



Supporting employed caregivers makes good business sense

RAPP bridges research, policies and practice to make a meaningful difference in the lives of older adults and their families

Caregiving is a common workforce issue

1 in 4 Canadians of employment age (19-70) combine mostly full-time jobs with family caregiving responsibilities. Yet most employers are unaware of the challenges these 5.2 million employees with caregiving responsibilities face and the impact it can have on their business. This fifth infographic (in a series of six) describes the aggregate impact of caregiving on talent retention and productivity and the solutions that help.



1 in 4 Canadians of employment age are caregivers

Caregiving impacts talent retention



1 in 20 employed caregivers left or intended to leave the paid labour force because of caregiving

Collectively, that's 214,000 employees who left the paid workforce in 2018, with women accounting for almost 60% of them. Their departure leaves a gap in organizational knowledge and skills for employers to fill.



1 in 7 employed caregivers worked fewer hours for pay (12 hours per week less on average) to manage paid work and caregiving responsibilities

Collectively, they worked 312 million fewer hours per year. To fill this gap, employers would need to hire 171,000 full-time employees.



Turnover costs to recruit and train new workers are estimated at **1.5 times¹ their annual salary** even though there is no guarantee that their position can be filled promptly and adequately.

¹ Employee retention: What is the true cost of losing an employee?, *Simply Benefits* (Jul. 25, 2020)

Some flexible work arrangements (FWAs) strengthen retention

Employed caregivers who had the option to **take extended leave without pay for personal reasons** were:

- 53% less likely to take a less demanding job because of caregiving, and
- 45% less likely to exit the labour force because of caregiving.

In addition, employed caregivers who had the **option to work part-time** were more likely to take advantage of this option by reducing paid work hours from full-time to part-time or taking a less demanding job. Overall, these FWAs help retain talented employees and reduce employer costs.

Offering flexibility where and when employees worked also improved employed caregivers' satisfaction with their work-life balance.

Caregiving impacts job productivity



1 in 2 employed caregivers (51%) missed one or more days of work because of caregiving (the longest consecutive absence being 8 days on average)

Conservatively, that's at least 15 million days of absenteeism per year.



The direct cost of absenteeism is estimated at **2.4% of gross annual salary**.² When indirect costs such as productivity losses, customer dissatisfaction, poor employee morale, and administrative costs are considered, the cost to organizations is substantially higher.

² Missing in action: Absenteeism trends in Canadian organizations, The Conference Board of Canada (Sept. 2013)

Almost half believe that using FWAs would jeopardize jobs



1 in 2 employed caregivers who have access to FWAs believed that using them would have a negative impact on their careers

Targeting support to most vulnerable employees

Having supportive workplace relationships can enable supervisors to recognize four aspects of the nature of care that put some employed caregivers at higher risk of poor work-life balance, performance management issues, and job insecurity:

1. Providing more than 10 hours per week of care
2. Caring for someone with cancer or mental health and addictions
3. Caring for a spouse or partner
4. Caring for someone living in supportive housing



Methodology

Findings are based on descriptive and multivariate analyses of Statistics Canada's 2018 General Social Survey (GSS), conducted with respondents aged 15+ living in the Canadian provinces. Our sample included 4,940 employed caregivers aged 19 to 70 (typical employment age) who combined paid work with caregiving to family and friends with a long-term health condition, physical or mental disability, or age-related challenges in the 12 months prior to the GSS survey. Analyses controlled for respondents' age, gender, education, having children under 5 in the household, personal income, and immigration status.