

KEY FINDINGS
from
Caregiving in the U.S.

National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP

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Profile of Caregivers

- Estimate that there are 44.4 million American caregivers age 18 and older who provide unpaid care to an adult age 18 or older. These caregivers are present in an estimated 22.9 million households.
- Almost six in ten (59%) of these caregivers either work or have worked while providing care. And 62 percent have had to make some adjustments to their work life, from reporting late to work to giving up work entirely.
- Almost seven in ten (69%) caregivers say they help one person. Nearly half (48%) of all caregivers say they provide eight hours or less of care per week and one in five (17%) say they provide more than 40 hours of care per week. The average length of caregiving is 4.3 years.
- Many caregivers fulfill multiple roles. Most caregivers are married or living with a partner (62%), and most have worked and managed caregiving responsibilities at the same time (74%). The great majority of caregivers (83%) are helping relatives.
- The typical caregiver is a 46 year old woman who has at least some college experience and provides unpaid care to a widowed woman age 50 or older.
- Although the caregiving landscape is still dominated by women helping women, the proportion of caregivers who are men is substantial. Nearly four in ten caregivers are men.
- Male caregivers are more likely to be working full or part-time than female caregivers (66% vs. 55%)
- Overall, female caregivers are providing more hours of care and they are providing a higher level of care than male caregivers.
- It is not surprising that women are more likely to report experiencing emotional stress as a result of caregiving than men. (40% v 26% in the highest levels of stress rating).

Profile of Care Recipients

- Most care recipients are female (65%) and many care recipients are widowed (42%). One in five care recipients is between the ages of 18-49 years, and nearly eight in ten care recipients is age 50 or older.
- More than half of care recipients live in their own home (55%).

- Nearly 80% of care recipients are over fifty with the other 20% 18-49.
- The average age of care recipients 50+ is 75 years old. Caregivers who help someone age 50 or older say the most common health problems the person they care for has are diabetes, cancer, and heart disease. One quarter of caregivers helping someone age 50 or older reports the person they care for is suffering from Alzheimer's, dementia, or other mental confusion.
- Caregivers of older adults (age 50+) are likely to be taking care of their mother (34%), grandmother (11%), or father (10%). Many older recipients are widowed (52%). More than half (53%) live alone.
- Most caregivers (85%) say the person they care for takes prescription medicine

Carrying the Load

- More than one in three (37%) caregivers say no one else provided unpaid help to the person they care for during the past 12 months. Among caregivers who say someone else did help provide assistance during the past 12 months, one in three (34%) say they provide most of the unpaid care, 55% say someone else provided most of the unpaid care, and 10% say they split the care 50/50.
- Using the services of paid personal helpers is less common than obtaining help from unpaid caregivers. Among caregivers who help those living outside of a nursing home, only four in ten (41%) say their care recipient received paid services from an aide or nurse, hired housekeeper, or other people who are paid to help the care recipient during the past 12 months.
- The level of care that caregivers say they provide has an impact on the caregiver's load. Half of all caregivers (50%) age 18 and older say they provide care at the lower ranges of the Level of Burden Index (33% at Level 1 and 17% at Level 2). Fifteen percent of caregivers say they are in the middle of the Index, and about three in ten say they provide care at the higher range of the Index (21% at Level 4 and 10% at Level 5).
- Although a minority (10%) of caregivers say they provide care at Level 5, these caregivers are involved in the most intense caregiving situations.

Caregivers Unmet Needs

- The most frequently reported unmet needs are finding time for myself (35%), managing emotional and physical stress (29%), and balancing work and family responsibilities (29%).
- About three in ten caregivers say they need help keeping the person they care for safe (30%) and finding easy activities to do with the person they care for (27%).
- One in five caregivers say they need help talking with doctors and other healthcare professionals (22%) or making end-of-life decisions (20%)
- Almost three in ten caregivers say they turn to the Internet (25%) or a doctor (28% - another 10% would turn to a nurse or other health professional).

- Seven in ten (73%) caregivers say praying helps them cope with caregiving stress, six in ten (61% caregivers say they talk with or seek advice from friends or relatives, and four in ten (44%) of caregivers say they read about caregiving in books or other materials.

Caregivers in Ethnic Sub-Groups

Overall, we find caregivers provide similar types of care and experience similar stresses regardless of ethnic background.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN

- African-American caregivers are more likely to have children under age 18 living in the household than caregivers from other racial or ethnic groups (53% v 35% white, 39% Hispanic, 34% Asian). African-American caregivers are also more likely to be single, never married (32% v 14% white, 23% Hispanic caregivers) and less likely to be married (13% v 28% white, 30% Hispanic, 33% Asian caregivers).
- African-American caregivers are more likely to be ages 18-34 (17% v 10% 50-64 years, 5% 65+).
- Among caregivers who do not live with the person they care for, African-Americans are more likely to say they visit the person they care for more than once a week (65% v 55% white, 44% Asian caregivers).
- African-American caregivers are more likely to live in urban areas (49% v 24% white, 35% Asian caregivers). Similarly, African-American care recipients are more likely to live in urban areas (49% v 28% white care recipients).
- African-American caregivers are more likely to say they have been employed since becoming a caregiver (68% v 56% white caregivers). They are also more likely to say they spend \$101-\$500 in a typical month for groceries, medicines, or other kinds of cash support for the non-spousal person they care for (36% v 22% white caregivers). Therefore, it is not surprising that African-American caregivers are more likely to say caregiving is a financial hardship (22% say 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale v 10% white, 14% Hispanic, 11% Asian caregivers). African-American caregivers are also more likely to ask for information on how to get financial help for the person they take care of (30% v 19% Asian caregivers).
- African-American caregivers are more likely to say they perform three or more IADL for the person they care for (88% v 78% white, 79% Asian). They are also more likely to say they obtained formal training of some sort about how to care for a person with the kinds of needs their care recipient has (25% v 17% white and 15% Asian caregivers).

- African-American caregivers are more likely to say they give medicine, pills or injections to the person they care for (48% v 39% white, 32% Asian caregivers). These caregivers are more likely to say they need to know more about the prescription medication the person they care for takes (28% v 20% white caregivers).
- African-American caregivers are more likely to say they obtained an outside service to provide transportation for the person they care for (28% v 16% white, 18% Hispanic caregivers).
- African-American caregivers are more likely to say they cope with the caregiving stress by praying (84% v 71% white, 50% Asian Caregivers). African-American caregivers are also more likely to say they cope with caregiving stress by talking to a professional or spiritual counselor (35% v 26% white, 25% Hispanic, 21% Asian caregivers).

HISPANIC

- Like African-American caregivers, Hispanic caregivers are likely to spend more than eight hours a week providing care.
- Hispanic caregivers are more likely to say they live with the person they care for (34% v 22% white caregivers) and they are also more likely to say help the person they care for with at least one ADL (59% v 48% white caregivers).
- Hispanic caregivers are likely to say they are Level 4 or 5 caregivers (41%). They are also more likely to say they have given up vacations, hobbies, or their own social activities than African-American caregivers (48% v 35%).

ASIAN-AMERICANS

- Asian-American caregivers stand out as being well educated (61% have at least four years of college v 36% white, 30% African-American, 27% Hispanic caregivers).
- Asian caregivers also report higher household incomes than others (53% report a household income of \$50,000+ v 42% white, 33% African-American caregivers, 38% Hispanic caregivers). It is therefore not surprising that Asian caregivers are more likely to say caregiving is not a financial hardship (24% v 14 % white, 13% African-American, 14% Hispanic caregivers).
- Asian caregivers, like white caregivers, are more likely to say the person they care for lives in the suburbs (43% v 27% African-American, 28% Hispanic caregivers). Similarly, Asian caregivers are more likely to say they live in the suburbs (56% v 40% white, 34%African-American, 37% Hispanic caregivers).
- Interestingly, Asian caregivers are less likely to say the person they care for has Alzheimer's or other mental confusion (86% v 75% white, 72% African-American, 75% Hispanic caregivers).

- Asians are less likely to report emotional stress (only 23% rate a 4 or 5, on a 5 point scale where five is very stressful v 36% white, 36% Hispanic caregivers).
- Asian caregivers are more likely to say they have tried to cope with caregiving stress by going on the Internet to seek information (43% v 33% white, 29%African-American caregivers). Sixteen percent of Asian-American caregivers report needing help finding non-English educational materials about caregiving. This figure is undoubtedly a low since we only interviewed English speaking Asians. If we had interviewed Asian caregivers in their native language, we probably would have found a greater need for non-English educational materials.

WHITE

- White caregivers are more likely to say they are 50 years of age or older than those in other racial/ethnic subgroups (46% of white caregivers, 29% African-American, 34% Hispanic, 35% of Asian-American caregivers).
- Like Asian-American caregivers, white caregivers tend to report higher incomes (42% make \$50,000 or more). However, unlike Asian caregivers, white caregivers are more likely to say they are currently providing care (68% v 56).
- While a large proportion of white caregivers say they live in a suburb (40%) white caregivers are more likely to say they live in a rural area (34% v 15%African-American, 19% Hispanic, 9% Asian caregivers). White caregivers also more likely say the person they care for lives in the suburbs (40% v 27% African-American, 28% Hispanic caregivers).
- Like Hispanic caregivers, white caregivers are likely to say they have given up vacations, hobbies, or their own social activities (45% v 35% African-American caregivers). Yet white caregivers are less likely to say caregiving is a physical strain (69% v 61% African-American caregivers), and they are more likely to say caregiving is not a financial hardship (one or two on a five point scale 79% v 66% African-American).
- White caregivers are also less likely to say they feel a need for more help or information keeping the person they care for safe at home, balancing their work and family responsibilities, finding easy activities they can do with the person they care for, moving or lifting the person they care for than African-American, Hispanic, or Asian caregivers.