

## For a better understanding

Some common definitions:

### Caregiver

Caregiver means any person who provides support to one or more members of their entourage who have a **temporary or permanent disability of a physical, psychological, psychosocial or other nature**, regardless of their age or living environment, and **with whom the person shares an emotional bond as a family member or otherwise**. The support provided is continuous or occasional, short or long term, and is offered on a non-professional basis, **in a free, informed and revocable manner**, with the particular aim of promoting the **recovery** of the person assisted and the **maintenance and improvement of their quality of life** at home or in other living environments. The support may take various forms, such as transportation, assistance with personal care and housekeeping, emotional support, or the organization of care and services. The support provided may also have financial **repercussions** for the caregiver or limit their ability to take care of their own physical and mental health or to assume their other social and family responsibilities (Government of Quebec, 2020).

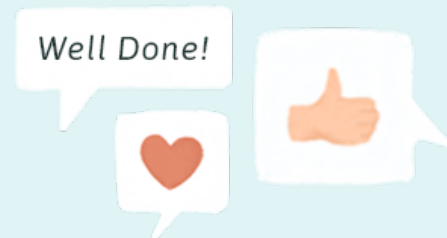
### Mistreatment

A caregiver may be mistreated in an **institution**, by someone in their **inner circle** or by the **person they care for**. It may manifest itself by voicing opinions on a caregiver's decisions and ways of doing things, by contesting their expertise, by imposing a role on them, by the absence of support or other help, etc. (Éthier S. et al. 2019).



## What does good treatment of caregivers entail?

Good treatment of caregivers is a **comprehensive support process**. Its aim is to promote their support, listen to their needs, and value their contribution, their experiences and their expertise in daily life in order to prevent mistreatment.



### What can I do?

- Acknowledge, identify the caregivers in your close circle
- Value caregivers and what they do
- Be kind to them, be patient with them and show them compassion
- Acknowledge their needs and their limits
- Encourage them to accept help for themselves and for the person they are caring for
- Make inquiries on the caregiver's behalf by contacting an organization in their region

## Caregivers need support too.

### RESOURCES

**AAA Line (Aide Abus Aînés)**  
1 888 489-2287

**Caregiver Support Line**  
1 855 852-7784

**L'APPUI Web Site**  
[www.lappui.org/en](http://www.lappui.org/en)

**Info-social Line**  
811

**To find your local organization:**  
**Regroupement des aidants naturels du Québec (RANQ)**  
[www.ranq.qc.ca](http://www.ranq.qc.ca) | 514 524-1959

A leaflet for **caregivers** and another for **community workers and health and social services professionals** are also available.



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## Treating Caregivers Well



## A Shared Responsibility!

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## Be aware that being a caregiver involves the risk of being mistreated!

Some examples of mistreatment:

### By those in their close circle (family, friends):

- Imposing (making obligatory) the role of caregiver on someone
- Opting out of providing care to the person requiring care
- Tolerating or ignoring behaviour that involves mistreatment by the person requiring care

### By the person being cared for:

- Hitting, brusqueness
- Using abusive, intimidating language
- Refusing care or services that would make the caregiver's task easier, etc.

### By the caregivers themselves (self-abuse):

- Burning out in performing the role
- Being too hard on themselves
- Feeling guilty, incompetent or feeling they are not doing enough
- Putting their own needs aside to prioritize those of the person requiring care, etc.

### Institutions (healthcare system and public, private and community organizations):

- Commenting on the caregiver's emotions or the way they do things
- Belittling their abilities when caring for the person requiring care
- Not forwarding the necessary information to accomplish their role
- Leaving the caregiver to cope with the healthcare system on their own, etc.

*Sometimes, we minimize our role as a caregiver. Family members might not think we need help and if we ask for it, they don't see the usefulness.*

*They doubt my observations and I don't feel listened to when I talk about my mother's illness.*

*My son came to take care of his father. That made me feel good.*

*Because my family reminds me that I said yes at the beginning, so I don't have room to negotiate this role now.*

*I received a nice gift, my brother paid me back a portion of the expenses for gas and parking.*

*I was offered some respite time as a caregiver, but I couldn't take it because the person I'm caring for didn't want anyone in the house. So now I'm exhausted and the family doesn't understand that I'm tired.*

*He looks like he needs help...*

*It's none of our business.*

*It's his choice!*

*Just because someone is ill doesn't mean they should be mean to me.*

  *\$#!?*

