



## Caregivers in Alberta: economic costs and contributions

Making a meaningful difference in the lives of older adults and their families by bridging research, policies and practice

A caregiver is someone who assists a family member or friend with challenges resulting from illness, disability or aging. More than **1 in 4 Albertans** (28%) age 15+ is a caregiver.



That's about

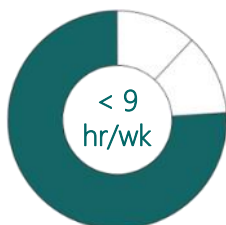
# 965,000

caregivers in Alberta based on growth in the population since the 2012 national survey.

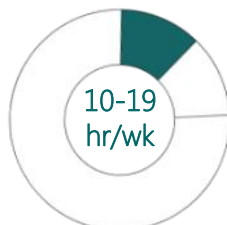
### Caregivers in Alberta spend considerable time providing care



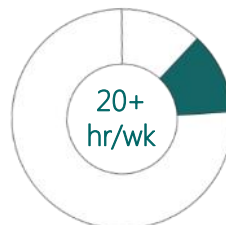
76% spend



12% spend



12% spend



### Caregivers' time is valuable

Caregivers in Alberta spend 8.7 hrs/wk on average helping others. That's about

# 388 million

hours of unpaid care in Alberta each year.

Caregivers' time saves the Alberta health care system billions and is estimated conservatively at

# \$5.8 billion

each year based on hiring replacement workers at Alberta's minimum wage of \$15/hr.

### Caregivers surveyed said



*I wish I had more time and energy for the person I care for, for my job, for my friends and to take care of myself • I worry that when I need to be a full-time caregiver, I will have to leave my job and will lose my income • I would like compensation for the care I provide.*

## Caregiving impacts caregivers' employment and Alberta's economy



2 in 3 caregivers in Alberta are in their prime employment years (age 30-64).

69% of female caregivers are employed | 79% of male caregivers are employed



1 in 2 (56%) caregivers in Alberta are **employed full-time**. Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) work less than 30 hrs/wk. Over 1 in 10 (11%) Alberta caregivers who were unemployed said caregiving prevented them from working at a paid job <sup>1</sup>.

2 in 5



41% miss days of paid work because of their caring — 7 days missed on average, and often unpaid

1 in 7



15% reduce paid work hours because of their caring — 10.4 fewer hrs/wk worked for pay on average reduces income

1 in 14



6% exit paid labour force because of their caring — often not by choice



### IMPACT ON ALBERTA'S ECONOMY

36M fewer hours worked for pay per year impacts employers and governments

32,923 caregivers in Alberta left the labour force in 2012 because of their caring

## Caregiving impacts caregivers' financial security

3 in 5



61% incur **extra expenses** because of their caring — often on transportation, prescription and OTC drugs and home modifications

1 in 7



14% who have extra care-related expenses report **financial hardship**, putting their current and future financial security at risk

3 in 4



73% who have extra expenses **use or defer savings** to pay for these extra costs, limiting ability to save for retirement



Some Albertans cannot afford care-related expenses: 2 in 5 caregivers in Alberta have annual personal incomes of either **less than \$30,000** (40%) or **\$30,000 to \$79,999** (38%) — adding financial stress to making ends meet and jeopardizing financial security, now and in later life.

<sup>1</sup>Consequences questions are asked only of caregivers who provide 2 or more hours per week.