

Caregiver Support

What is caregiving?

- Caregiving describes any situation in which one individual helps another with essential activities of daily living. Caregiving activities may include help with dressing and bathing, grocery shopping, managing money, providing transportation, dressing wounds and administering medication.

What is the difference between “formal” and “informal” caregiving?

- Care provided by an employee of an agency or organization, or a trained individual (usually for a fee), is considered “*formal caregiving*.”
- Care provided by family members and friends, most often unpaid, is considered “*informal caregiving*” or “*family caregiving*.”

Who is an informal caregiver?

- Relatives and non-relatives can be informal caregivers. If you aren’t currently affected by caregiving issues, chances are you will be at some point in your life.
- Relative caregivers are most often adult children or spouses.
- Fifty-seven percent of Ohio caregivers are female, 40 percent are at least 50 years old, and 62 percent are employed.

Who receives care?

- Eighty percent of care receivers in Ohio are at least age 50, and 70 percent are female. Care receivers live in a variety of settings, from nursing homes to private residences.

Does informal caregiving impact communities?

- Caregiving often negatively impacts the health and wellness of the caregiver as well as his or her relationships with friends and neighbors.
- Working caregivers often use more vacation and sick leave than non-caregiving employees. The cost of informal caregiving to U.S. businesses is estimated at \$11 to \$29 billion annually.
- On average, a person in Ohio may be in a caregiving role for 4.2 years. However, caregivers of parents and spouses are likely to provide care for 10 years or more. The longer a caregiving relationship exists, the higher the toll it is likely to place on the caregiver physically, emotionally and financially.

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What help is available for informal caregivers in Ohio?

The **National Family Caregiver Support Program** helps individuals rise to the challenges of informal caregiving.

- Area Agencies on Aging and service providers help caregivers access supportive services, provide counseling, facilitate support groups and caregiver training, organize respite care (temporary relief from caregiving responsibilities) and more.
- Information and some supportive services are available to all caregivers. However, to be eligible for respite and supplemental services, the caregiver must be caring for an individual who is age 60 or older and frail or a person with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder. Services are also available for grandparents or other relatives age 55 or older (not including natural or adoptive parents) who care for children under 18 or an adult child age 19-59 with a disability.

Ohio's **Alzheimer's Respite Program** assists caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease.

- Area Agencies on Aging and service providers give these caregivers a break from caregiving duties through a combination of personal care and homemaker services, adult day services, institutional care, case management, education programs and more.
- The toll-free Alzheimer's disease Helpline (**1-800-272-3900**) connects caregivers to the Alzheimer's Association chapter serving their community.

How can I get help with caregiving?

- Call toll-free **1-866-243-5678** to contact the Area Agency on Aging serving your community for details.

Where can I learn more about caregiver support programs?

- Visit the following Ohio Department of Aging Web page for more information about caregiver support.
www.aging.ohio.gov/resources/nationalfamilycaregiversupport/

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