

# Care Census: Understanding Caregiving and the Work Environment



## A Crisis of Care

*The Caring Company*, a report from the **Harvard Business School**, sparked a national conversation on the topic of caregiving in the workplace. The report noted that in less than 15 years, people age 65 and older will outnumber those age 18 and under. Additional demographic shifts already underway will have far-reaching effects on the working-age population:

- by 2025, more than one in four Ohioans will be age 60 or older
- more than one in six working Americans is an elder caregiver
- a shortage of home health workers is placing extra burden on family caregivers
- women make up a significant portion of the workforce while also shouldering a majority of caregiving responsibilities

**The data point to a truth that employers cannot afford to ignore:** More and more employees are being called to serve as caregivers for older loved ones and 70% of these caregivers suffer work-related difficulties due to their dual roles. They take time off, forego promotions, cut back hours or leave the workforce altogether. The financial impact to employees and employers is staggering: annually, employees lose up to **\$3 trillion in wages and benefits** while employers lose **\$17-33 billion due to absenteeism and turnover**.

## A Care Census

The Harvard report noted, *"employers do not measure and thus do not realize the extent to which employees are burdened by care."* The report urged businesses to conduct a **'care census'** to better understand the scope and impact of employees' caregiving responsibilities.

In 2019, Council on Aging (COA) conducted a Care Census of nearly 1,000 local employees to better understand the impact of caregiving in the workplace. **Council on Aging's Care Census:**

- helped employers gain an understanding of the current and future impact of caregiving on the workforce
- provided valuable insight to help shape policies, programs and planning to create a culture of care within each organization
- connected employers and employees to community resources that support working caregivers and help them remain fully engaged in the workplace
- created on-going partnerships between COA and area employers to support working caregivers and the local economy

### **How Council on Aging can support area employers and their caregiver employees:**

- Present directly to your employees about programs and support to help manage caregiving responsibilities.
- Participate in health and wellness events hosted by your organization for your employees.
- Share data from our Care Census and other sources with your leadership team to increase their knowledge and awareness of the impact of elder caregiving on our regional workforce.
- Provide COA brochures and fact sheets to distribute in your organization or provide educational content for your employee intranet and newsletters.
- Offer innovative training and education opportunities for family caregivers to reduce stress, increase empathy and improve caregiving skills and knowledge.
- Provide one-one-one support for family and volunteer caregivers.

Contact [Lisa Kruse](#) for more information.

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## 952 Total Respondents (50%)

29% Male, 68% Female

2% Prefer not to answer

### EMOTIONAL/ACTUAL WORK IMPACT\*

Do you provide support, help or care for an older family member?  
(Of no, 81% foresee a time when they will have to provide)



Top ways we help our aging loved one:  
(84% indicate providing 10 hours or less per week)



Errands and/or grocery shopping (66%)



Attending medical or other appointments (62%)



Transportation (52%)



Paying bills and managing paperwork (46%)

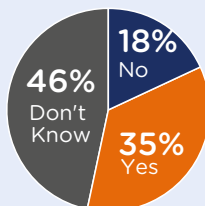
#### Top ways that Caregiving has impacted me:

- I have taken time off work (64%)
- I have cut back or postponed personal things that I enjoy doing (56%)
- I feel fatigued, stressed/unhappy (44%)
- While I'm at work, I worry about my family member (43%)

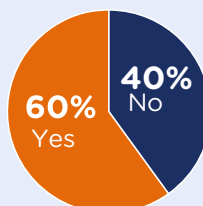
\*All answers provided based on respondents who currently provide care.

### ACCESS TO RESOURCES

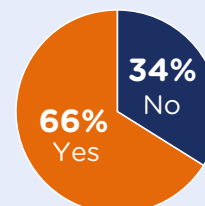
Does your employer provide caregiving resources?



Are you aware of local organizations that help seniors or caregivers?



Do you know anyone in your company caring for family?



### OPPORTUNITIES



Does your employer have a relationship with COA?

- I don't know (58%)

I would like my employer to partner with COA to offer the following:

- A presentation about resources **58%**
- A workshop series (43%)