

## Caregiver Profile

# The Typical Caregiver

National Alliance for Caregiving  
AARP Public Policy Institute

### WHO

The typical caregiver is a 49-year-old female, currently caring for a 69-year-old female relative who needs care because of a long-term physical condition.

### WHAT

She has been providing care for 4 years on average, spending 24.4 hours a week (68 percent help 20 hours or less; 32 percent help 21 hours or more). These caregivers typically help with 1.7 activities of daily living (ADLs; such as help with bathing and dressing)<sup>2</sup> and 4.2 instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs; such as running errands or managing finances), and usually conduct medical or nursing tasks (such as wound care, giving injections, or managing medications) for their loved one. She is the primary, unpaid care provider and provides care without the assistance of paid help.

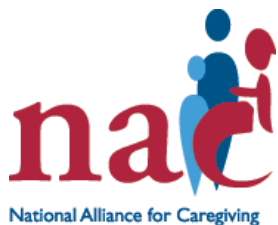
### WORK AND CAREER

She is typically employed and working full time (an average of 34.7 hours per week). This caregiver is likely married or living with a partner, and in very good or good health. She is a high school graduate or has taken some college courses, but does not have a degree. Her average household income is \$54,700.

### ABOUT THE CARE RECIPIENT

This caregiver usually cares for only one adult. That adult, the care recipient, likely lives either with the caregiver or very close by (within 20 minutes of the caregiver's home). The care recipient typically has been hospitalized at least once in the past year.

*This profile summarizes data from the Caregiving in the U.S. 2015 research study, jointly conducted with the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP.<sup>1</sup> While the data presented below provide aggregate information about the average caregiver, it should be noted that the face of caregiving is changing. Family caregivers come in all variations and circumstances—from the grandson helping his grandmother out by cutting the grass and driving her to the store a couple hours a week; to the mother helping her adult son 10 hours a week with various activities due to his post-traumatic stress disorder; to the adult daughter caring for her mother with Alzheimer's; to the wife caring for her husband around the clock to deal with his stroke, diabetes, and wound care.*



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## IMPACT OF PROVIDING CARE

On average, caregiving has not affected her health. It's a 50-50 toss-up as to whether she expects to continue to be a caregiver over the next 5 years, as well as 50-50 on whether she feels she had a choice in taking on care for her loved one. She reports little to no physical strain, a moderate amount of emotional stress, and little to no financial strain as a result of caregiving.

- 1 National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP Public Policy Institute, *Caregiving in the U.S., 2015* (Bethesda, MD: NAC, and Washington, DC: AARP, June 2015).
- 2 ADLs include those tasks that provide assistance with basic personal tasks such as bathing, dressing, using the toilet, transferring to or from a bed or chair, caring for incontinence, and eating. IADLs are supports for everyday tasks, including housework, managing money, taking medication, shopping for groceries or clothes, using communication devices (like telephones), and caring for pets, among others. For more information, see <http://longtermcare.gov/the-basics/what-is-long-term-care/>.

## About the National Alliance for Caregiving

Established in 1996, the National Alliance for Caregiving is a non-profit coalition of national organizations focusing on advancing family caregiving through research, innovation, and advocacy. The Alliance conducts research, does policy analysis, develops national best-practice programs, and works to increase public awareness of family caregiving issues. Recognizing that family caregivers provide important societal and financial contributions toward maintaining the well-being of those they care for, the Alliance supports a network of 80+ state and local caregiving coalitions and serves as Secretariat for the International Alliance of Carer Organizations. Learn more at [www.caregiving.org](http://www.caregiving.org).

## About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org); AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).

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