

For Immediate Release

Supporting Caregivers in the Workplace is a Good Investment for Employers, Says Northeast Business Group on Health

NEW YORK, March 15, 2017 – Employers need to be aware of the potential pay-offs for offering benefits and services that make caregiving an easier burden for employees to bear, says a new report from Northeast Business Group on Health (NEBGH). The report, “[*The Caregiving Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities for Employers*](#)”, says that maximizing productivity, reducing future employee healthcare costs, and attracting and retaining talent are among the reasons employers should consider specific policies and services designed to help employees who are providing care to loved ones. Challenges to better supporting these employees include resistance to being labeled as a “caregiver,” the absence of best practices for employers and the need for buy-in from executive management.

“More than one in six Americans who work is also a caregiver, and this number is going to grow significantly given demographic trends,” said Laurel Pickering, President and CEO of NEBGH. “Many employers – including our members – are expanding company-paid leave, experimenting with peer-led caregiving support groups, providing subsidies for services that offer back-up caregiving, and connecting employees with resources who can help navigate the complexities of caregiving. But one key challenge even these forward-thinking employers need to overcome is stigma – the fear among employees that self-identifying as a caregiver might result in special treatment or loss of opportunities for new projects or promotions,” she said.

NEBGH’s report is based on research, interviews with employers and experts, and an employer roundtable co-developed with AARP. It highlights steps taken by employers including EY, Deloitte, CBS and Goldman Sachs to support employee-caregivers in the areas of leave policies, direct support for caregivers and facilitated access to support services. The report makes note of new digital platforms that employers can integrate into their offerings, including those that help organize and track caregiving activities, provide monitoring of those being cared for, and offer marketplaces to enlist caregiving help, for example.

“Many employees providing care for loved ones don’t think of themselves as caregivers but rather as ‘just doing what’s necessary,’ and that in itself can be an obstacle in adequately supporting those struggling with this burden,” said Jeremy Nobel, MPH, MD, and Executive Director of NEBGH’s Solutions Center, which conducted this work. “Employer initiatives designed to create awareness about the presence of caregivers in the workforce and the support that is available will help reduce the isolation and anxiety that many caregivers experience, and encourage them to seek out help. Employee-caregivers need support not only in fulfilling their caregiving responsibilities but also in taking care of their own needs, both emotional and physical. Caregivers often neglect their own self-care, threatening their own health and wellbeing, and leading to higher healthcare costs for employers down the road,” he said.

NEBGH's report notes that a growing percentage of caregivers are millennials, which has implications for employers who may not yet be fully aware of caregiving as a workplace issue deserving of attention and customized initiatives. The report suggests that employers look to other employers to see what they're offering in the way of caregiving support as well as asking employees what help might be most beneficial.

About NEBGH

NEBGH is an employer-led coalition of healthcare leaders and other stakeholders with the mission of empowering members to drive excellence in health and achieve the highest value in healthcare delivery and the consumer experience. The Solutions Center is NEBGH's research and discovery platform for identifying the most promising, innovative opportunities for improving health outcomes, focused on employers as the catalyst for change.

AARP provided funding to NEBGH's Solutions Center for its work on caregiving.

The guide can be accessed [here](#).

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