



Caregivers in Alberta: impact of caregiving on well-being

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

Caregivers in Alberta

A caregiver is someone who assists a family member or friend with challenges resulting from chronic illness, disability or aging.

50% are female

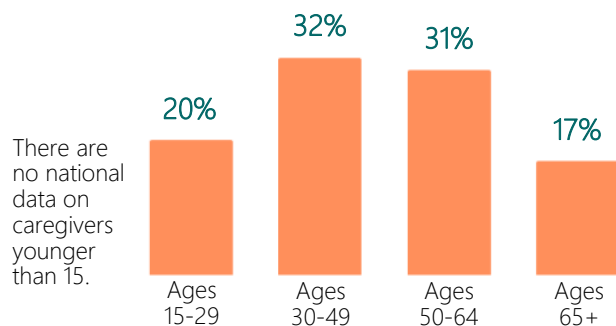


50% are male

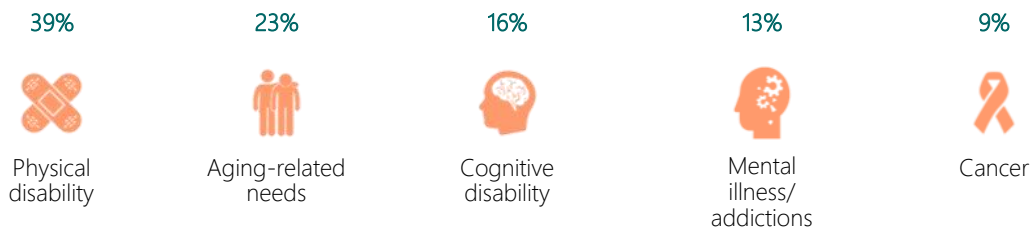
Nearly 2 in 5 Albertans (38%) have been a caregiver at some point in their life already—that's 1.3 million people!



Caregivers in Alberta are all ages



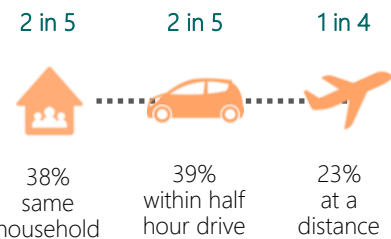
Most caregivers in Alberta support people living with:



4 in 5 (84%) care for family members like parents (44%), spouse/partners (12%), children (10%), siblings (4%), and other family members (14%).

1 in 6 (16%) care for non-kin, including friends, neighbours and co-workers.

Most caregivers live with or near the care receiver, but some live farther away.



Caregiving impacts caregivers' own health and wellness

1 in 2



55% are **tired** and 40% report **sleep disturbances** because of their caregiving.¹

2 in 5



39% are **overwhelmed** and 42% are **short-tempered or irritable** because of their caregiving.

1 in 4



26% report that their **health has suffered** because of their caregiving.

¹Consequences questions are asked only of caregivers who provide care 2 or more hours per week.

Caregiving impacts caregivers' relationships and can lead to loneliness



2 in 3 caregivers (67%) in Alberta are married or partnered. To accommodate their caregiving duties, 1 in 2 caregivers (49%) say that their **spouse or partner modified their life and work arrangements**, and 2 in 5 (42%) say that extended family members provided them with help.



Nearly 1 in 4 caregivers (23%) in Alberta are raising their own children under 18 years, while simultaneously providing care to others, commonly known as the 'sandwich generation'. 1 in 2 caregivers (49%) say their **children helped them**, regardless of age.

2 in 5 caregivers (44%) in Alberta say that caregiving strengthened their relationship with the person receiving care. Caring may strain other relationships or leave caregivers feeling alone and isolated.

1 in 2



52% **spend less time** with their spouse/partner and 54% spend less time on social activities or hobbies

1 in 3



35% feel that caregiving **strained relationships** with family members or friends

1 in 5



19% feel **lonely or isolated** because of their caregiving

Caregiving impacts young caregivers' education



While most caregivers in Alberta have completed high school (25%), trade school/community college/some post-secondary (39%), or obtained a bachelor's degree or higher (27%), some have not completed high school (9%). 1 in 8 caregivers (12%*) are **currently attending school**, college or university, and say their studies have been affected by their caregiving.

Young caregivers surveyed said: *I wish I had more time to do school, work and be there for my family* • *I interrupted my studies three times for my mother* • *I eventually dropped out.*

Caregivers in Alberta need more supports to sustain their caregiving

2 in 3



65% need **financial support** or **government assistance**.

1 in 3



34% need **Home Care** or other supports and 33% want **help from health care professionals**

2 in 5



43% need **information and advice**

Caregivers surveyed said: *I wish I had more supports and a Home Support System that worked* • *Respite is not time off to go do groceries or get a hair cut* • *The ability to have a break and know my loved one is cared for* • *I wish I had the energy to manage my own mental and physical health* • *I wish I had a resource person or guide to point me in the right direction at the start of my caregiving journey.*

* use with caution