically there is a reluctance to collaborate with caregivers, and an unwillingness to involve caregivers in the care process in a meaningful fashion"[17]. University of Alberta Neurologist, Dr. Janis Miyasaki, doesn't think family caregivers are underused, but rather, under-engaged, which sometimes leads to family caregivers being overused and under-supported by the health care system. Researchers and healthcare providers alike recommend competency-based education for health and community care providers to effectively recognize, communicate with, and engage family caregivers as partners on the care team [15-23].

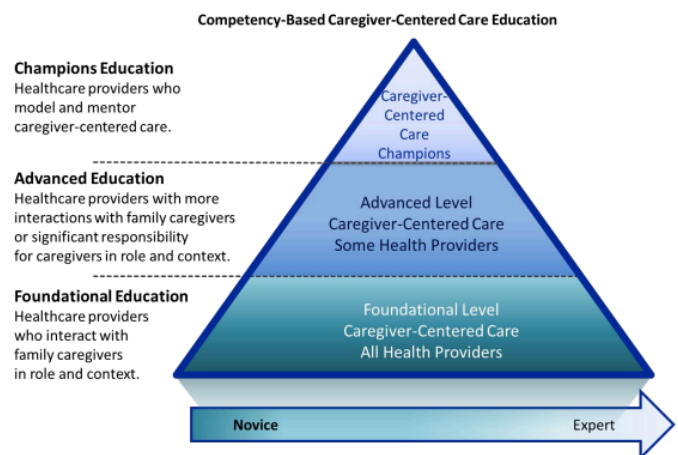
CAREGIVER-CENTERED CARE EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

Caregiver-Centered Care education is based on literature reviews of best practices in interdisciplinary education[24-30] and follows the six domains in the [Caregiver-Centered Care Competency Framework](#): Recognizing the Family Caregiver Role; Communicating with Family Caregivers; Partnering with Family Caregiver; Fostering Family Caregivers' Resilience; Navigating Health and Social Systems and Accessing Resources; and Enhancing the Culture and Context of Care. Learning is facilitated through clear learning objectives, video vignettes based on real-life case studies, subject-matter experts, and interactive exercises that promote critical thinking, encourage reflection and self-assessment. The Caregiver-Centered Care education is designed to be delivered flexibly, either online, facilitated-in-person or virtually. Access the free education at www.caregivercare.ca.



LEVELS OF EDUCATION

As recommended by stakeholders co-designing the Caregiver-Centered Care Competency Framework, we have co-produced three levels of Caregiver-Centered Care Education: Foundational, Advanced, and Champions. This graduated approach moves the learner from novice to expert within each level, and from level to level. Building the learners competence and confidence in providing Caregiver-Centered Care as they progress through the education modules.



Level 1: Foundational Education is designed for all healthcare providers who interact with family caregivers. No prerequisites are required. The module follows Lacey, a student nurse whose mother was recently diagnosed with early onset dementia, as she learns about the Caregiver-Centered Care competencies she needs to support caregivers from her health workforce colleagues at the hospital. It takes 45 - 60 minutes to complete Level 1.

Level 2: Advanced Level Education is designed for health and social care professionals who interact with family caregivers frequently, are involved in case management and care planning, or oversee other healthcare professionals who interact with family caregivers. The video vignettes follow the Fawcett family caregivers, husband John Fawcett, son Chad and daughter Carly as they care for wife and mother Leanne after discharge home with major stroke. The six modules provide in-depth instruction on and practice in the six Caregiver-Centered Care competencies: Recognizing the Family Caregiver Role, Communicating with Family Caregivers, Partnering with Family Caregiver, Fostering Family Caregivers' Resilience

(wellbeing), Navigating Health and Social Systems and Accessing Resources, and Enhancing the Culture and Context of Healthcare. Each module takes 45-60 minutes to complete (~6 hours) and each comes with a continuing competency certificate on completion.

Level 3: Champions Education released in June 2024, is designed for health and social care professionals who lead, model, and mentor Caregiver-Centered Care competence within their practice. These individuals may be in formal or informal leadership roles within their areas of practice and act as influencers of improved quality of care. Topics covered in this bundle include: Inspiring Change, Leading Change, and Managing Change, and build on concepts presented in the Foundational (Level 1) and Advanced (Level 2) Education. Completion of Level 1 & 2 are a suggested pre-requisite for Champions.

COVID-19 Education offers more fulsome practice for communicating in stressful situations, like a pandemic or flu outbreak. The module follows Gordan Cruikshank family caregiver to his wife, and long term care facility manager Estelle Wagner, as they deal with changing restrictions. The learning is designed to improve health providers' comfort and confidence in perspective taking, empathic communication, and navigating times of uncertainty together with family caregivers.

COURSE GOALS

Upon completion of the full suite of Caregiver-Centered Care Education the learner will be well prepared to implement what they have learned to enhance their practice. We hope that learners will be inspired to complete all levels of the education and become a Caregiver-Centered Care Champion!

Upon completion of the education, learners will be able to:

- Respect, support, and meaningfully integrate family caregivers as partners in care (Foundational, Advanced, COVID-19)
- Assist family caregivers to maintain their care and own wellbeing (Foundational, Advanced, COVID-19)
- Model Caregiver-Centered Care in their practice/settings (Foundational, Advanced, COVID-19)
- Apply change management principles and practices to enhance overall organizational, community, and/or network desire and ability to practice Caregiver-Centered Care (Champions)

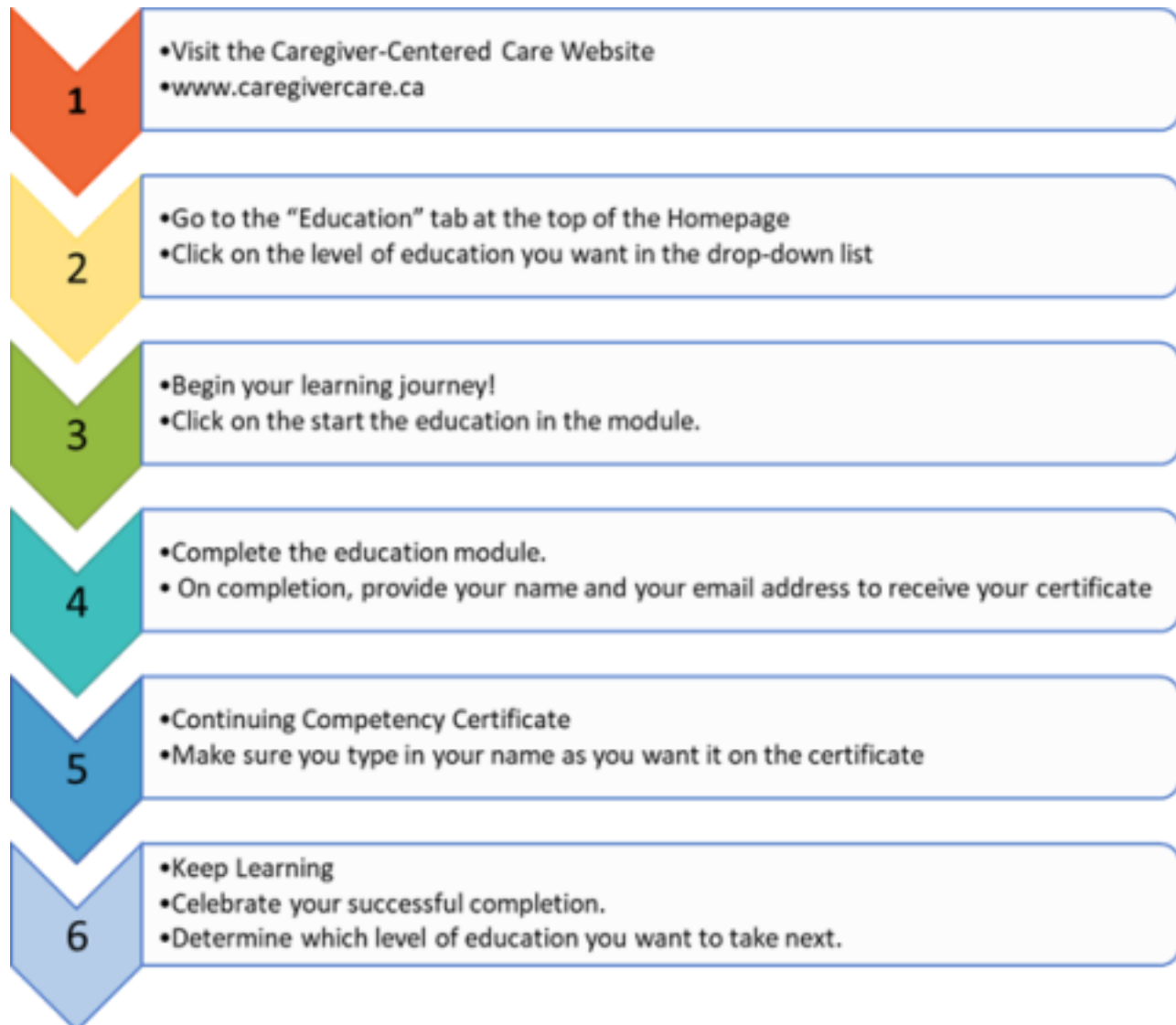
CERTIFICATES OF COMPLETION

Learners receive a Certificate of Completion after successfully completing the course content of each learning module.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Caregiver-Centered Care Education is designed for everyone who interacts with family caregivers, including healthcare students, individuals working in health and social care professions, health and social care leaders, and policymakers. Family caregivers also benefit from education. Anyone interested in knowing how to better support family caregivers is encouraged to enroll.

HOW TO ACCESS THE EDUCATION



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