

Working Caregivers



- Understand the issue
- Learn strategies to support caregivers in the workplace

Emily Farah Miller
emily@tcaging.org
651-245-2927

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Demographics

- ◆ Increased numbers of older adults
- ◆ Smaller family size
- ◆ Dispersed families
- ◆ Increased numbers of people living alone
- ◆ Workforce growing smaller



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Between 2010 and 2035

- ◆ Between 2010 and 2035
 - Number of Minnesotans age 65+ will more than double, 677,000 to 1.4 million.
 - Number of Minnesotans age 85+ will more than double, 222,000.
- ◆ In 1940, average family had 3.8 members
- ◆ In 2000, ave. family had 3.1 members
- ◆ By 2040, ave. family will have 2.8 members



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Family Caregivers

- ◆ A family member, friend, or neighbor who takes care of a frail or disabled older person.
- ◆ Dressing, feeding, bathing, grocery shopping, transportation, handling finances, medication management, attending dr. appointments
- ◆ Amount of care needs depends on the individual receiving care and can be unpredictable



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Caregivers in MN

- ◆ In 2006, 610,000 family caregivers
- ◆ 16% of Minnesotans age 18 and older provide care and support to an adult family member
- ◆ 60% of caregivers are working, most full time
- ◆ Typical caregiver in MN:
 - 46 year old female caring for a 77 year old female



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Burdens Associated with Caregiving

- ◆ Time deficits
- ◆ Emotional strain
- ◆ Health problems
- ◆ Mental health problems
- ◆ Financial burdens
- ◆ Retirement insecurity



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Caregivers in the Workplace

- ◆ % of adult children providing care to a parent has more than tripled over the past 15 years.
- ◆ Total estimated aggregate lost wages, pensions, and SS benefits of these caregivers is nearly \$3 trillion.
- ◆ Large % of working caregivers are still raising children, some raising grandchildren



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Working Caregivers Face Financial Burdens

- ◆ More than **one-third** of adults leave the workforce or reduce their hours worked once they begin caregiving duties
- ◆ Forego advancement opportunities
- ◆ Take unpaid leave
- ◆ Incur expenses providing care to family member (\$5,600 annually)



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Challenging to Balance Work and Caregiving

- ◆ Americans who work a full-time job and care for an elderly or disabled family member, relative, or friend, suffer from poorer physical health than those who work a full-time job but do not have caregiving responsibilities.
- ◆ Stress, anxiety, depression
- ◆ Neglect self care
- ◆ Physical health problems



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Employers Experience Costs

- ◆ Health care costs increase as employee health/wellness decrease
 - Additional 8% in health care costs for employers
- ◆ Increase in chronic and acute health care costs
- ◆ Costs in productivity



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Employers Experience Costs

- ◆ Companies are losing upward of \$17 billion a year due to caregiving employees.
- ◆ On average, a loss of \$2,441 annually, for each employee who is a full-time employed "intense" caregiver
- ◆ Absenteeism
 - 60% of caregivers report arriving late to work, leaving work early, or taking time off to provide care for a family member



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Employers Experience Costs

- ◆ Costs associated with:
 - Workday interruptions
 - Eldercare crisis
 - Increase in hours a supervisory may spend supervising a caregiving employee
 - Unpaid leave/reduction of hours
 - Replacing employees



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Growing Challenge

- ◆ Without support, caregiving may further weaken a workforce already compromised by retiring baby boomers.
- ◆ Helping employees handle the stresses of caregiving will help them remain productive members of the workforce.



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Policies

- ◆ FMLA
- ◆ Employer Best Practices for Workers with Caregiving Responsibilities
www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/caregiver-best-practices.html
- ◆ Enforcement Guidance on Unlawful Disparate Treatment of Workers with Caregiving Responsibilities
<http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/caregiving.html>



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Best Practices in Workplace Eldercare

- ◆ Technology (intranet and web services)
 - informational and support services
 - market existing offerings
- ◆ Move away from “full service” work family vendor to vendor that offers eldercare programs
www.caregiving.org/pdf/research/BestPracticesEldercareFINAL.pdf



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Best Practices in Workplace Eldercare

- ◆ **Discounted backup home care for emergencies.**
The discounted rate for in-home care was \$4 to \$6 per hour, and the number of hours of care available at the subsidized rate varied by employer.
- ◆ **Help with insurance paperwork** and information about Medicare, Medicaid and other insurance policies for employees, their parents/parents in law at no charge
- ◆ **Paid time off** and flexible approaches to time off.
- ◆ **Elder care resource and referral services**, including geriatric care management services.



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However.....

While the percentage of working caregivers is increasing, there has been a steady decrease in the proportion of employers with elder care programs following the 2008 recession.



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Increase in working caregivers, decrease in elder care programs

- ◆ 2% offered access to elder care backup services, down from 4% in 2007.
- ◆ 9% offered referral service, down from 22% in 2007.
- ◆ 11% offered care leave above federal FMLA leave, and 11% offered leave above state family leave; down from 16% and 14% , respectively, in 2007.



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First steps

- ◆ Raising the issue
- ◆ Understand your workforce and their needs
- ◆ Inventory existing services, policies, benefits
- ◆ Strategies to utilize what is available
- ◆ *Supportive supervisors who encourage employees to be proactive in balancing work-family may be the most important factor in an employees decision to use workplace programs.*



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Supporting Employees

- ◆ Allow employees to take longer lunch breaks
- ◆ Access to phone or email
- ◆ Parking space near work
- ◆ Caregiving/health fairs
- ◆ Flexible work hours
- ◆ Working from home
- ◆ On site seminars
- ◆ Webinars
- ◆ Support groups
- ◆ Geriatric care manager, insurance specialists, elder law
- ◆ Information, referral



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Supporting Employees

- ◆ Caregiving coffee breaks
- ◆ Caregiver support conference calls
- ◆ Manager and Supervisor training
- ◆ Make programs and policies available to all employees, not one category
- ◆ On going marketing to ensure employees are aware of what is available



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Psychologically Healthy Workplace

- Organizations are implementing programs and policies that foster employee health and well-being while enhancing organizational performance.
- Psychologically Healthy Workplace Program
- <http://www.phwa.org/>



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Employee Wellness

- Keep employees healthy.
- Play up existing benefits and how they can support caregivers.
- Remind employees to receive regular check up, flu shots and other preventative services when they are taking care of someone else.



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Women's Issue

- ◆ In Minnesota,
 - 84% of women 45-54 work (US ave. 74%)
 - 68% of women 55-64 work (US ave. 57%)
- ◆ Women are more likely to leave their jobs once they begin to provide care than to reduce the hours they work.



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Changing Demographics/Aging

- ♦ *"It used to be that people died in their 70s. Now they're dying in their 90s and 100s. So we have people who are either leaving the workforce to go take care of a loved one or they're missing a lot of days of work, taking unpaid leaves of absence, and it's adding up."*



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Additional Considerations

- ♦ Increased numbers of male caregivers
- ♦ Multiple caregiving responsibilities / Multigenerational
<http://www.gu.org/OURWORK/Multigenerational.aspx>
- ♦ Iraq and Afghanistan veterans
- ♦ Caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease
<http://www.workingmother.com/research-institute/women-and-alzheimers-disease-caregivers-crisis>
- ♦ Consider programs that help employees plan for caregiving responsibilities



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Where to begin? Awareness

www.whatisacaregiver.org



- ♦ National Family Caregivers month (Nov)
- ♦ Take an Elder to Work Day
- ♦ National Work and Family month (Oct)
- ♦ Intranet postings before and after the holidays; Mother's/Father's days



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More Awareness Ideas

- ◆ Start Seeing Caregivers (Nov 2011)
 - Hennepin County Gallery
 - Exhibit profiled Hennepin County employees who are caregivers
 - Offered resources to help caregivers
 - <http://www.hennepin.us/hennepingallery>



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Education, Services, Type of Caregiver

- ◆ Pick an issue and provide education
 - Alzheimer's disease, End of life
- ◆ Identify a service for the care receiver
 - Respite, Meals on Wheels, Companion program
- ◆ Focus on a type of caregiver
 - Long distance, LGBT, male



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Help for Employees

- ◆ MinnesotaHelp.info
www.minnesotahelp.info
- ◆ Senior LinkAge Line® is a free state-wide telephone information and assistance service for older adults and their families to find community resources.
1-800-333-2433



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