



Caregivers in Alberta: impact of caregiving on well-being

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

Caregivers in Alberta

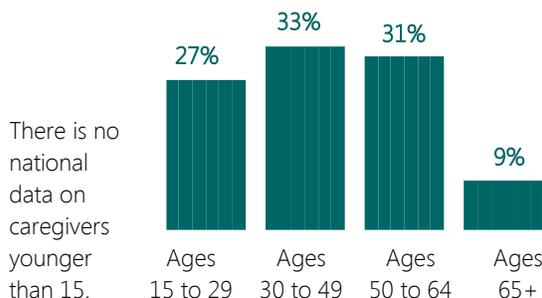
A caregiver is someone who assists a family member or friend with challenges resulting from illness, disability or aging.

53% are female  47% are male

2 in 5 Albertans (44%) have been a caregiver at some point in their life—that's 1.4 million people!



Caregivers in Alberta are **all ages**



There is no national data on caregivers younger than 15.

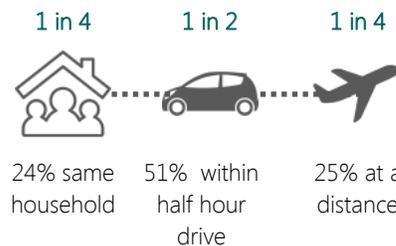
Most caregivers in Alberta support people living with:



4 in 5 (81%) care for family members like parents (in-law), grandparents, spouse/partners, siblings and children.

1 in 5 (19%) care for friends, neighbours and co-workers.

Most caregivers live with or near the care receiver, but some live afar.



Caregiving impacts caregivers' own health and wellness



46% are **tired** and 1 in 3 (33%) report **sleep disturbances** because of their caring¹



31% feel **overwhelmed, short-tempered or irritable** because of their caring



18% report that their **health has suffered** because of their caring

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



Caregiving impacts caregivers' relationships and can lead to loneliness



2 in 3 (66%) caregivers in Alberta are married or partnered. To accommodate their caregiving duties, **2 in 5** say that their **spouse or partner modified their life and work arrangements** (41%); and that **extended family members provided them with help** (40%).



Nearly 1 in 3 (29%) caregivers in Alberta have children under 15 years at home. To accommodate their caregiving duties, **2 in 5** (40%) say their **children helped them**.

While 3 in 4 (74%) caregivers in Alberta say that caregiving strengthened their relationship with the person receiving care, caring may strain other relationships or leave caregivers feeling alone and isolated.

1 in 2



47% **spend less time** with their partner and on social activities and hobbies

1 in 4



24% feel that caring **strained relationships** with family or friends

1 in 6



16% feel **lonely or isolated** because of their caring

Caregiving impacts young caregivers' education



While most caregivers in Alberta have completed high school (33%) or post-secondary education (54%), some have not yet completed school. **1 in 7** are still attending school, college or university (15%) and say their studies have been affected because of their caregiving.

Young caregivers surveyed said: *I wish I had more time to do school, work and be there for my family* • *I interrupted my studies three times for my mother* • *I eventually dropped out.*

Caregivers in Alberta need more supports to sustain their caregiving

2 in 5



43% need **financial support** or **government assistance**

1 in 3



31% need **Home Care** or support provided to their care receiver

1 in 3



36% need **information and advice** and help from health care professionals

Caregivers surveyed said: I wish I had more supports and a Home Support System that worked • *Respite is not time off to go do groceries or get a hair cut* • *The ability to have a break and know my loved one is cared for* • *I wish I had the energy to manage my own mental and physical health* • *I wish I had a resource person or guide to point me in the right direction at the start of my caregiving journey.*