



The Canadian Caregiving Policy Landscape

Patrik Marier

Professeur et titulaire de la Chaire de recherche de l'université Concordia
sur le vieillissement et les politiques publiques
Département de science politique

Directeur scientifique, Centre de recherche et d'expertise en gérontologie
sociale (CREGÉS), CIUSSS du Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal

Outline

- Defining Caregiving and its multiple challenges
- How these are expressed within the broader policy landscape
- Potential solutions

Caregivers



The term « **caregiver** » encompasses a large and varied group of people, many of whom do not even realize that there is a word to describe the daily tasks and responsibilities they are performing.

Caregivers (...) are family members or friends who provide regular support to someone with a physical, cognitive, or mental health condition.

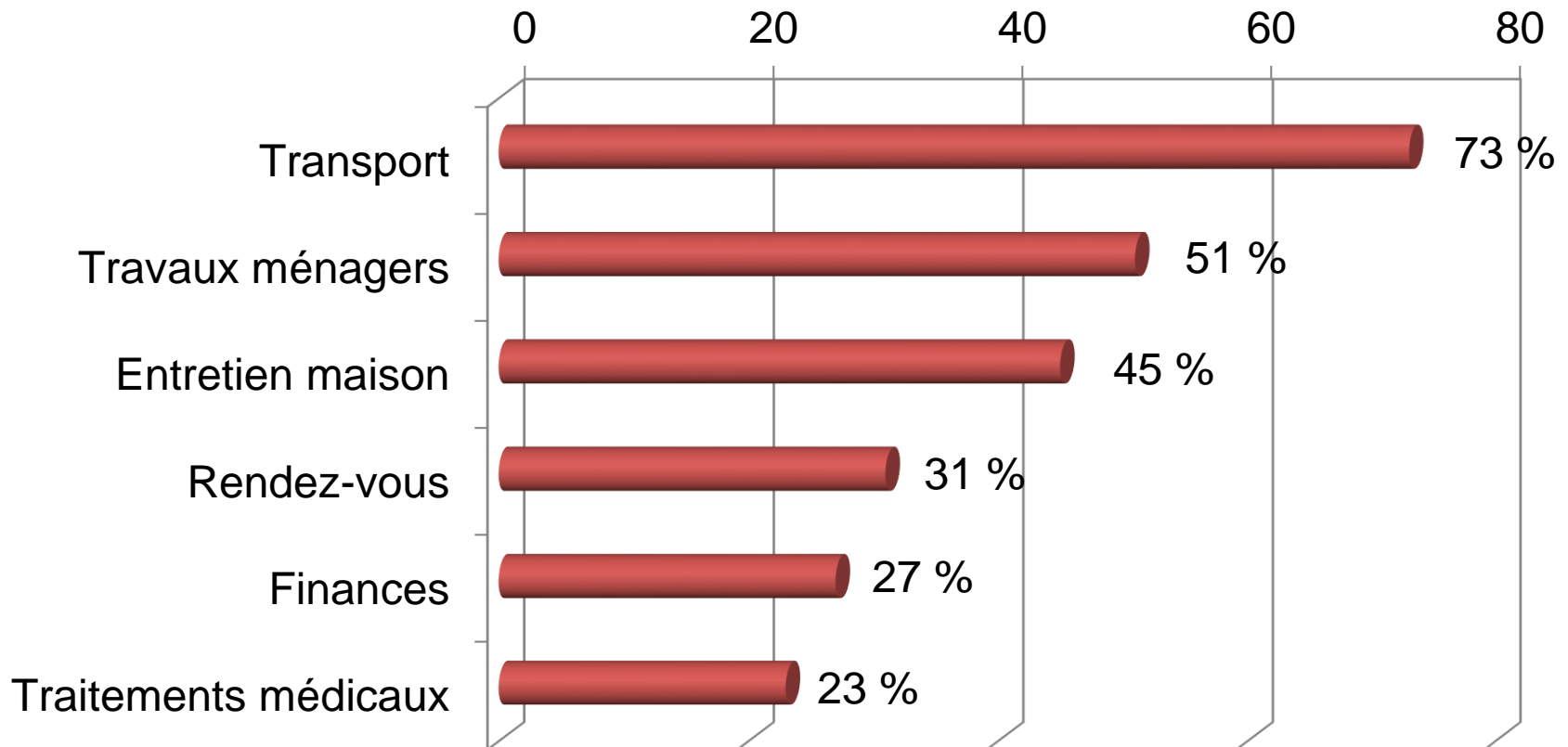
Silverman, Marjorie (2008). Counselling with caregivers. A guide for professionals. Les éditions remue-ménage.

Many Canadians provide care

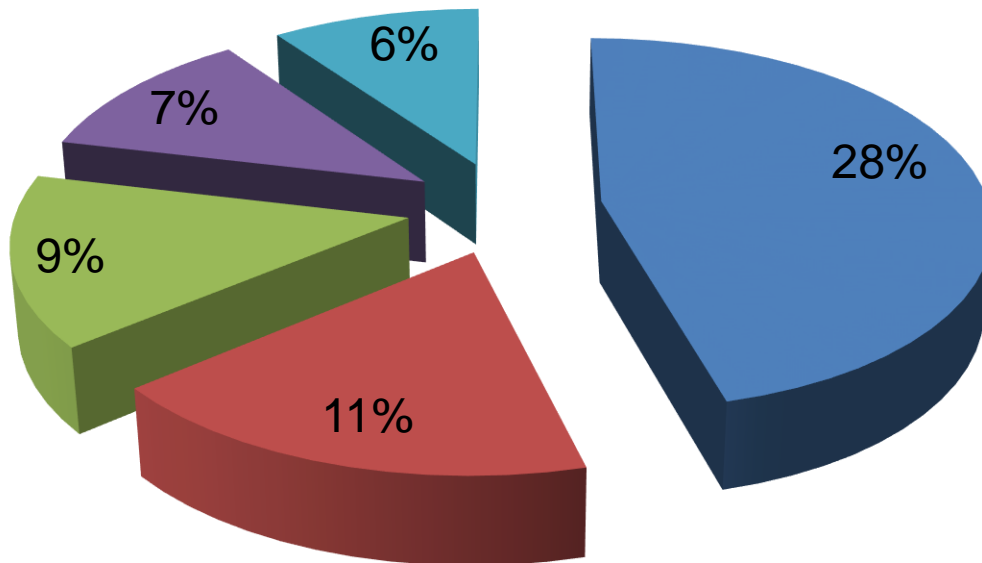


- 46% (13 millions) of Canadians have provided, throughout their lives, care to a friend or family member experiencing a long term health problem, some form of incapacity or issues related to aging.
- 28% have provided care within the last year

What services are caregivers providing?

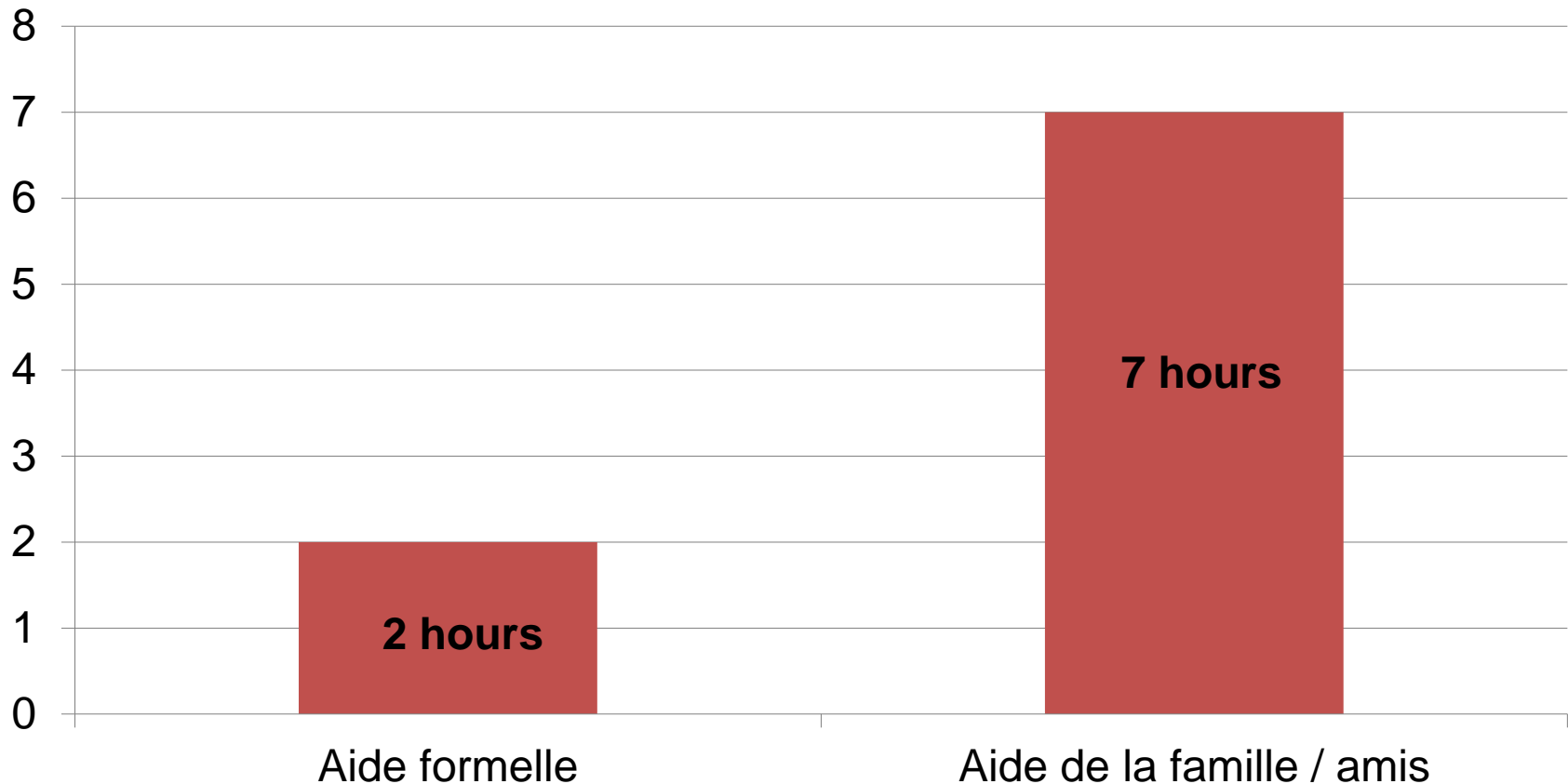


Why is care needed?

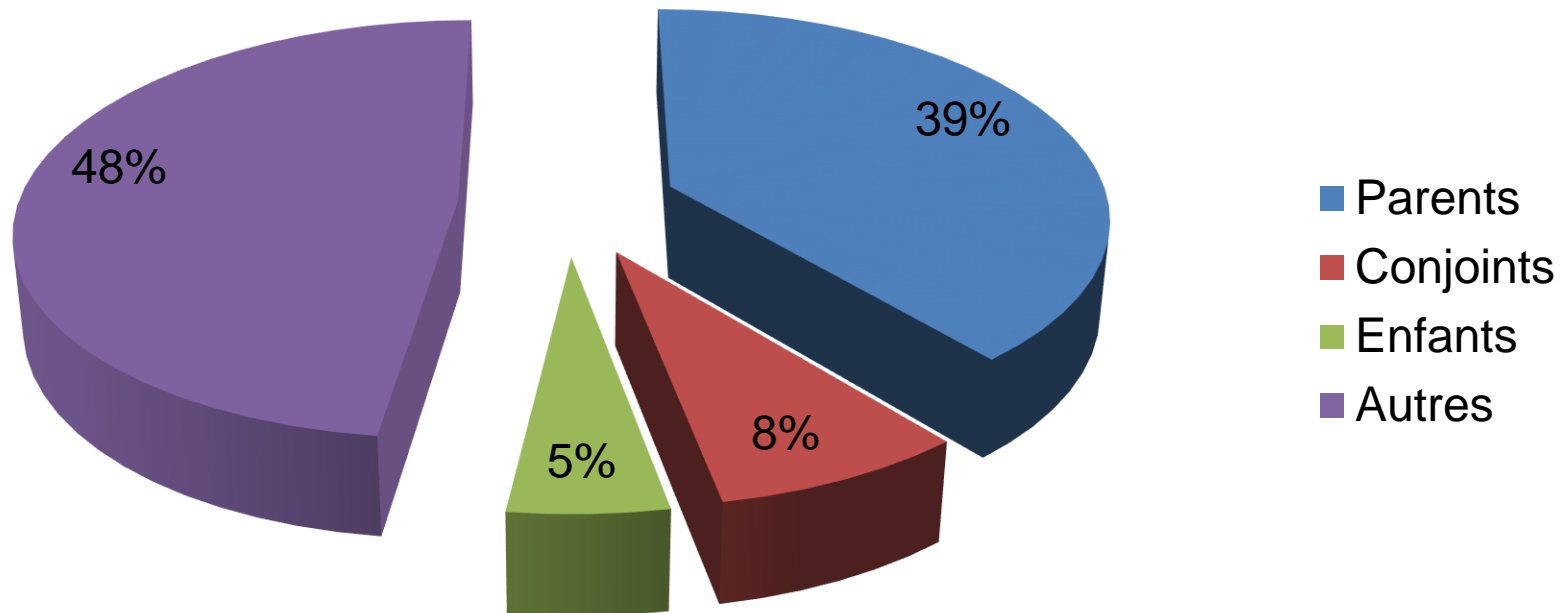


- Vieillissement
- Cancer
- Maladies cardiovasculaires
- Santé mentale
- Alzheimer / démence

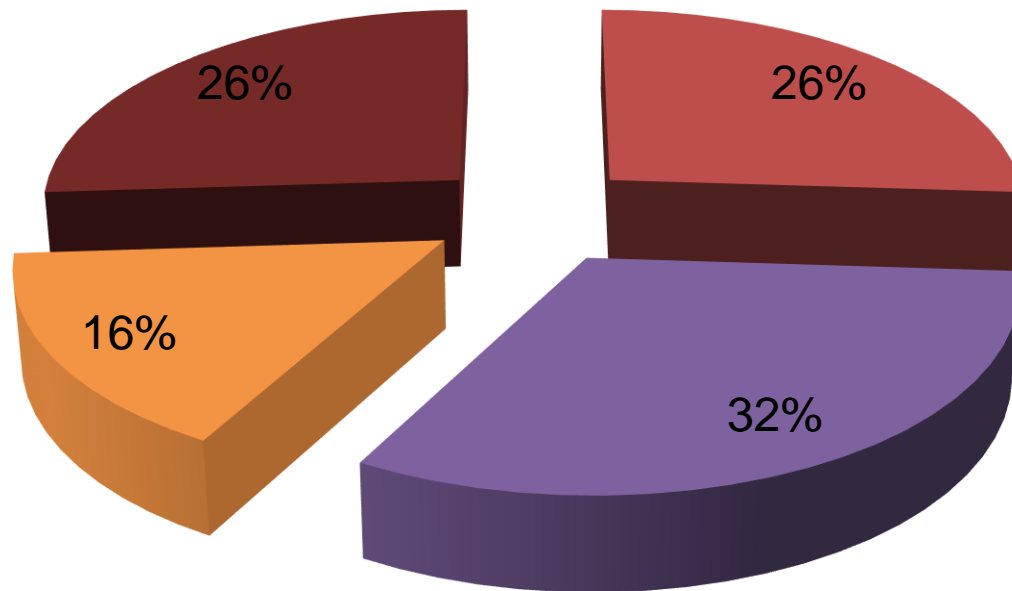
Where do care services originate from?



Who benefits from caregiving?



Number of hours per week



- Une heure ou moins
- 2 à 4 heures
- 5 à 9 heures
- plus de 9 heures

Consequences

- Personal
- Family relationships
- Health (physical and mental)
- Professional (career and LT benefits)
- Financial

Who should help?



Debate in the welfare state literature and in the political arena between:

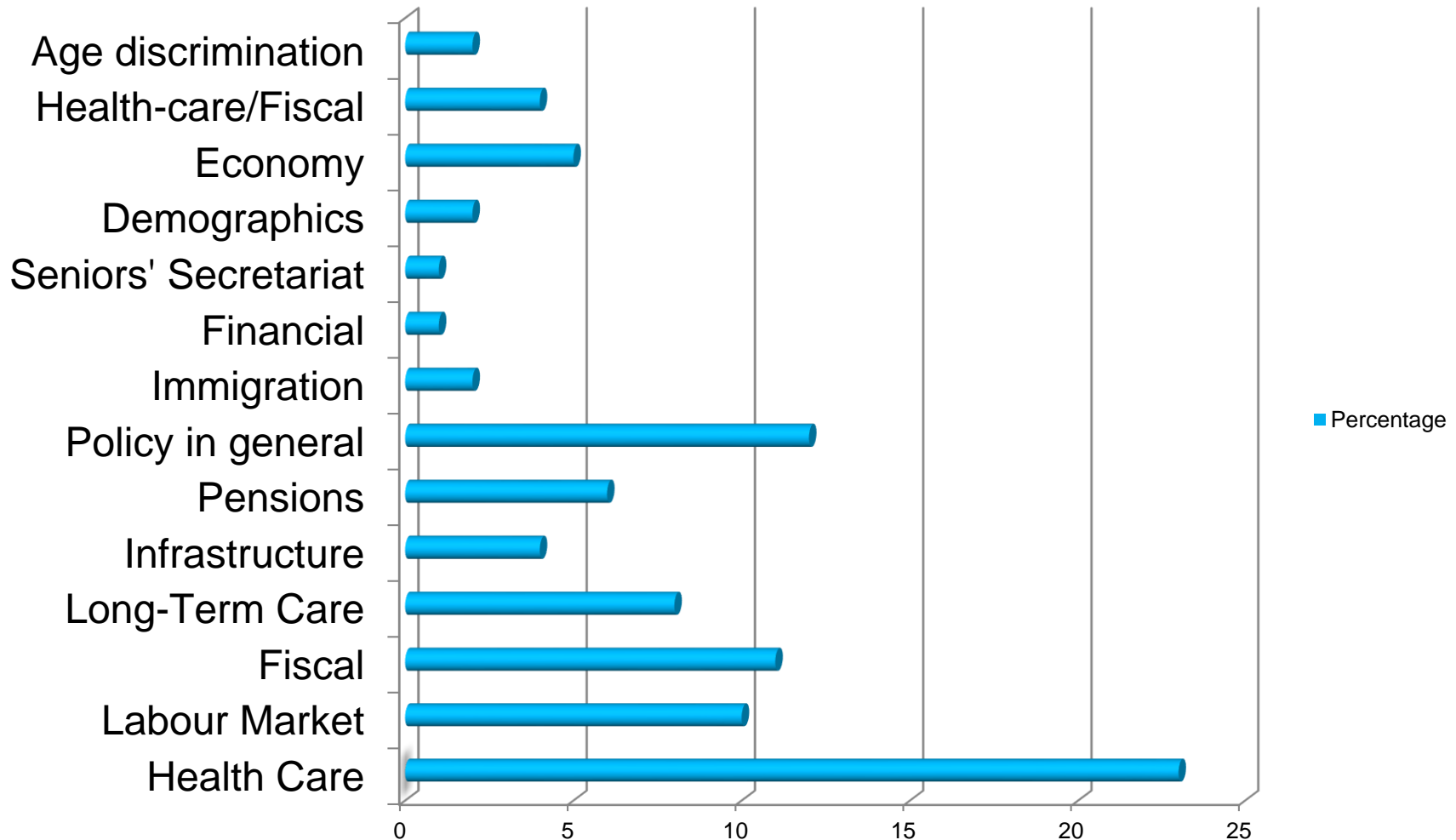
- Autonomists
 - Familialists
 - Individualists
-
- Implications on division of labour and the types of policy instruments deployed

Problem Recognition in Policy Debates

- The Importance of Problem Definition
- There is no real value system to rank the importance of policy problems or signs like a leaking roof!
- A Policy Problem needs to be first and foremost recognised **widely** to alter the policy agenda of governmental authorities.

To what extent is caregiving predominant as an issue in the policy agenda?

Policy Problems associated with Population Aging from 2000 to 2013, English Newspapers in Canada



Ignored just in Canada?

- Comparative Analysis of Five Francophone Dailies in three countries (Belgium, France, and Canada) (Marier and Van Pevenage, 2016) over 20 years.
- Only 254 articles = **2.54 articles** on average per newspaper per year!!!
- Only 18 articles in total discussed gender issues beyond one line. All except 2 in Quebec newspapers.
 - International Women's Day
 - 5 letters to the Editors

Consequences of Operating in a Biomedical Model

- The primacy of the biomedical model
 - Services prioritised on medical interventions, in a hospital setting
 - Legacy of the Canadian Health Care Act
 - Push for home care remains difficult and it continues to operate in a grey zone.
- Even the shift towards patient centred approaches is problematic for caregivers—

Caregivers in a Biomedical Model

- *Chez soi, premier choix* – recognition of caregivers as partners and volunteers...
 - Provide 85% of care needs for older adults (L'Appui, 2015).
 - But *les proches aidants sont “souvent traités davantage comme des aidants que des proches”* (Protectrice du citoyen, 2016: 91).
- But, still a lack of clarity on the nature of the partnership and its limitations...
- Lack of recognition across governmental departments

Conclusion: Que Faire?

- Accentuate the public pressure for a better recognition of the issue.
- Ensure a conversation and dialogue beyond the health based actors.
- Continue effort to better protect caregivers

patrik.marier@concordia.ca