



FINAL REPORT MARCH 2005

Consultation on financial compensation initiatives for family caregivers of dependent adults.

Janice Keefe, Pamela Fancey & Sheri White

*Maritime Data Centre for Aging Research & Policy Analysis
Department of Family Studies & Gerontology
Mount Saint Vincent University*

An initiative of Theme 3, "Hidden Costs/Invisible Contributions: The Marginalization of Dependent Adults" Research Program.



Consultation on financial compensation initiatives for family caregivers of dependent adults.

FINAL REPORT MARCH 2005

Executive Summary

Janice Keefe, Pamela Fancey & Sheri White

*Maritime Data Centre for Aging Research & Policy Analysis
Department of Family Studies & Gerontology
Mount Saint Vincent University*



Acknowledgements

The consultation on financial compensation initiatives for family caregivers of dependent adults was held on November 8, 2004 in Ottawa. The idea grew out of discussions between researchers and partners within the policy theme of the *Hidden Costs/Invisible Contributions: The Marginalization of Dependent Adults* research program, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, about how to make our research results more relevant to the policy community. This resultant consultation was an additional activity, not part of the original project. It would not have come to fruition without the support of researchers, partners and staff of the HCIC project and interest, energy and financial commitment of others.

FIRST, an expression of thanks is extended to the representatives from national level government departments and agencies as well as organizations who willingly gave time from their busy schedules to attend. Their engagement and contribution to the discussion demonstrates their interest in policy development for Canada's caregivers.

SECOND, a thank you to those involved in the program - the facilitating skills of Susan Weagle, Director of Policy & Standards, NS Dept of Health, the comprehensive presentation by Lynn Friss Feinberg, National Centre on Caregiving, Family Caregiver Alliance (US) and the organizing skills of staff at the Maritime Data Centre for Aging Research and Policy Analysis, Mount Saint Vincent University. Combined these individuals ensured a well-organized and valuable experience for participants.

FINALLY, this event or the range of participants would not have been possible without the financial contributions of:

- Institute of Aging, Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Institute of Health Services & Policy Research, Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- A Healthy Balance: A Community Alliance for Health Research on Women's Unpaid Caregiving, a CIHR funded Community Alliance for Health Research



A Healthy Balance

A community alliance for health research on women's unpaid caregiving

Funded by: 



Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings of the “*Consultation on Financial Compensation Initiatives for Family Caregivers of Dependent Adults*” held on November 8, 2004 in Ottawa, Canada. The consultation was an opportunity for national level policy makers and stakeholder organizations to critically assess the strengths and limitations of other countries’ financial compensation programs and discuss their suitability for Canada’s caregivers. Countries reviewed include: Australia, France, Germany, Israel, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States.

The consultation format included plenary sessions, break out sessions, networking opportunities and a poster display. Policy Profiles developed for each of the ten countries were reviewed and discussed. The Profiles provided information on the country’s policy context and available financial compensation policies (*e.g. allowances, tax relief, paid leave, credits*).

Participants review of the countries’ policies suggest that financial compensation should be part of a menu of options, be broader than tax relief and also include labour policy to target employees with caregiving responsibilities. Also, an approach that considers immediate (*e.g. allowance, paid leave*) and longer term compensation (*e.g. pension credit*) should be considered. Ensuring adequate levels of compensation was noted so not to perpetuate caregiver poverty. Finally, differences in government jurisdictions were noted when reviewing the other countries. While some are administered nationally, others have national level legislation that is administered locally. Either model would prove challenging for Canada given its socio-political system.

Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom were the four countries identified with elements of most interest and relevance to the Canadian context. As well, carer allowances and pension credit schemes were identified as important policy options to examine further. Issues related to implementation of similar models/initiatives in Canada include: federal-provincial-territorial jurisdictional responsibility for health/social services, program financing, labour market structure and political will. To this end, participants identified further information needed on other countries’ approaches to support policy development in Canada. This includes: rationale, infrastructure, utilization, financing, integration with services, ethical considerations and evaluation.

The results from the in depth analysis will be transferred to key stakeholders during 2005-06 to help advance policy development on financial compensation in Canada.

The consultation was an initiative of the “*Hidden Costs/Invisible Contributions: The Marginalization of Dependent Adults*” research program and funded by CIHR’s Institute of Aging and Institute of Health Services and Policy Research and A Healthy Balance CIHR funded community alliance research program.

Maritime Data Centre for Aging Research & Policy Analysis
Department of Family Studies & Gerontology
Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, NS B3M 2J6
www.msvu.ca/mdcaging