

CAREGIVERS, COWORKERS AND FAMILIES

Over 50 million Americans care for a loved one with a chronic illness, disability or the frailties of old age. Many caregivers neglect their own needs and report the following health concerns: exhaustion, poor eating habits, failure to exercise, postponing or missing medical appointments, anxiety, stress, isolation, depression and frustration. Taking care of yourself is the only way you can effectively care for another.

Statistics from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services state:

- *One in four households is currently caring for people 50 years and older.*
- *Within the next ten years, an estimated 70 million baby boomers will be caring for spouses and/or parents.*
- *The bulk of caregivers in the U.S. range in age from 35-49.*
- *More than 40% of those caring for older adults are also raising children under age 18.*
- *Approximately 73% of those providing care to older family members and friends are female, 27% are male.*
- *The typical caregiver is a married woman in her mid-40's who works full time.*
- *The average caregiver provides care for 18 hours per week; 1 out of 5 provides "constant care" or at least 40 hours of care per week.*
- *Within the next two decades, 1 in 3 individuals in the workplace will have the responsibilities of caring for at least one elderly person. Currently, 64% of all caregivers are working – 52% full-time; 12% part-time.*
- *About ½ of primary caregivers provide care with no outside assistance.*
- *Only an estimated 10%-20% of caregivers use formal services through public or private agencies.*
- *Among working caregivers, more than half have made at least some work-related changes to accommodate the demands of caregiving: modifying work schedules, going into work late, leaving work early, taking time off during the day, 26% had to take a leave of absence due to caregiving responsibilities, 30% had to give up work entirely, 15% took early retirement*
- *If the work of caregivers had to be replaced by paid home care staff, the estimated cost would be \$45-\$94 billion per year.*
- *Because caregiving is such an emotionally draining experience, caregivers experience depression at 3 times the rate of others in their own age group, and they are more likely to become physically ill themselves.*

[AGIS](#) – An Eldercare caregiver resource.

[ARCH NATIONAL RESPITE NETWORK](#) - (919) 490-5577 - Assists and promotes the development of quality respite and crisis care programs; to help families locate respite and crisis care services in their communities; and to serve as a strong voice for respite in all forums.

[CANCER AND CAREERS](#) - Resources and advice to help family, friends, coworkers and primary caregivers.

[CAPS FOR CAREGIVERS](#) – An online support group for children of aging parents.

[CARE CENTRAL](#) – A free personalized web service that allows users to create a private, secure online community for loved ones during significant health events. Offers help and support.

[CAREGIVER MAGAZINE](#) – magazine devoted to the concerns of Caregivers in the greater Chicago area.

[CAREGIVER](#) - Articles on caregiving, caregivers, and home care workers.

[CAREGIVING BLOG](#) – Blogging by caregivers for caregivers for support.

[CAREPAGES](#) – A free personalized web service that allows users to create a private, secure online community for loved ones during significant health events. Offers help and support.

[CARE TENDER](#) - A monthly newsletter written by a caregiver for caregivers

[CARING TODAY](#) – A magazine and a website providing useful advice and how-to articles on a range of caregiving topics.

[CARINGBRIDGE](#) - Connects family and friends during a critical illness, treatment, or recovery. Provides information and support.

[EMPOWERING CAREGIVERS](#) – Online support, forums and message boards, and newsletter for caregivers.

[FAMILY CAREGIVER ALLIANCE](#) – For families, caregivers, policy makers, providers and media to access information on caregiving. Free reports, fact sheets, newsletters, support groups, and care advice.

[FAMILY CAREGIVING 101](#) – Provides assistance, answers, new ideas and helpful advice.

[FAMILY VOICES](#) – Provides tools for families to make informed decisions for family-centered care for all children and youth with special needs.

[FRIEND'S HEALTH CONNECTION](#) – Links individuals with similar health challenges for mutual support and provides public access to motivational programs nationwide.

[HOSPICE FOUNDATION OF AMERICA](#) – (800) 854-3402 – Helps those who cope personally or professionally with terminal illness, death, and the process of grief and bereavement.

[IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH](#) – An online blog with resources, advice, and support for couples dealing with an illness.

[LOTSA HELPING HANDS](#) - A private, web-based caregiving coordination service that allows family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues to create a community to assist a family caregiver with the daily tasks that become a challenge during times of medical crisis, caregiver exhaustion, or when caring for an elderly parent.

[NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR CAREGIVING](#) – Provides support to family and caregivers and the professionals who help them. And strive to increase public awareness of issues facing family caregivers.

[NATIONAL CAREGIVERS LIBRARY](#) – An excellent comprehensive source of hundreds of articles, forms, checklists and links to topic-specific resources.

[NATIONAL CAREGIVING FOUNDATION](#) - Primary focus on Alzheimer's disease; however, much of the information is useful for caregivers for patients with other conditions.

[NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS ASSOCIATION](#) - Provides education, respite care, counseling and advocacy for caregivers.

[RAINBOWS](#) – Advocates for youth who face a life-altering crises.

[ROALYNN CARTER INSTITUTE FOR CAREGIVING](#) – Provides support to individuals and caregivers living with chronic illness and disability, as well as limitations to aging.

[SECOND OPINION FOR CAREGIVERS](#) - A PBS health series on caregiving: A Caregiver's Journey (Alzheimer's Disease); Caregiver Burnout, and Caring for Someone with a Chronic Disease.

[SHARE THE CARE](#) - A model that details how ordinary people can create and operate a unique extended family-type support system to care for a friend or a loved one.

[SMITH FARM CENTER FOR HEALING AND THE ARTS](#) - Healing resources and support for adults who live with cancer and their caregivers

[STRENGTH FOR CARING](#) – Advice on taking care of yourself, caring for others, connecting with other caregivers and other resources.

[THE BRAIN TRUST](#) – Online support groups related to Brain Tumors

[THE THOUGHTFUL CAREGIVER](#) - Encouragement and wisdom for those who provide care.

[WELL SPOUSE ASSOCIATION](#) - Support to wives, husbands and partners of the chronically ill and / or disabled.

CANADA

[ALBERTA CAREGIVERS ASSOCIATION](#) - Caregiver information, support and resources.

[CANADIAN CAREGIVER COALITION](#) - Responding to the needs of caregivers in Canada.

[CAREGIVING](#) - Provides information, discussion boards and support.

[CAREGIVERS - NOVA SCOTIA](#) - Provides recognition and practical supports to friends and family giving care.

[FAMILY CAREGIVERS](#) - Information, referral, education and support.

[FAMILY CAREGIVERS NETWORK SOCIETY](#) - Inform, support, and educate on issues of concern to family caregivers of adults in the Capital Regional District of British Columbia.

[LONG TERM CARE NETWORK](#) – A resource to help caregivers of the elderly and ill.

[SASKATOON CAREGIVER INFORMATION CENTRE](#) - Community service information, emotional and social support.

UK

[CARERS UK](#) - Advocates for caregivers to get the practical, financial and emotional support they need.

MISCELLANEOUS

A CAREGIVER'S BILL OF RIGHTS – By Jo Home – Author of *Caregiving: Helping an Aging Loved One*

I have the right to:

- Take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the ability to take better care of my loved one.
- Seek help from others even though my loved one may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
- Maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for just as I would if he or she were healthy.
- Know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person and I have the right to do some things just for myself.
- Get angry, be depressed, and express difficult feelings occasionally.
- Reject any attempt by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt or anger.
- Receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance for what I do for my loved one as I offer those attributes in return.
- Take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it has taken to meet the needs of my loved one.
- Protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in times when my loved one no longer needs my full-time help.

- Expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.