

MARIN COUNTY EMPLOYEE CAREGIVER SURVEY

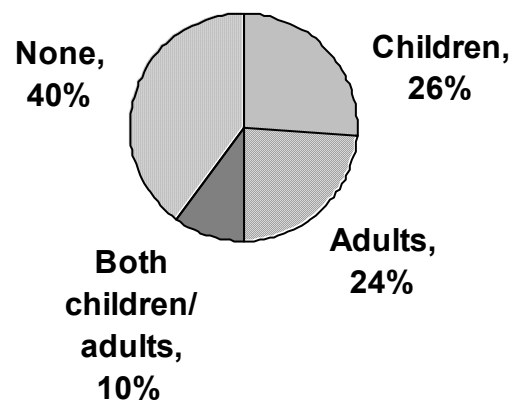
In September 2001, Marin County employees were surveyed on their child and elder caregiving responsibilities and needs. The survey was a collaboration of the County's Division of Aging, Department of Human Resources, and Child Care Commission. Results became available in 2002 and are representative of County employees as a whole, though not necessarily of the general population of Marin. The following are the highlights of general findings and a summary of information gathered about caregivers of adults and older adults.

CAREGIVERS IN MARIN COUNTY

Mail-in surveys were attached to all employee paychecks, which yielded a 39% response rate. Overall, 60% of Marin County employees have some kind of caregiving responsibility.

- 70% of respondents have household incomes of \$100,000 or less.
- 56% of respondents live in Marin County, 25% in Sonoma County, 19% in other counties. County of residence varied by age; only 38% of respondents under 40 years of age live in Marin.
- 36% have child care responsibilities; with an average of 1.6 children per respondent.
- 34% have elder care responsibilities.
- 10% have both child and elder care responsibilities (the "sandwich generation").
- Of respondents with child care and/or elder care responsibilities; 66% are female; 34% are male.
- The majority of child caregivers are 49 years old or younger.
- The majority of elder caregivers are 50 years old or older.

Caregiving Responsibilities



Families are not as closely knit or as large as they once were. Yet family members continue to care for the vast majority of dependent people at home.

Rosalyn Carter

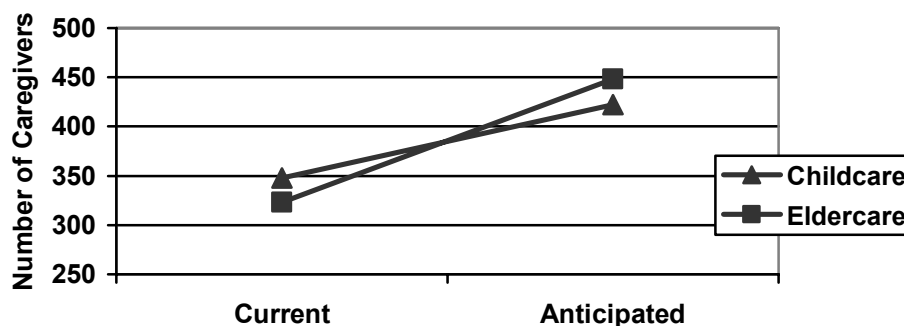
PROFILE OF ADULT/OLDER ADULT CAREGIVERS

Of the 959 completed questionnaires, 323 employees (about a third) report that they care for one or more adults. Not surprisingly, the majority (about three-quarters) of caregivers are women, caring for one adult over the age of 60 years. Most caregivers are between 50 and 59 years of age, married or living with a partner, caring for a parent or parent-in-law.

WHO ARE ADULT CAREGIVERS AND FOR WHOM DO THEY PROVIDE CARE?

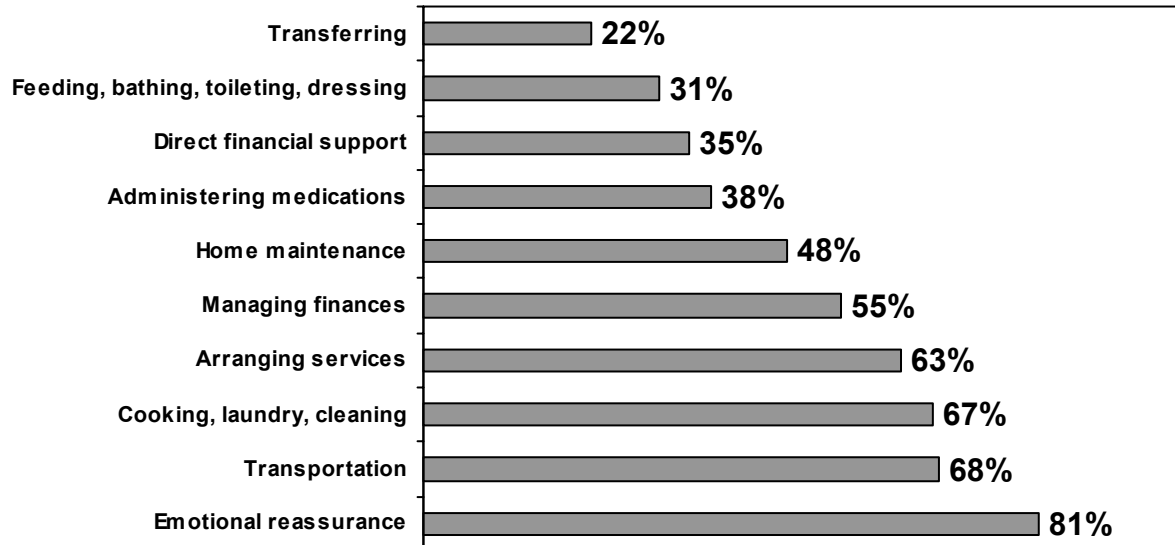
- Half of adult caregivers are over 50, the majority of caregivers are aged 50 to 59 years.
- 63% live in Marin compared to 49% of child caregivers.
- 72% report a total annual household income of \$100,000 or less.
- 87% of those caring for adults care for an adult age 60 or over.
- 16% care for a younger adult (age 18-59).
- A third care for two or more adults.
- 81% of those cared for are a mother, father, or parent-in-law.
- 40% of caregivers living in Marin are responsible for the care of someone living outside of the county, i.e. have long-distance caregiving responsibilities.
- Almost a third of adult caregivers are in the so-called “sandwich generation”, which means they are also parents or guardians of children under 18 years old. Another 7% expect to need child care in the next three years.
- Reflecting the County’s aging workforce, while 34% of employees currently care for adults, another 21% expect to do so within five years. In contrast, 36% of employees are currently child caregivers, while another 8% expect to be in the next three years.

Growth in Caregiving



WHAT DO CAREGIVERS DO?

The types of caregiving range from reassurance and help with chores to providing more demanding personal care. The table below summarizes the types of care provided



- 35% of adult caregivers spend over 10 hours a week on caregiving. (11% spend 30 or more hours a week, representing 3% of the workforce.)
- 13% of caregivers spend \$500 or more a month on caregiving.
- 32% spend between \$100 and \$499 a month on caregiving.

CAREGIVER BURDEN

While caregiving may be a labor of love, caregivers often feel the impact of providing assistance to another adult. Caregiving has an impact on the caregiver's work and personal life and can cause physical, emotional, and financial stress.

- One third of adult caregivers report being "highly burdened," reporting two or more of the following:
 - Spend over \$250/month on caregiving
 - Care for an adult over 10 hours/week
 - Provide 6 or more types of assistance
- A third of higher burdened caregivers care for a spouse/partner, compared to 12% of lower burdened caregivers.
- 31% of caregivers live with the adult for whom they care, among whom:
 - 17% are spouses
 - 14% are parents
- 55% of higher burdened caregivers live with the adults for whom they care, compared to 20% of the lower burdened caregivers.

WHAT PROBLEMS DO CAREGIVERS FACE?

- 2 out of 3 have trouble finding and understanding services.
- All caregivers have some type of personal problem as a result of caregiving, such as interference with free time, social activities, work or other family relationships; emotional upset; physical strain or fatigue; and financial strain.
- 78% have significant difficulties in managing this care. 54% have more than they can handle.
- 65% of adult caregivers missed work last year. 30% missed 5+ days; 14% missed over 9 days.
- 18% asked for flex time; 12% currently have flex time or flexible hours.
- Adult/elder caregivers said they most need work flexibility and information about services.

COSTS OF CAREGIVING

Respondent caregivers reported how much time they had missed from work during a 12-month period as a result of caregiving. Multiplying the total time off by the average County salary gives a cost of lost productivity of \$245,943 for child caregivers and \$233,550 for adult/elder caregivers, for a total cost to the County of \$479,493.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The County is looking into the following ways to assist employees with adult and elder care responsibilities:

1. Providing information on elder care services and promoting the Adult & Aging Information & Assistance line (457-4636)
2. Creating a County flexible time policy and reduced schedule policy
3. Introducing a medical care reimbursement account (MRA) in 2003 that can be used for an IRS dependent adult's nursing and home care costs
4. Providing information to employees on the available long-term care insurance policy and reimbursable expenses under the Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP) for IRS dependent adults.

DIVISION OF AGING
10 N. SAN PEDRO ROAD, SUITE 1012,
SAN RAFAEL, CA. 94903.
415.499.7396
www.co.marin.ca.us/aging

