

Eldercare Quarterly

A newsletter for the informed employer

Improving the lives of employed caregivers...an employer benefit

CAREGIVING 101

- Over 6 million people are providing care to adults over 50
- More than 50% are employed full time; two-thirds are employed at least part-time
- Two-thirds of employed caregivers have rearranged work schedules, decreased hours, or taken unpaid leave to provide care
- **DO ANY OF THESE PEOPLE WORK FOR YOU?**

Source: Family Caregiver Alliance, 2001

**We're on the web!
 Check us out at**

www.eldercareeducation.com

**We can help!
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Eldercare and the Workplace: The Silent Killer of Productivity

Older adults are already the fastest growing segment of our population. While there are currently over 36 million elders, by 2030, estimates indicate that 71.5 million Americans will be age 65 or older. The first baby boomers will begin to turn 65 in 2011—in only 6 years. Will US businesses be prepared to respond to this changing demographic?

Businesses stand to lose up to \$29 billion each year due to productivity losses among employed caregivers
 ~MetLife Insurance Company

An estimated 44 million Americans are providing care to older adults, and this is scheduled to grow as the numbers of elders continue to rise. Nearly 30 million of these people are employed full or part-time. In a key study by Met-

Life, experts warn that American businesses stand to lose between \$11-29 billion annually due to productivity losses directly related to employees juggling the responsibilities of elder caregiving with duties at work.

Where do these losses in productivity come from? A 2002 MetLife study showed that of those em-

ployed caregivers studied, 84% make care-related phone calls during work, 69% arrive late or leave early, 67% take time off during the workday, and 64% use sick leave or vacation days to perform caregiving duties. The workplace becomes further disrupted as co-workers and manage-

ment do not understand the complexities of elder care, breaking down the dynamics of work relationships and preventing effective communication channels.



Most employers do not fully understand the impact of eldercare in the workplace, nor do they offer effective resources and flexibilities to help their employees. Further, the Society for Human Resource Management found that only 25% of employers offer any type of elder care benefit, leaving millions of employed caregivers without much needed assistance.

Sources: Administration on Aging, 2003; MetLife "Juggling Act Study," 1999; SHRM "Eldercare Survey," 2003

The Winning Combination—What You Can Do for Your Employees

Experts in human resources and gerontology have called for eldercare strategies in the workplace that include core fundamentals. Incorporating these elements prevents underutilized, ineffective program implementation.

- Understand the issues and problems of juggling caregiving and work
- Be receptive to employee needs, including information, emotional needs, and financial advice
- Thoroughly know your locality and available resources
- Include training for management and co-workers

For help in designing a winning eldercare strategy in the Cincinnati area, visit us at www.eldercareeducation.com.