



Caregivers in Alberta: economic costs and contributions

Making a meaningful difference in the lives of older adults and their families by bridging research, policies and practice

A caregiver is someone who assists a family member or friend with challenges resulting from illness, disability or aging. More than **1 in 4 Albertans** (28%) age 15+ is a caregiver.



That's about

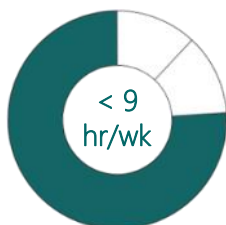
965,000

caregivers in Alberta based on growth in the population since the 2012 national survey.

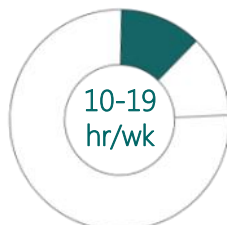
Caregivers in Alberta spend considerable time providing care



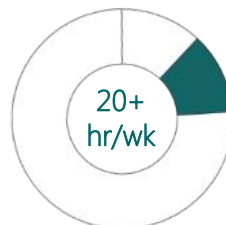
76% spend



12% spend



12% spend



Caregivers' time is valuable

Caregivers in Alberta spend 8.7 hrs/wk on average helping others. That's about

388 million

hours of unpaid care in Alberta each year.

Caregivers' time saves the Alberta health care system billions and is estimated conservatively at

\$5.8 billion

each year based on hiring replacement workers at Alberta's minimum wage of \$15/hr.

Caregivers surveyed said



I wish I had more time and energy for the person I care for, for my job, for my friends and to take care of myself • I worry that when I need to be a full-time caregiver, I will have to leave my job and will lose my income • I would like compensation for the care I provide.

Caregiving impacts caregivers' employment and Alberta's economy



2 in 3 caregivers in Alberta are in their prime employment years (age 30-64).

69% of female caregivers are employed | 79% of male caregivers are employed



1 in 2 (56%) caregivers in Alberta are **employed full-time**. Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) work less than 30 hrs/wk. Over 1 in 10 (11%) Alberta caregivers who were unemployed said caregiving prevented them from working at a paid job ¹.

2 in 5



41% miss days of paid work because of their caring — 7 days missed on average, and often unpaid

1 in 7



15% reduce paid work hours because of their caring — 10.4 fewer hrs/wk worked for pay on average reduces income

1 in 14



6% exit paid labour force because of their caring — often not by choice



IMPACT ON ALBERTA'S ECONOMY

36M fewer hours worked for pay per year impacts employers and governments

32,923 caregivers in Alberta left the labour force in 2012 because of their caring

Caregiving impacts caregivers' financial security

3 in 5



61% incur **extra expenses** because of their caring — often on transportation, prescription and OTC drugs and home modifications

1 in 7



14% who have extra care-related expenses report **financial hardship**, putting their current and future financial security at risk

3 in 4



73% who have extra expenses **use or defer savings** to pay for these extra costs, limiting ability to save for retirement



Some Albertans cannot afford care-related expenses: 2 in 5 caregivers in Alberta have annual personal incomes of either **less than \$30,000** (40%) or **\$30,000 to \$79,999** (38%) — adding financial stress to making ends meet and jeopardizing financial security, now and in later life.

¹Consequences questions are asked only of caregivers who provide 2 or more hours per week.