

Employer Engagement - Supporting Working Caregivers



PRESENTERS:

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Wisconsin Family & Caregiver Support Alliance

Working Together to Find Solutions



The Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance partners with businesses and organizations throughout Wisconsin to:

1. Increase Outreach and Awareness
2. Promote Policy and Advocacy Efforts
3. Improve Systems Navigation and Access
4. Expand Family and Caregiver Support
5. Strengthen Community Support



Our Vision Statement:

People of all ages and abilities, their families, and caregivers will have the supports needed to live and be included in their communities.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to raise awareness of family and caregiver support needs and increase the availability of and access to services and supports (both paid and unpaid) which will keep people across the lifespan engaged in their community as long as they desire.

Membership:

Disability and Aging advocacy groups and organizations are invited to become members and get involved with the Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance. The WFACSA does not engage in lobbying activities but seeks to educate its members about public policy and other issues related to improved supports for caregivers.

If you would like to join WFACSA as an organizational or individual member, copy and paste this link: https://wisconsincaregiver.org/_data/media/51/wfacsa-membership-application-53123.pdf

Or email wfacsa@gmail.com.

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Outline for Today

- Why employer support is essential for family caregivers
- How WDRN members can use the HR CareKit to promote workplace improvements for family caregivers
- National and local resources to help advocate for change



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Here's How People Managers Can Support Employees Who Are Caregivers

Research shows that managers often play a key role in helping employees feel supported at work.

By Lisa Rebasca Roepe
February 7, 2023

Caregiver is the fastest-growing employee group, with 73 percent of all employees having some type of current caregiving responsibility, according to a recent Harvard Business School study (https://www.hbs.edu/managing-the-future-of-work/Documents/The_Caring_Company.pdf) titled *The Caring Company*. Many employees are not just caring for a child but also for an elderly parent or a family member with a disability.

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/people-managers/pages/how-to-support-caregivers.aspx>



Why?

- 'Caregiver' is the fastest growing employee group
- 73% of all employees have some type of current caregiving responsibility
- Employees aren't just caring for their own young children – 'Sandwich Generation'
- Employment dropped almost 8 percent for workers who became caregivers

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#FACT

Between now and 2040, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services estimated that the number of people living with dementia in their homes will increase by 86.8%.

#FACT

According to the 2023 Alzheimer's Association Facts and Figures report, 120,000 people aged 65 and older are currently living with Alzheimer's in Wisconsin.

#FACT

Wisconsin's 191,000 family caregivers provide a combined **213 million hours of unpaid care**, a value of nearly \$4 billion. **Nearly 60% also work a paying job. Even more workers are providing care for a child with disabilities or other special healthcare needs.**



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Studies show...

- Employers who are aware of the needs of working caregivers and how to support them can reduce hidden costs (turnover costs, loss of institutional knowledge, loss of productivity) and increase productivity, employee retention, and improve recruitment efforts. *Harvard Business School
- Studies in other states recommend assessing needs of caregivers in the workplace and exploring different policies and resources to support working caregivers. *Massachusetts Business Roundtable; New York Office on Aging
- Caregivers seldom use FMLA. *WFCSA study – Feb 2021
- Caregivers also reported that they felt they could continue meeting their work and home responsibilities for longer with just a little more help. *WFCSA study – Feb 2021

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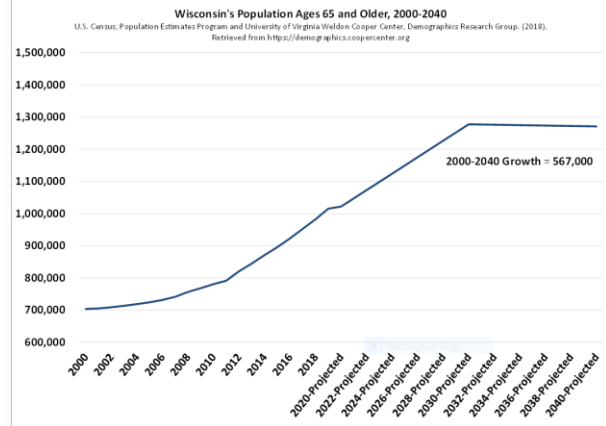
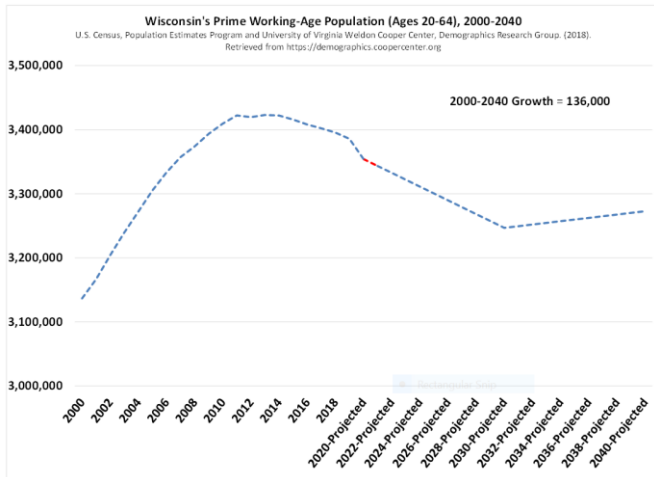
HRCareKit: A tool you can use!

Contains:

- National and local data to support outreach efforts
- Real stories from workers impacted by family caregiving
- Tips to support caregivers in your own organization



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Wisconsin's Workforce vs. Aging Population

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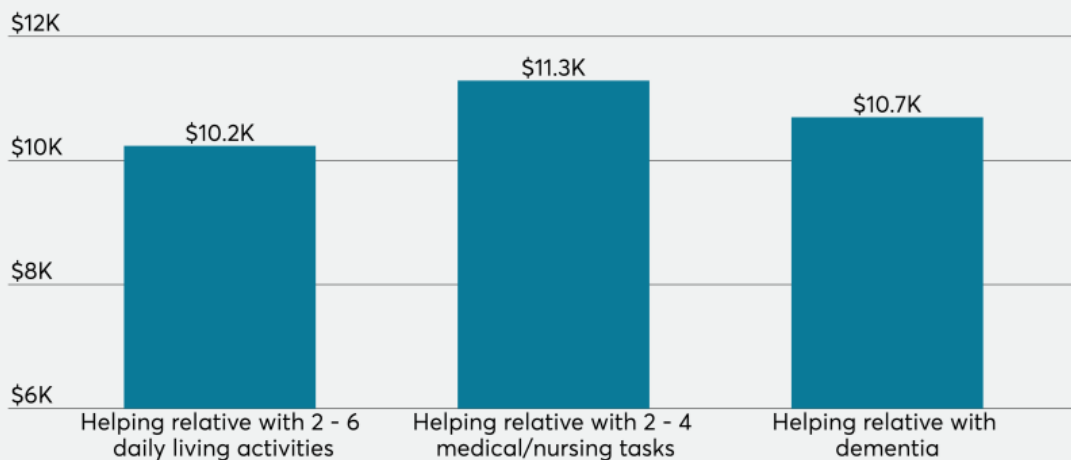
You know you are a caregiver if you...

- Take someone to medical or therapy appointments,
- Do grocery shopping or food preparation for someone who is unable,
- Provide financial management services,
- Provide personal care such as toileting, feeding, transferring, grooming, dressing, housekeeping, etc. or
- Provide breaks or respite for someone who is the primary caregiver



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Caregivers annual out-of-pocket expenses



Source: AARP

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What do you know about your employees?

Use this FREE Employed Caregiver Survey from UW-Extension to learn about the growing needs of employees who have family caregiving responsibilities.



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Emphasize the Role of Supervisors

Supervisors play an important role and significantly impact how any employee experiences stress.

Supervisors set the tone for an organization, either helping or impeding an employee's ability to maintain balance between their work life and caregiving responsibilities.

Training for supervisors that instructs how to respond with empathy and concern retains valued employees.

FUTURE CAREGIVERS



Factors that promote caregiver well-being:

- A positive supervisor relationship
- Work from home capabilities
- Resources offered through employers
- Flexible hours

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Where does your company stand?

	Core	Comprehensive	Advanced	My Company	To Do
Caregiver resource list A list of public resources an employee caregiver can access, including financial planning and elder law assistance, directories of home care agencies, community-based services such as adult day care, and downloadable apps.	*	*	*		
Paid sick days that can also be used for employee or to care for a relative	*	*	*		
Support groups for caregivers — led by experts or fellow caregivers Employees can offer space and time for caregiving employees to meet, share resources and get support from one another. Some companies have such groups led by experts.	*	*	*		
In-house stress-reduction programs: Yoga, meditation, massage discounts Yoga, meditation, massage and other types of stress reduction activities can help caregivers who are dealing with burnout or anxiety — and for employees in general. Some companies have the resources to provide such activities in house, while others can negotiate employee discounts.	*	*	*		
Discounts for yoga, meditation and massages arranged with outside vendors					
On-line or in-person coaching to assist in developing a care plan Employees often need information and help specific to their caregiving situation as well as general assistance in navigating the world of caregiving.		*	*		
Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with caregiver resources EAPs can offer caregiving-specific information, guidance and support to employees.		*	*		
FMLA (including help with filling out forms, etc.)		*	*		
Paid family leave		*	*		

See page 4 in HR Cares Kit for complete assessment

Identifying Strategies for Your Own Organization

Now it's your turn. Use the worksheet below to reflect on your own organization and identify next steps to help support your caregiving employees.

What stands out in the report? How many employees in our organization are caregivers, and how is it impacting their work-life?	
What resources are currently available to support caregiving employees?	
Are caregiving employees using these resources? If not, why not? What can we change to make our programs and resources more accessible?	
What other needs are we seeing among caregiving employees? What programs or initiatives could we implement to meet those needs?	
What will we do first? Create a SMART goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bounded)	
How will we measure whether these changes are having a positive impact on our employees and organization?	

BUILDING A STRATEGY

Individualized by each company to fit employees' needs



Promega

**Exemplary Employer
of employed caregivers**

Diana Clark
Benefits Manager Human Resources
Promega Corporation

**TOP WORK PLACES
2023**
USA

**TOP WORK PLACES
2023**
WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL
MADISON.COM

**Going Big:
Promega's Business Success with Working
Caregivers**

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Seven Ideas from Wisconsin Employers

1. Offer education and brainstorming sessions to solicit ideas from employees.
2. Provide a tool (newsletter, website, electronic bulletin board) for caregivers to post their needs.
3. Establish a volunteer 'job board' for employees interested in helping fellow employees with caregiving tasks.
4. Contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center to learn what family caregiver supports are available in the community.
5. Organize a Resource Fair for all employees and invite local caregiving providers to exhibit.
6. Start an ERG (Employee Resource Group) for caregivers where they can connect with one another at work.
7. Provide information to employees about Trualta, an online training and education community provided FREE to all Wisconsin caregivers. Free access is available at <https://wisconsin caregiver.trualta.com/login>



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National Studies and Resources

“The Caring Company: How employers can help employees manage their caregiving responsibilities while reducing costs and increasing productivity” — Harvard Business School This report identified hidden costs associated with caregiving such as turnover costs, loss of institutional knowledge, and temporary hiring and overtime.

<https://www.hbs.edu/managing-the-future-of-work/research/Pages/the-caring-company.aspx>

“Caregivers in the Workplace: Finding Balance for Your Employees” — New York State Office for Aging and the New York State Department of Labor Recommends assessing the needs of caregivers in the workplace, exploring perceptions on how caregiving affects work, ideas/suggestions on how to support caregivers. They also recommend reviewing policies in the workplace related to caregiving and training for managers. <https://aging.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/07/caregivers-in-workplace-guide-2022.pdf>

AARP offers many publications and educational opportunities specifically for caregivers. These resources are offered in several different languages, and for different groups such as military families and LGBTQ families. You can find AARP Family Caregiver Support resources here:

<https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/prepare-to-care-planning-guide/>

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Take-Aways



Caregiving is an issue that will be with us for decades to come.

Employees are more productive and stay longer when they feel valued.

Work-life balance matters. Model it. Support it. Have a strategy.

Offer some level of flexibility.

Make it safe to come to managers with caregiving concerns.

Integrate caregiver supports into the work culture, benefits, and systems.

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Questions?



Tell us your ideas!

Supporting and
Retaining Working
Caregivers

THANK YOU!

