



Facing the challenges of caregiving

You need to take care of yourself!

TO BETTER GUIDE YOU

**This brochure explains
the different stages
of caregiving and how
to obtain support.**

Understanding the different stages of caregiving

Each informal caregiver's experience is unique. Whether you're new to caregiving or have been a caregiver for some time, certain stages look the same for everyone and can come with their share of challenges.

Support is available at each of these stages.¹

Since you are receiving home care, it's likely you are at stage 4, 5, or 6.

1 Concerns about your loved one's health condition

You are noticing changes. You are asking questions. You are worried about the situation.

2 Finding information and services

You understand the situation better. You are learning about the illness, resources, rights, etc.

3 Moving toward a diagnosis

Appointments are piling up. Things are becoming clearer. Your role is becoming more demanding.

4 Setting up home care services

Assessment by the CLSC, start of home care, respite services, etc.

5 Deterioration in your loved one's health condition

Needs are increasing. Caregiver exhaustion is setting in. Support is becoming more complex.

6 Choosing a care facility

Staying at home is becoming difficult. You are starting to consider a care facility.

7 End of life and bereavement

A delicate, sometimes overwhelming time, fraught with emotion.

8 Your life after caregiving

Your role as informal caregiver comes to an end. You need to reconstruct your identity.

Acknowledging your struggles is the first step toward self-care

You are supporting your loved one to the best of your abilities. But being an informal caregiver often means taking on heavy responsibilities, which can become exhausting—physically and mentally.

Pay attention to your feelings and ask for help before you become overwhelmed. This will make sure you stay well enough to take care of your loved one with compassion and respect.

¹ Adapted from the care trajectory in [Le Guide de parcours et de soutien du proche aidant](#), by the Comité de soutien aux proches aidants ainés de Laval.

Being an informal caregiver can have positive effects:

- Feeling of pride
- Feeling of being useful
- Stronger relationship with your loved one

But it can also involve challenges:

- Guilt
- Helplessness
- Anxiety
- Exhaustion
- Sleep problems
- Self-neglect
- Overwhelm



Other resources

Info-Aidant, by L'Appui pour les proches aidants

A helpline that offers information and referrals to organizations in your community (personalized, free, confidential service).

1-855-852-7784

L'Appui pour les proches aidants

website, for resources and advice about your role as an informal caregiver.

lappui.org

Éducaloi's Practical Legal Tools guide,

for helpful information about the caregiving process.

educaloi.qc.ca/en/publications/caregivers-practical-legal-tools

Proche aide Québec

website, for information about the risks of caregiver mistreatment. procheaide.quebec/bientraitance/

[personne-proche-aidante](http://procheaide.quebec/bientraitance/personne-proche-aidante)

When the relationship becomes difficult

Your relationship with your loved one may be challenging at times. For example:

- Your loved one may refuse help or express fears about losing control.
- This may lead to mistreatment. Despite your best intentions, imposing your choices on your loved one can often affect their dignity and independence.
- You may also experience mistreatment as a caregiver. If you think this is happening to you, it is important to talk about it.

Managing risks: finding a realistic balance

Caregiving will always involve some degree of risk, even if you do your best to keep your loved one safe and sound.

For example, your loved one may fall, refuse care, or become confused. The goal is not to control every situation, but rather to help them with compassion, even when things don't go as planned.

Respecting your loved one's choices—even when you disagree—helps to maintain their dignity and independence.

Helpful resources at every stage

No matter what stage you're at, you don't have to face this alone. Accepting help is not a sign of failure or weakness—it's a way to support your loved one while also taking care of yourself.

The CLSC and community resources offer crucial support in your role as an informal caregiver. They can provide a range of services to meet your needs, without replacing you as the caregiver. Don't hesitate to contact your CLSC to discuss your situation.