



Chair in Gender, Health and
Caregiver Friendly Workplaces



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Availability of caregiver-friendly workplace policies (CFWPs): an International scoping review

Ireson, R.; B. Sethi; A. Williams.

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Informal caregiving

Results from The Commonwealth Fund 2014 International Health Policy Survey of Older Adults (age 55+) show that Canadians generally spend more time as informal caregivers than people in other countries and don't always get the support they need.



1 in 5 older Canadians provided care to someone with an age-related problem at least once a week. That's about the same as the international average of 11 countries.



4 in 5 older Canadian caregivers provided care for their **family members**.



Almost half (47%) of older caregivers provided care for at least 10 hours a week, which is higher than the international average of 40%.



Canadian caregivers were more likely to experience **distress, anger or depression** if they provided 10 or more hours of informal care.



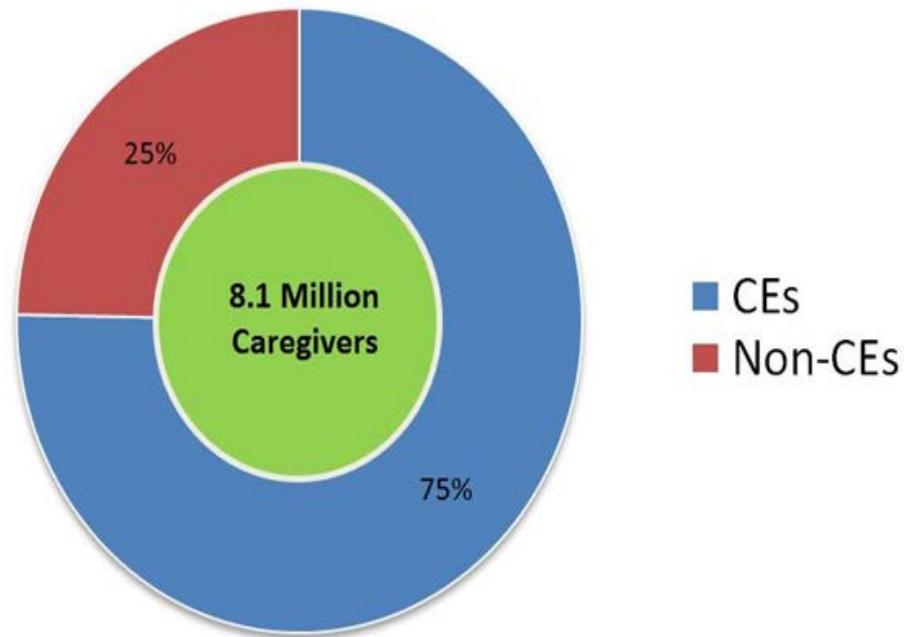
Almost one-quarter of Canadian caregivers needed help in the past year but didn't receive it.



The main reasons caregivers didn't get the help they needed were lack of services and not knowing where to go for help.

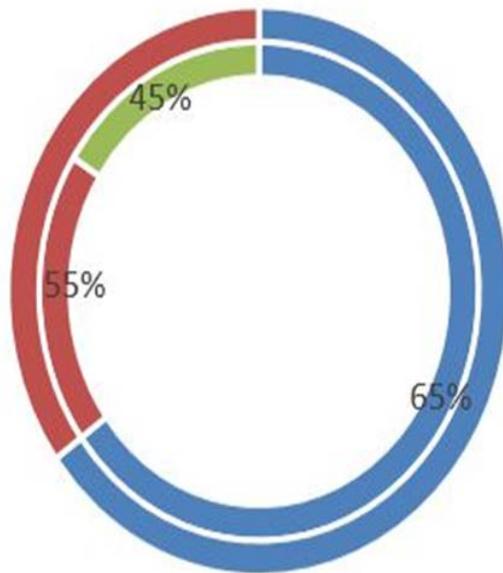
Who are Caregiver-Employees?

Caregiver Distribution Population in Canada



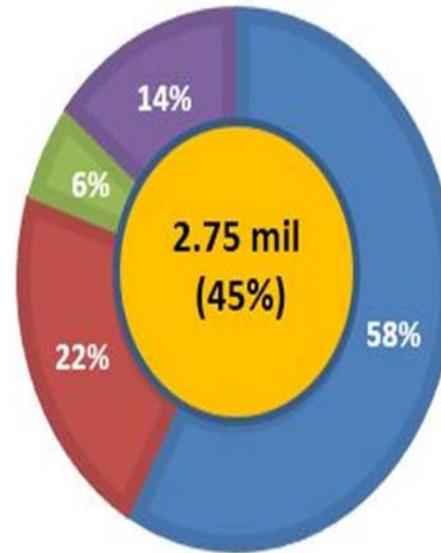
What is the Economic Impact?

Canada's Workforce



- General
- CE
- Affected CE

CE WORK IMPACT



- Leave from work
- Reduced Hours
- Denied paid employment
- Quit Job

1.3 billion lost per year



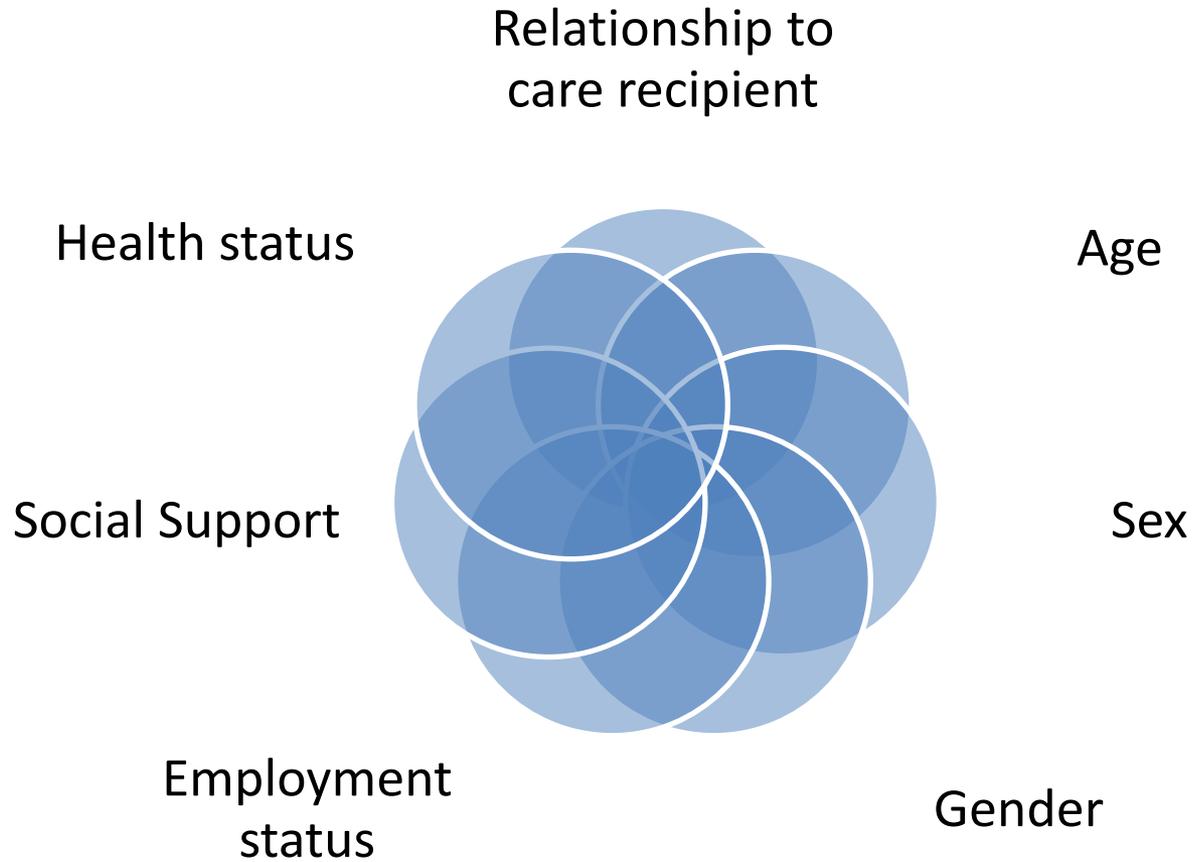
Daily Geographies



Photo Credits: Covenant Health



Caregivers are **d** **i** **v** **e** **r** **S** **E**



Work-Family Balance OR Conflict?

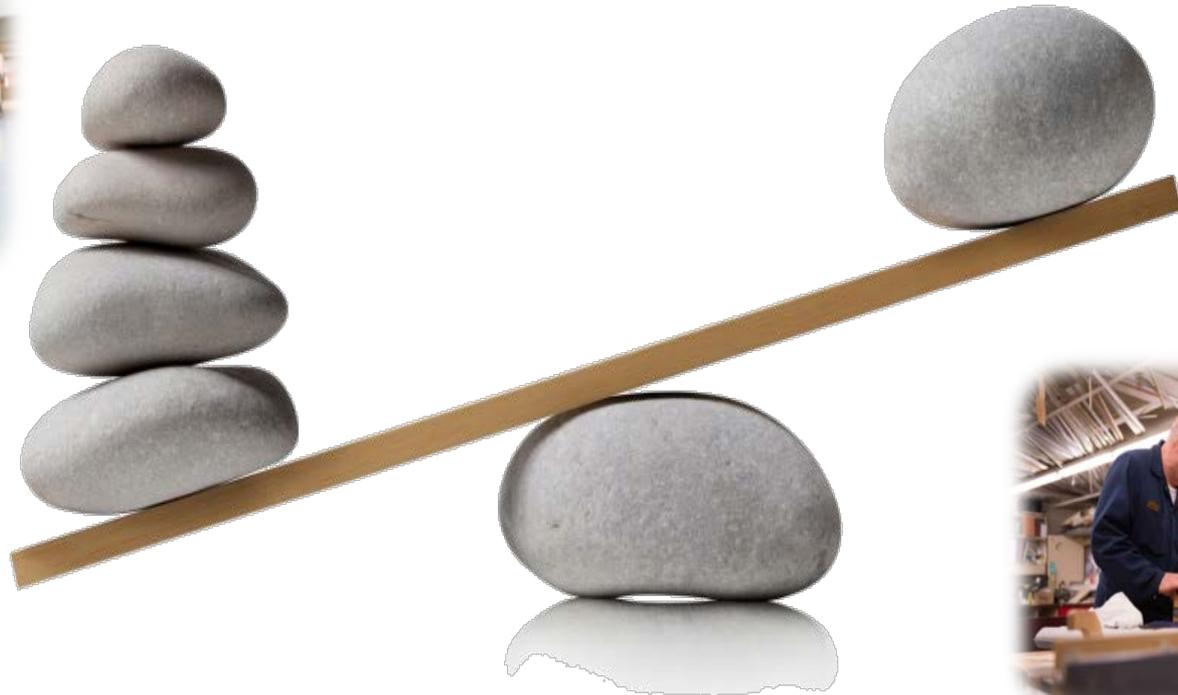


Photo Credits: Covenant Health



Introduction



- ✓ The nature of unpaid caregiving is changing significantly
 - ✓ Number of seniors requiring care expected to double by 2031¹

- ✓ Caregiver-employees (CEs): individuals providing unpaid care while also working in paid employment
 - ✓ Canada: 5.6 million reported CEs (growing)²

- ✓ Role conflict and insufficient workplace supports can result in CEs experiencing health, interpersonal, economic consequences^{3,4,5}

- ✓ One solution: implementing caregiver-friendly workplace policies (CFWPs) such as:
 - ✓ Support services, paid/unpaid leave options, flexible work⁶
 - ✓ Evidence for their efficacy is still emerging^{7,8}





Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Policies

Innovative Solutions for the Workplace



Who are Caregiver-Employees?

Caregiver-Employees (CEs) are family members and other significant people (often identified by the care recipient) who provide care and assistance to individuals living with debilitating physical, mental or cognitive conditions, while also working in paid employment.

CEs can be caring for a range of different types of people, including: a parent, parent-in-law, spouse, life partner, grandparent, sibling, adult child or friend.

What are Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Policies?

Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Policies (CFWPs) are understood to be the intentional organizational changes, whether in practices, policies or the workplace culture, which relieves work-family conflict. They are sometimes called family-friendly workplace policies.

CFWPs are wide ranging and include:

- Support Services, such as: counselling, support groups and skills training
- Flexible work arrangements, such as: working from home and job sharing
- Strategies which support employees, such as: culture change initiatives and educational workshops
- Paid or unpaid leave, such as: sick days/leave and family medical/compassionate care leave
- Financial and other forms of assistance, such as: employee assistance plans (EAPs) and insurance coverage



Over 50%

of caregiver-employees are caring for their parents, or their parents-in-law.



1 in 4

caregivers are sandwiched between child rearing and caregiving, in addition to their paid work responsibilities.



50%

of caregiver-employees are between the ages of 45-65, representing the most experienced in the labour market.



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Cost to Employers

- Increase in absenteeism
- Increase in disability costs
- Decrease in employee retention
- Increase in employee turnover
- Loss of skilled employees
- Less productive workforce



Simple Solutions = Huge Benefits

- Competitive advantage
- Retain skilled staff
- Improve productivity
- Reduce absenteeism
- Reduce number of employees coming to work sick
- Engaged workforce

Tips for Employers:

- ✓ Emphasize the importance of work-life balance and promote a family-friendly workplace culture
- ✓ Educate line managers and supervisors on policies, programs and information available for caregivers
- ✓ Make employees aware of programs available in the workplace, and support their use
- ✓ Accept diversity in the workforce, including differences in family needs
- ✓ Ask employees how you can support them



8.1 Million

Canadians aged 15 years and older provide care to a chronically ill, disabled, or aging family member or friend.



5.6 Million

Canadians provide unpaid care to a family member or friend, while also in paid employment. The majority of these employees work full-time.



2.4 Billion

hours of care are provided annually by caregiver-employees in Canada; the equivalent of 1.2 Million full-time employees.

Check out the caregiver-employee decision tool for workplace accommodations:

www.science.mcmaster.ca/caregiver-employee

References available upon request. This fact sheet was funded by a CIHR Operating Grant titled "Evaluation of Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Policies (CAWRPs) Interventions on the Health of Full-Time Caregiver-Employees (CEs): Implementation and Cost-Benefit Analysis" (#137044) (2014-2017)

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Purpose

- Current evidence illustrating the health benefits & cost-effectiveness of CFWPs is needed if employers are to adopt and integrate CFWPs into their employment practices;
- Little research has been done to synthesize what is currently available to CEs, what types of employers are offering CFWPs, & the success of CFWPs in the workplace;
- The purpose of this study is to present the findings of an international scoping review to explore the availability of CFWPs.



Methods

- This review followed the Arksey & O'Malley's (2005) methodology for conducting scoping reviews

Arksey, H., O'Malley, L. 2005. Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1): 19-32.



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Step 1: Identifying the research question

- What is the availability of CFWPs internationally?

Step 2: Identifying relevant studies

- Study search strings developed
- Database & hand searches in academic and grey literatures (n=701 articles), published January 1994 to December 2014 inclusive in the English language

Step 3: Study selection

- Inclusion & exclusion criteria applied to abstract/title of articles (n=402 articles)

Step 4: charting the data

- Inclusion & exclusion criteria applied to full text of articles, & data charted (n=78 articles)

Step 5: collating, summarizing & reporting the results

- 93 workplaces found
- Qualitative & quantitative findings reported
- Additional hand searches of databases performed to fill in gaps



Results

- Quantitative (1)
- Qualitative (2)



Figure 1: Categories of CFWPs offered by workplace

Categories	n	%
(1) Support services (i.e. workshops, counselling, etc.)	62	66%
(2) Paid leave	25	26%
(3) Unpaid leave	28	30%
(4) Flexible & customizable work schedules	46	50%
(5) Financial assistance/relief	35	38%
(6) Culture change	21	22%

Figure 2: Locations of Workplaces offering CFWPS

Location	n	%
United States of America	42	45.16%
United Kingdom	12	12.90%
Australia	6	6.45%
Netherlands	6	6.45%
Austria	5	5.37%
Germany	4	4.30%
Ireland	4	4.30%
Slovenia	4	4.30%
Portugal	3	3.22%
France	2	2.15%
Finland	2	2.15%
Canada	1	1.07%
Poland	1	1.07%
Belgium	1	1.07%

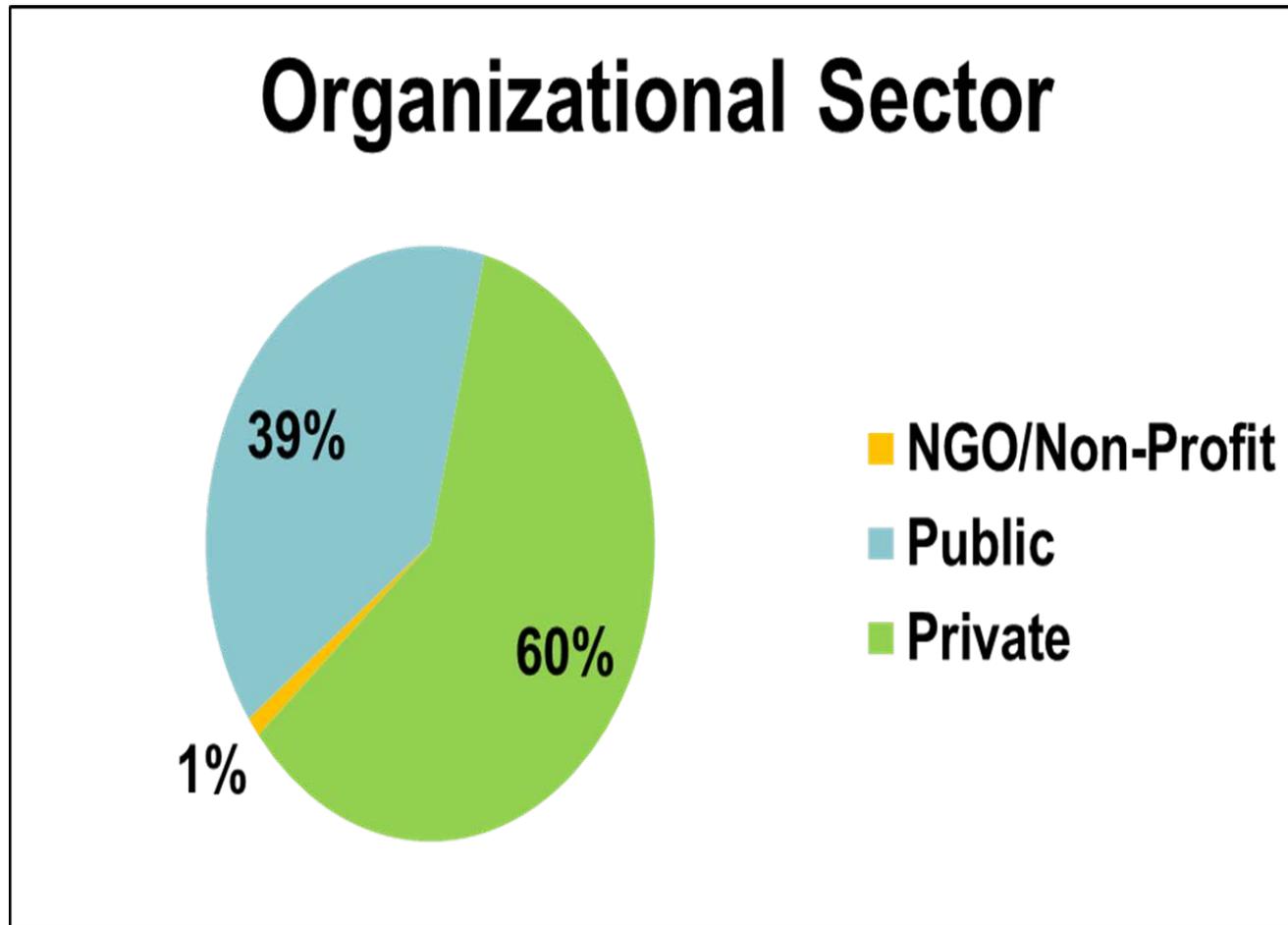


Figure 3: Industry/Sector offering CFWPs

Industry/ Sector	n	%
Financial	27	29.03%
Healthcare	12	12.90%
Technology	11	11.82%
Consumer Goods	9	9.67%
Education	5	5.37%
Other	5	5.37%
Government	4	4.30%
Transportation	4	4.30%
Utilities	4	4.30%
Basic Materials	3	3.22%
Legal Services	3	3.22%
Industrial Goods	2	2.15%
Services	1	1.07%



Figure 4: CFWPs by Organizational Sector



Qualitative Thematic Findings

- Theme 1: Diversity & Inclusiveness
- Theme 2: Motivation
- Theme 3: Accessibility
- Theme 4: Culture



Theme 1: Diversity & Inclusiveness

The majority of companies recognized the diversity of employees & their caregiving situations, ensuring that policies were wide ranging & accessible. This included breaking down cultural & gendered norms around caregiving.



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Theme 2: Motivation

- Overwhelmingly, the business case for implementing CFWPs was highlighted as a major motivation for employers.
- Other motivations included: demographic change; employee recognition, & interest in nominations/winning awards or being named on top employers lists.



Theme 3: Accessibility

Accessibility included the sub-themes of: (a) barriers , & (b) the interest in case-by-case implementation.

- Barriers: A number of barriers were found to decrease use of CFWPs: stigma, lack of awareness of available policies, perception of caregiving as a private issue rather than a social responsibility, & expectations that employees are required to ask for arrangements.
- Case-by-case Implementation: Although formal mandated policies were found to reduce barriers to CEs, there was widespread belief that one size does not fit all. Caregivers often require tailored solutions.



Theme 4: Culture

Workplace cultures which support CEs are wide ranging, & included those which:

- (1) value employees;
- (2) are spiritually focused, and;
- (3) encourage dialogue between employees & supervisors.



Conclusions & Implications

- This review informs the current literature on CFWPs being offered internationally, as well as the barriers faced by CEs.
- Informs a number of knowledge translation strategies to increase awareness of CFWPs and contribute to caregiver-friendly workplaces.





Funding

CIHR IGH Chair in Gender, Work & Health
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Thank you!



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