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NEWS RELEASE

Canada needs a comprehensive home care system

Montreal – Canadian governments need to plan how they will address the increasing care needs of an aging population, particularly as they prepare to renew the federal provincial health accord in 2014.

“Developing a comprehensive long-term home care system is both necessary and cost-effective. It is the most appropriate option for an aging society,” argues a new study published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy.

In *Population Aging and the Evolving Care Needs of Older Canadians: An Overview of the Policy Challenges*, author and gerontologist Neena Chappell analyzes the main health and social policy challenges raised by population aging in the areas of informal care, formal care and prevention.

“The current health care system provides services to dependent elderly Canadians only when family care is unavailable or insufficient,” Chappell notes.

“But in the coming years, more seniors will struggle to find the care they need. Lower fertility rates, increasing rates of divorce, remarriage and blended families may also affect the availability of informal care.”

Canada needs a formal, long-term home care system that is integrated with other services – such as health and social support, residential care and certain community services – so that individuals who need care do not fall through the cracks and can easily move from one service to the next whenever necessary, according to Chappell.

“The long-term home care system also needs to link and partner with the community to form a support network for informal caregivers and care recipients.”

This study is the first in a series of IRPP studies that will focus on seniors’ care issues. Later this fall, a study by **Harvey Lazar** examines the federal government’s role in the provision of care for seniors, and **Janice Keefe’s** study looks more specifically at the policy challenges with regards to support for family caregivers.

Population Aging and the Evolving Care Needs of Older Canadians: An Overview of the Policy Challenges can be downloaded free of charge from the Institute's Web site (www.irpp.org).

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