



Juggling Care for Older Adults: *The Hidden Strain on Caregivers...and Business*

Tom Hlavacek, Executive Director

Alzheimer's Association of
Southeastern Wisconsin



United Way
in Waukesha County



Who are the Caregivers for an Older Adult?

- Non-paid children of senior adults
- Spouses of seniors
- Other family members
- Friends and neighbors of seniors
- They are your employees



Aging in Waukesha County

- 2005 U.S. Census: 68,000 seniors in Waukesha County
- Population over age 65 grew 45% from 1990 to 2000
- Over 85 grew by 67%
- Baby boomers: first wave turning 65



Caregiver Facts

- Majority of caregivers in the U.S. are 35-64 years old
- 60% of caregivers are working, majority full-time
- Average caregiver: 18 years assisting an aging parent
- 40% of caregivers are men; average age is 47
- 15% of caregivers – person supported lives one hour+ away



Caregiving and Work

- 60% of employed caregivers made some adjustment to their work as a result
- 9% left the workplace
- 10% reduced to part-time (cost to business: \$3.3 billion)



Caregiving: The Cost to Business

The 2006 MetLife Study

- 7 million full time employees with intense caregiving responsibilities - cost: \$17.1 billion
- All FTE caregivers: \$33.6 billion
- Replacement costs: \$2.8 billion
- Absenteeism costs: \$4.3 billion
- Workday interruption costs \$2.7 billion
- Crisis in care (a few days off) costs: \$1.8 billion
- There are more costs...but there are also steps to take

The Cornerstone of All Efforts

Vision Statement:

Waukesha County is a place where caregivers of seniors receive the respect and appreciation they deserve and the help they need to be successful.



Intended Results: Caregivers

Create an environment in which caregivers:

- Identify themselves as caregivers sooner
- Are aware of support and assistance available
- Easily access assistance in a seamless system, and
- Have their needs met



Intended Results: Community

Community has an increased awareness of the needs associated with caregiver support.

Employers better understand the caregiving needs of employees who act as caregivers and find ways to help them.



Back to Business – What Can You Do?

- Work with your employees and community organizations
- Develop programs and policies for working caregivers
- Look at options such as flextime, telecommuting and job-sharing
- Access community programs such as respite care, adult day care, caregiver support groups
- Provide educational/informational programs to employees
- Consider employer and/or employee funded long-term care insurance
- Take part in the Simulation



There are only four kinds of people
in the world – those
who have been caregivers,
those who currently are caregivers,
those who will be caregivers,
and those who will need caregivers.

- Rosalynn Carter

Former First Lady of the United States