

# Helping caregivers self-identify: strategies for professionals and practitioners

A **caregiver** is any person who provides support to one or more members of his or her circle living with a temporary or permanent physical, psychological, psychosocial or other incapacity. For more information about caregivers, see the [interactive infographic](#).



Self-identifying as a **caregiver** lets someone:



Better recognize their needs



Access support services






Feel less isolated

## NOTE:



Some people prefer to see themselves as a partner, sister, friend, parent, son, etc. rather than a “caregiver.” In these cases, **it is best not to impose any labels** but simply help the person recognize their role as caregiver and the importance of seeking help as needed.

## AS A PROFESSIONAL OR PRACTITIONER, you are in a position to help caregivers recognize the importance of their role.

Here are some suggestions:

- ➔  Find out more about caregivers and their realities (e.g., through the Observatory's [Knowledge portal](#))
- ➔  Take a few moments to encourage the caregiver to reflect on what it is they do for the person they assist, asking open-ended, non-judgmental questions aimed at stimulating dialogue.
- ➔  Check whether the caregiver has needs and, with their consent, refer them to specific caregiver support services
  - To find these services, see [L'Appui's Resource Directory](#) or the [Proche aide Québec member directory](#) [in French only]
  - For direct referrals: [Référence aide Québec](#) [in French only]

You can also:

- ➔  Share different forms of educational materials based on the interests of the caregiver and their family (e.g., [games](#), [videos](#), [podcast](#) [in French only])
- ➔  Invite the caregiver to complete a questionnaire on their role (e.g., [Quel type de pilier êtes-vous?](#), [Suis-je proche aidant?](#), [Êtes-vous proche aidante ?](#) [in French only])

Again, keep in mind that some people will be less inclined to see themselves as caregivers. These people will need special attention to ensure they receive the support they need.



**Women** are less apt to label themselves as caregivers since they already assume a large part of household domestic and care-related tasks.



**People who take care of a family member with a mental health disorder** may hesitate to call themselves caregivers for fear of the affiliated stigma.



**Parents of a special-needs child** may not think of themselves as caregivers since they see taking care of their child merely as part of their parental responsibilities.



Due to social and cultural norms, **people from diverse ethnocultural groups** may be less likely to identify as caregivers if they see taking care of family and community as something that is normal and expected.



**Young caregivers** may be reluctant to identify as caregivers from fear of being judged, of inadvertently causing harm to the person they care for or of being reported to youth protection authorities, who might separate them from their family.

## INFORMATION ON CAREGIVERS



Interactive infographic: What Is a Caregiver? Would You Know One to See One?  
**Quebec Observatory on Caregiving**



Knowledge portal  
**Quebec Observatory on Caregiving**



Report: *Caregiver Recognition and Self-Recognition: Challenges and Practices*  
**Quebec Observatory on Caregiving**

## REFERENCING



Resource Directory  
**L'Appui pour les proches aidants**



List of member organizations  
**Proche aidance Québec**



Direct referral platform [in French]  
**Référence aidance Québec**

## EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS



"Jeu des 7 familles" [in French]  
**L'Appui pour les proches aidants**



Videos [in French]  
**Regroupement des aidantes et aidants naturels de Montréal**



Podcast [in French]  
**L'Appui pour les proches aidants**

## QUESTIONNAIRES FOR CAREGIVERS



Quel type de pilier êtes-vous ? [in French]  
**L'Appui pour les proches aidants and member organizations**



Suis-je proche aidant ? [in French]  
**Regroupement des aidantes et aidants naturels de Montréal**



Êtes-vous proche aidant-e ? [in French]  
**Fondation Émergence**

