



CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
ELDER LAW

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Media Release

CCEL Announces Online Launch of Family Caregiving Study Paper

for immediate release

Vancouver, 24 June 2010—The British Columbia Law Institute and the Canadian Centre for Elder Law are pleased to announce the online launch of their study paper, *Care/Work: Law Reform to Support Family Caregivers to Balance Paid Work and Unpaid Caregiving*.

The study paper, generously funded by the Law Foundation of British Columbia, considers whether the law recognizes the value of unpaid family caregiving labour and examines to what extent the law assists British Columbians who are managing the double role of worker / caregiver.

Family caregivers look after aging parents, children with disabilities, people coping with mental health issues, addictions and chronic illnesses, cancer survivors, and individuals in post-surgical recovery. Family caregivers care for biological family members, as well as friends and neighbours. They provide a variety of services, including managing medication and appointments, assisting with intimate personal care, providing emotional support, assisting with mobility, shopping and housework, and preparing meals.

As the population ages, more and more British Columbians will find themselves caring for parents and grandparents. Recent statistics suggest that 80% of elder care is delivered through informal care arrangements and over 60% of adults with disabilities require the daily assistance of family members. Many adults are joining the “sandwich generation” who struggle to provide care simultaneously for both children and parents.

“Family caregivers face significant work-related consequences such as short-term and long-term poverty caused by a loss of employment income,” said Staff Lawyer Krista James. “Court decisions suggest a trend of not supporting workers who require workplace accommodation in order to balance work and care. Family caregiving saves the health care system a lot of money. It is time to question whether the law should provide caregivers with more job protection and greater benefits.”

The study paper identifies five areas in need of reform to better support family caregivers: employment law, human rights, tax policy, health policy and pensions.

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The study paper and its accompanying documents are available online at <http://www.bcli.org/ccel/publications/study-paper-family-caregiving>.

The Canadian Centre for Elder Law strives to be a leader in law reform by carrying out the best in scholarly law reform research and writing and the best in outreach relating to law reform as they relate to older adults.

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