

Fact Sheet

The “Typical” High Intensity Caregiver

National Alliance for Caregiving
AARP

WHO, CARING FOR WHO

The average high intensity caregiver is a 48.7-year-old woman, caring for a 67.2 year-old parent, who has multiple conditions and who has been hospitalized at least once in the past year. The high intensity caregiver is more often Hispanic or African American than lower intensity caregivers.

DOING WHAT, WITH WHAT OTHER HELP

High intensity caregivers typically live with their recipient and have provided care for about 5.1 years. A hallmark of high intensity caregiving situations are the time and tasks: on average, these caregivers spend 48.9 hours a week helping with 3 ADLs, 5.5 IADLs, and medical/nursing tasks. High intensity caregivers are the primary caregiver and half of the time, the only unpaid caregiver.

WORK AND FINANCE

About half (56%) of high intensity caregivers are employed. While they are less likely to work than lower intensity caregivers, they work 35 hours per week on average—similar to other working caregivers. High financial strain is more common. Caregiving has caused many more financial impacts, like stopping saving and taking on more debt. Higher intensity caregivers also manage their recipient's finances, which is a highly time consuming task.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Over the next five years, the high intensity caregiver expects to continue to be a caregiver, which they find to be highly emotionally stressful. They feel they had no choice in caring for their recipient, but also feel a sense of purpose or meaning from their role. High intensity caregivers rate their health more poorly than lower intensity caregivers and more often say caregiving has made their health worse. They are more likely to feel alone and find it difficult to take care of their own health.

SERVICES & SUPPORTS

High intensity caregivers more often have difficulty finding affordable services in the recipient's area and more often would find respite services helpful. High intensity caregivers more often want help



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or information on a range of topics, most commonly: managing their own emotional or physical stress; figuring out forms, paperwork, or eligibility for services or support for their recipient; and keeping their recipient safe at home. They also are especially likely to want financial support like payment for some hours of care or a partially paid leave of absence from work.

- 1 National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP, *Caregiving in the U.S. 2020* (Washington, DC: NAC and Washington, DC: AARP, May 2020).
- 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 <https://longtermcare.gov/the-basics/>.

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.

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; 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.

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