


Employer Engagement - Supporting Working Caregivers

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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

February 3, 2022


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. *WFACSA 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. *WFACSA study – Feb 2021

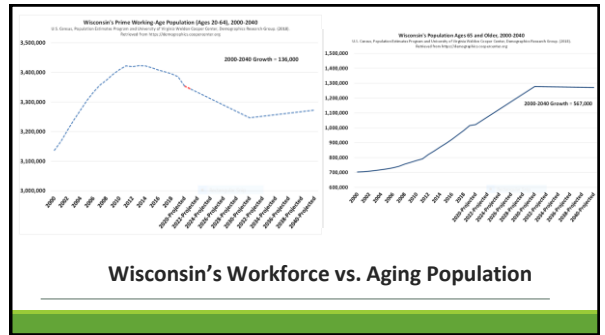
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HRCareKit: A tool you can use!

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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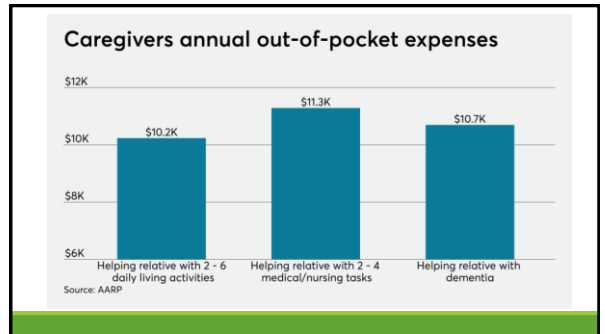
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You know you are a caregiver if you...

- 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

Photo source: The Boston Globe/Getty Images

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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.

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 advisors, directors of home care agencies, community-based services such as adult day care, and transportation 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 Employers can offer group and time for caregivers' education to meet, offer resources and get support from one another. Some organizations have support groups by phone.	*	*	*		
In-house stress-reduction programs: Yoga, meditation, massage discounts Yoga, meditation, massage and other types of stress reduction activities can help caregivers who are feeling overwhelmed or lonely — 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 Employers offer 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 EAP 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 Careg Kit for complete assessment

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Identifying Strategies for Your Own Organization

How do you plan to use the searchsheet below to reflect on your own organization and identify next steps to help support your caregiving employees?

What strategies are in place now?	
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? Why, why not, where can we change to make our programs and resources more successful?	
What other needs are emerging among caregiving employees? How might we respond to these changes to meet those needs?	
What will we do first? (Create a budget? Get specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound?)	
How will we measure whether these changes are being a positive impact on our employees and organization?	

BUILDING A STRATEGY

Individualized by each company to fit employees' needs

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Promega

Exemplary Employer of Employed Caregivers

Diana Clark
Benefits Manager Human Resources
Promega Corporation

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://wisconsincaregiver.truaita.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!

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Supporting and Retaining Working Caregivers

THANK YOU!



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