



Canadian Academy of Health Sciences  
Académie canadienne des sciences de la santé

# Home and Community Care: Living with dementia - at the intersection of formal and informal care in Canada

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# Issues

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- Situating home care in Canada
- Three key policy and organizational challenges
  - Scopes of practice
  - Scheduling of services
  - “We share the care”: family/ informal carers
- Future challenges



# Situating Home Care in Canada

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- 2.6 million clients annually ( ↑ 55%: 2008-2012)
- ~36,000 home care workers
- Outside Canada Health Act: Mixed economy of care providers
- Changing landscape: service delivery more intense:
  - smaller # of clients receiving more hours of care
  - more specialized care ( ↑nursing, ↓housework)
  - Acute, post-hospital focus; move from prevention



# More than an a baker's dozen...

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- Patchwork: variable access, availability, costs, wait times: “a crapshoot” ; “checkerboard ... situation” (Seggewiss, *CMAJ*, 2009)
- “....where Canadians live, rather than what they need, determines access to services, residency requirements, the payment of user fees, and the continuity of service providers” (Shapiro, 2002, *Health Transition Fund Synthesis*).



# Scope – Schedule of Services

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- Scope of services:
  - Care Plans - Training
  - Client complex needs: ↑ “Delegation of task”
  - Task-shifting
- Scheduling of services
  - ‘Revolving door’ = many workers: one client
  - Threats to ‘relational’ aspects of care
  - Initiatives: Wages: cluster/ neighbourhood care



# Family & friends: Mind the Gap

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- 98% (sample 131,000 older adult home care clients) received assistance from informal caregiver (CIHI, 2010).
- Most caregivers are spouses and children (CIHI, 2010).
- Family and “informal” carers:
  - Assumed availability
  - “Private trouble” - Ignored in policy
  - System reactive not supportive



# The narrative – the challenge

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- Projected 68% of older people with dementia (~500,000) will live in their own homes by 2038—almost triple (ASC, 2010).
- Worker shortages: wage parity –residential care
- Initiatives: Home is Best™ (Fraser Health Authority, BC); “Home First” (Ontario), “Better at Home”