

## Facts About Caregivers

### Who Are Caregivers

- Over **44 million people** in the US (21% of the population), serve as an unpaid caregiver to an adult family member (spouse, mother, father, grandparent, other).
- **More than one million** people in Michigan are caring for a loved one, ranking Michigan 8th in the US for the highest caregiver population.
- The typical family caregiver is a **46-year-old woman** caring for her widowed mother who does not live with her. She is married and employed. Approximately **60%** of family caregivers are women.
- More caregivers are 18 to 49 years of age (**58%**) than are 50 years of age or older (42%).
- On average, caregivers provide **21 hours of care per week**. 17% of family caregivers are providing 40 hours of care a week or more. The average length of care is **4.3 years**.

### ECONOMIC VALUE OF CAREGIVERS

- The value of the services family caregivers provide for "free" is estimated to be **\$306 billion** a year. That is almost **twice as much** as is actually spent on homecare and nursing home services combined (\$158 billion).

### WORKING CAREGIVERS

- 48% of all caregivers are also employed outside of the home
- Both male and female children of aging parents make changes at work in order to accommodate caregiving responsibilities; both **modify schedules** (men 54%, women 56%); **come in late and/or leave early** (78%/ 84%) and **alter work-related travel** (38%/ 27%).
- Caregiving responsibilities result in individuals turning down promotions and assignments, or taking early retirement, costing nearly \$659,000 over their lifetime in lost wages, social security and pension contributions.
- According to projections by the National Alliance for Caregiving in 2004, the number of employed caregivers in the United States is expected to reach nearly 15.6 million working Americans in 2007 - roughly 1 in 10 employed workers.

### IMPACT ON CAREGIVERS

- Evidence shows that most caregivers are ill-prepared for their role and provide care with little or no support. More than 33% continue to provide intense care to others while suffering from poor health themselves.
- Estimates indicate that between 40 to 70% of caregivers have clinically significant symptoms of depression; have more stress related illnesses (80% of doctor visits are stress related); an increased risk of heart disease; lower- levels of self care; and increased mortality.
- The most frequently reported unmet needs of caregivers are finding time for one's self (35%), managing emotional and physical stress (29%), and balancing work and family responsibilities (29%).

**Sources:** *National Family Caregiver Association* (<http://www.nfcacares.org>); *The MetLife Caregiving Cost Study: Productivity Losses to U.S. Business (2006)*; *National Alliance for Caregiving* (<http://www.caregiving.org>); *Family Caregiver Alliance* (<http://www.caregiver.org>)