

DRAFT

Dear editor

I want to reassure readers that the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) continues to be an important part of our immigration system. In fact, in 2012, we anticipate some 9,000 people will obtain permanent residence through this program. The vast majority will then go on to become Canadian citizens.

The Program helps Canadians to recruit caregivers to provide child care, senior support care or care of a disabled person in their home. The Live-in Caregiver Program facilitates the entry of qualified caregivers into Canada when there is a shortage of Canadians or permanent residents to fill these positions.

The program is unique in that these temporary foreign workers are allowed to apply for permanent residence after completing just two years of work as live-in caregivers.

In setting admissions targets, Citizenship and Immigration Canada takes several factors into account. For example, we know that the vast majority of live-in caregivers apply for permanent residence and initiate an application for themselves and their dependents after completing at least two years of authorized full-time work within four years of their arrival in Canada. Therefore, as the number of new entries of these workers goes up or down, the number of them who then go on to permanent residence follows.

Last year, more live-in caregivers and their family members became permanent residents than ever before, nearly 14,000 in all. That's more than double the number of permanent residents who entered through the program in 2006.

But the number of caregivers entering as temporary foreign workers has been on the decline since peaking at approximately 13,800 in 2007. Only 8,400 live-in caregivers entered Canada as temporary foreign workers in 2010.

As a result of the decline, the number of permanent resident applications from caregivers received by CIC began to drop off in 2010. Our immigration plan for 2012 reflects that decrease in demand and should line up well with the anticipated number of permanent resident applications we are expecting in coming years.

I also want to note a number of improvements to the program to better protect live-in caregivers and facilitate their transition to permanent residence.

Employers are now obliged to provide paid benefits including: transportation to Canada; private medical coverage until caregivers are eligible for provincial health coverage; workplace safety insurance; and all recruitment fees charged for hiring a live-in caregivers. Given these new requirements, it is anticipated that only serious employers are now using the program.