

The Evolution of Care: How EAP's can Effectively Support Elder-caregiving

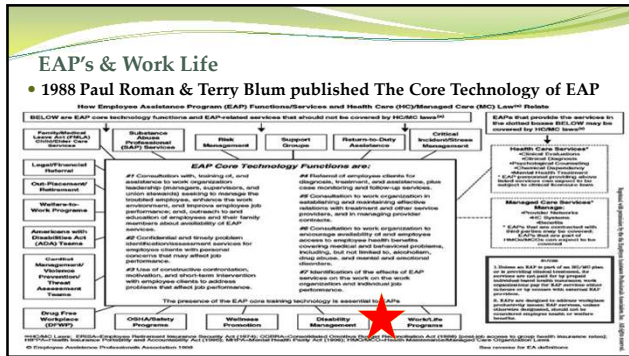
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Agenda

- Review the relationship between EAP's & Work Life programs
- Define and describe how elder care-giving impacts employees
- Describe interventions to support employees who are caregiving with special attention focused on eldercare

Work Life

- Most prevalent of optional EAP services
- Typically includes childcare, eldercare services, financial & legal consultations
- Introduced in the early 80's primarily with childcare
- Eldercare is usually in the form of information & referral services, support groups & eldercare publications



Why should EAP's care about caregiving?

- No-one will escape care-giving...whether you have been, will be, are currently or will be cared for. Most care-giving occurs between children & parents, *informal care*; unpaid care
- Caregiving greatly impacts employee attendance, productivity, & commitment to employment

Who is a caregiver anyway?

A caregiver, sometimes called an *informal caregiver*. **Unpaid individual** (spouse, partner, family member, friend, or neighbor) assisting others with activities of daily living (ADL's) and/or medical tasks

Types of care-giving

- 3 distinct groups of informal caregivers, roughly defined by the age of who they care for: (1) children with chronic illness & disability are typically cared for by young adult parents, (2) adult children with such conditions as mental illness are cared for by middle-aged parents, & (3) older individuals are cared for by their spouses or their middle-aged children (**largest number**)
- **Sandwich generation:** (47%) of adults in their 40's & 50's have a parent age 65 or older & are either raising a young child or financially supporting a grown child (age 18 or older). About 1 in 7 middle-aged adults (15%) is providing financial support to both an aging parent & a child

Eldercare-giving expansion

- Increasing life expectancy & lower fertility rates have increased the elderly dependency ratio in most industrialized countries
- Increased numbers of older adults living with worse health has resulted in a higher demand for care. Families have reduced in size, we move to secure careers, more single parent families, all result in the growth of the eldercare industry
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), 39.6 million people in the U.S. age 15 & over engage in elderly care

Caregiver characteristics

- Most caregivers don't disclose to their employer their caregiving situation
- Most caregivers have a close relationship with the recipient
- Typically informal caregivers have had no professional care-giver training
- Have no working contract
- Receive no pay or equivalent pay for their duties
- Have diverse & wide range of care duties that can change daily
- No official hours (never really off the clock)

The day of a care-giver; your employees; 63% of caregivers spend more than 11 hours per week on eldercare related tasks

Imagine adding these elements to an existing workday

- Awaken an hour earlier to prepare for the day
- Awaken your parent & prepare them for their day; toilet, feed, medicate, dress
- Before leaving for work, meet with homecare aid, review care plans for the day
- Travel to work & get a call from the aid about your parent's lack of cooperation
- During lunch, call aid & review morning. Make Dr. appt. for your parent & call insurance regarding coverage issues. Contact Medicaid office to schedule homecare waiver program to can get more assistance
- In the afternoon, interrupt staff meeting to take a call from the Dr's office
- Leave work 30 mins early to buy adult diapers & medication
- Relieve aid, eat dinner with parent, clean up, talk about "the old days"
- Give medications, check & record their BP & blood sugar
- Prep parent for bed; toilet, dress, attempt to manage mood swings & poor sleeping
- Manage the mail, organize new medical bills, return calls/e-mails
- Prep for the next day, go to bed....Set your alarm for 2:30 am for medication

This is an example of a care day without problems!

Caregiving impact on employees

- 70% of working caregivers suffer work-related difficulties due to dual roles
- 49% arrive to work late/leave early/take time off
- 15% take a leave of absence
- 14% reduce their hours/take a demotion
- 7% receive a warning about performance/attendance
- 5% turn down a promotion
- 4% choose early retirement
- 3% lose job benefits
- and 6% give up working entirely

[National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP. (2015). Caregiving in the U.S.]

- A sense of obligation is higher in caregivers that provide 21 or more hours of care per week (59%) & live-in caregivers (64%)

Caregiving impact on employees

- Care-giving is time consuming, so combining it with regular employment is difficult
- Care-givers often need to reduce or adjust work hours & even quit to provide sufficient care
- Those who are unemployed or work part-time have more time therefore are more likely to be caregivers
- Those who provide care for long hours over a longer period are far more likely to adjust their job participation or leave employment
- 49% of caregivers feel they have no choice about taking on caregiving responsibilities (no other sibling or they live elsewhere, care recipient has no financial resources, "guilt" from recipient)

Resignation

- 39% of caregivers leave their job to have more time to care for a loved one
- 34% leave because their work does not provide flexible hours. [National Alliance for Caregiving & AARP. (2015). Caregiving in the U.S.]
- 17% of caregivers of people diagnosed with dementia quit their jobs either before or after assuming caregiving responsibilities
- 54% arrive to work late or leave early, 15% take a leave of absence, & 9% quit their jobs in order to continue providing care. [Alzheimer's Association. (2015). 2015 Alzheimer's Disease Facts & Figures.]

Caregiving maze...how can we assist our employees?



The decision to care; implications for caregivers

EAP's can discuss several considerations with caregiver *before* they begin

- 1) Most care recipients stay & receive care in their own homes; family members need to consider how to do so or to bring in formal care if accessible & affordable
- 2) Caregivers need to remember their duties are stressful & involve major responsibility that are time consuming
- 3) Eldercare may involve another older adult spouse or partner which adds another dimension of responsibility, limited assistance & stress
- 4) Caregivers are commonly employed &/or have other household obligations, therefore if choosing to be caregiver, may add challenges to their existing job and/or their own family/personal life

How EAP's can help caregivers

- Bring in experts for lunch & learns
- Provide a library of resources
- Organize health-fairs with experts available
- Encourage onsite support groups
- Contract with eldercare specialists to design care plans & assist with education & referrals
- Help with designing difficult conversations for elders about driving, medical care, safety, money & end-of-life issues
- Provide legal referrals for assistance with health care proxies, wills, trusts & other documents
- Information about transportation options, financial consultation, home health care workers & senior living options
- Referrals to Medicare, Medicaid, VA professionals
- Referrals to care managers who can help with planning or make home or hospital visits
- Referrals to special needs specialists to help with disabilities
- Home modification referrals for ramps, chairlifts, & other tools for improved daily living
- Pre-vetted lists of assisted living options, including pricing & availability

Interventions

EAP's should be familiar with local resources:

- Area Agency on Aging: Eldercare Locator; https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/About/Aging_Network/AAA.aspx
- Respite care resources: <https://archrespite.org/>
- Geriatricians: <https://www.healthinaging.org/>
- Hospice organizations: <https://www.nhpco.org/>
- Disease specific organizations; Alzheimer's Association; <https://alz.org/>, Cancer support; <https://www.cancersupportcommunity.org/>, Parkinson's; <https://www.parkinson.org/>, Grief & Loss organizations; <https://hospicefoundation.org/>, etc.
- Geriatric Care Managers: <https://www.aginglifecare.org/>
- Free educational publications on aging: <https://order.nia.nih.gov/>

Caregiver resources

- ✓ Family Caregiver Alliance
National Center on Caregiving
(415) 434-3388 | (800) 445-8106
Website: www.caregiver.org
FCA CareJourney: www.caregiver.org/carejourney
Family Care Navigator: www.caregiver.org/family-care-navigator
- ✓ Caring.com
(800) 973-1540
<https://www.caring.com>
- ✓ National Alliance for Caregiving
<https://www.caregiving.org>
(301) 718-8444

Summarize

- There is a strong likelihood that your employees are care-takers
- Provide education on a regular basis; through table toppers, posters, newsletters, podcasts, webinars, health fairs, support groups, and lunch & learns
- Discuss with other EAP's how they support their companies
- Call or write me to brainstorm!

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