Valuing the Invaluable:
Understanding the Contributions of Family Caregivers

In 2017, about 41 million family caregivers provided an estimated 34 billion hours of unpaid care to an adult with limitations in daily activities. The estimated economic value of their unpaid contributions was about $470 billion in 2017.

HOW MUCH IS $470 BILLION?

- Family caregiving estimated value
  - $470B ($1,450 for every person in the US)
- Out-of-pocket spending on health care
  - $366B
- Total long-term services & supports (LTSS) spending
  - $366B
- Medicaid spending on LTSS
  - $154B

FAMILY CAREGIVERS AREN’T WHO YOU THINK THEY ARE...

- Nearly 1 in 4
  - (24%)
  - is a millennial.
- 40% are men.
- About 40% represent multicultural communities.

FAMILY CAREGIVERS ARE...

- Becoming more diverse.
- Paying for care themselves. ($7,000, on average, in 2016)
- In most cases, juggling paid work while caregiving. (60% of family caregivers)
- Carrying out increasingly complex tasks, like wound care and giving injections.

THE CARE GAP IS GROWING

- Rising demand and shrinking families will increasingly strain family caregivers and those they care for.
- In 2010, there were 7.1 potential family caregivers for every person 80+.
- By 2030, there may be only 4.1 potential caregivers for every person 80+.

POLICY AND PRACTICE: CHANGE IS ACCELERATING

At the federal level:
- Congress enacted the RAISE Family Caregivers Act in 2018.
- Expanded Medicare reimbursement for several services benefit family caregivers.
- Supplemental benefits under Medicare Advantage can now include LTSS and supportive services.
- Managed LTSS programs have begun to recognize and support family caregivers.

At the state level:
- The Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable (CARE) Act has been enacted in 43 states and territories.
- There is growing momentum and support for paid family leave in the workplace.
- Some states are beginning to provide financial relief for family caregivers.
- Washington State established the first public long-term care insurance program in 2019.

MORE ACTION IS NEEDED TO HELP CAREGIVING FAMILIES

- The aging of the population and its impact on families can no longer be viewed as a private, family-only issue.
- America’s public policies have not kept pace with changing demographic and social trends.
- Investments in family caregiving supports today will build a more caring society for our families and ourselves tomorrow.


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