

GAO

Report to the Honorable  
Olympia Snowe, House of  
Representatives

January 1994

# LONG-TERM CARE

## Private Sector Elder Care Could Yield Multiple Benefits



---

---

**Notice:** This is a reprint of a GAO report.

Health, Education, and  
Human Services Division

B-249658

January 31, 1994

The Honorable Olympia J. Snowe  
House of Representatives

Dear Ms. Snowe:

Today, about 6 million older Americans living at home need assistance in everyday activities as a result of their disabilities. Population aging will significantly increase demand for this assistance, as the number of elderly needing long-term care reaches an expected 10 million or more by 2020. Currently, most disabled elderly receive their care informally from family members and friends, primarily women. However, greater geographic dispersion of families, smaller family sizes, and the large percentage of women who work outside the home are straining the capacity of this care source. Employed caregivers often face challenges balancing their work and caregiving responsibilities, which can adversely affect both roles.

Some companies are responding to the needs of their employees who care for the elderly with assistance, known as "elder care," to help alleviate work and caregiving conflicts. In this report we define elder care as any employer-sponsored practice, policy, or program that directly or indirectly helps employees or retirees in caring for elderly relatives or friends.

Because little was known nationwide about the extent and content of elder care assistance in the private sector, you requested that we evaluate (1) the extent and nature of company practices currently offered to assist employees who care for the elderly, (2) planned changes in these practices, and (3) the potential of company practices to further support informal caregivers.<sup>1</sup>

## Results in Brief

Currently, about 2 million working Americans are providing significant unpaid care to their elderly relatives living in the community who need assistance with everyday activities. An additional 6 million employed persons have parents or spouses who are disabled and may also need assistance with these activities. The number of employed caregivers is expected to grow as the population ages. Work and family responsibilities often conflict, and many caregivers provide assistance long distance. To maintain both roles, working caregivers identify both work schedule

<sup>1</sup>A separate, forthcoming report will discuss availability of elder care assistance to employees in the public sector.

flexibility and information about community services for the elderly as the most useful options their employers could offer. Many companies provide flexible scheduling options, but they are often not promoted as being available to assist employed caregivers. At least 23 million Americans work for medium and large companies (those with more than 100 employees) that already offer at least one flexible scheduling option, such as flexible leave, alternative work schedules, and leave without pay. Companies' support for their employees who care for elderly persons could be strengthened if managers identified and actively supported the use of these options for elder care. At least 9 million people work for companies that also provide assistance specifically designed for elder care, such as information about long-term care services and aging, and support groups for caregivers.

Companies' elder care assistance offers benefits for caregivers and their employers, as well as for the elderly. Caregivers struggling to balance work and family responsibilities may find useful those services that offer them flexible schedules and needed information, while employers may see reduced work disruption, such as turnover and absenteeism. The elderly may benefit by being able to remain in their own homes and communities as they prefer.

The number of employees with access to elder care assistance is likely to increase, although the rate and extent of this growth is uncertain. More than 8 million people work for companies planning to expand existing elder care options or offer new ones. However, companies' awareness of both employees' elder care needs and employers' options for addressing them will affect the extent of overall expansion.

---

## Background

More and more Americans are facing the need for long-term care in their families. In most cases, long-term care needs are primarily for nonmedical care provided outside of nursing homes. Unpaid, informal assistance from family and friends is the chief source of care for most elderly Americans dependent on others for assistance in the basic tasks of everyday life such as eating, moving around the house, shopping, managing money, and completing other routine activities. This assistance is instrumental in allowing the elderly to remain in their homes and communities. About 2 million elderly persons receive formal, paid, home and community-based long-term care services, such as home health care, transportation, and

---

meals.<sup>2</sup> These services are either purchased by the elderly and their families or paid for with public funds, primarily Medicaid and Medicare.

When families can no longer provide care, or when home and community-based services are not available or sufficient to address a disabled elder's needs, institutionalization may result. About 1.5 million older Americans, generally those with the severest disabilities, live in nursing homes each year. Institutions are generally an expensive source of long-term care. About half of nursing home costs are paid for by the elderly and their families and half by public funds.

While most care to the elderly is provided by unpaid family and friends, federal involvement in providing long-term care to disabled elders is nonetheless significant. In 1991, state and federal long-term care spending totaled more than \$38 billion through the Medicare and Medicaid programs, primarily spent on funding institutional care. Other federal long-term care funds are provided through the Older Americans Act, the Social Services Block Grant, the Supplemental Security Income program, and several Department of Veterans' Affairs programs. In addition, some proposals for health care reform, including the administration's, include federal payment for additional long-term care services.

---

## Scope and Methodology

To respond to your request, we surveyed a nationally representative random sample of companies with 100 or more employees,<sup>3</sup> interviewed benefits and human resources managers, discussed our work with elder care experts, and reviewed the relevant literature on corporate involvement in elder care assistance and informal care-giving. (See app. I for a full description of our methodology.) Our overall survey response rate was 56 percent. We did not independently verify the accuracy of companies' responses. Nor did we assess the quality of the elder care assistance companies offered or the extent of its use by employees. Our employee estimates in this report represent the minimum number of persons with access to certain options. Unless otherwise noted, sampling errors on attribute estimates do not exceed plus or minus 12 percentage

---

<sup>2</sup>National Medical Expenditure Survey: Use of Home and Community Services by Persons Ages 65 and Older with Functional Difficulties, Research Findings 5, Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services (Sept. 1990).

<sup>3</sup>Our survey reflects the availability of elder care options to at least 26 million Americans who work in these medium and large companies. According to the Census Bureau, there were 42 million Americans working for all private sector companies with 100 or more employees in 1990. We did not survey small companies—those with fewer than 100 employees—which employ about one-half of all private sector workers.

---

points. (See app. II for more information on estimates and sampling errors.)

---

## Informal Caregiving Growing, Can Conflict With Work

Women's growing participation in the workforce and the rise in the number of disabled elderly have resulted in increasing numbers of employees who care informally for older Americans in their homes and communities. Nearly three-quarters of all caregivers are women, many of whom are employed outside the home. Approximately 2 million working Americans provide informal caregiving assistance to their disabled elderly relatives, including help with eating, bathing, moving around the home, housework, and financial management. An additional 6 million employed persons have a disabled spouse or parent who may also require assistance with these or other activities. As the population ages, the number of employed caregivers is expected to grow. Potential caregivers—spouses and children of disabled elders—currently represent about 9 percent of the workforce with full-time employment.<sup>4</sup>

Employees' caregiving demands can adversely affect their work performance. Caregiving problems may lead to increased absenteeism, tardiness, work disruptions, turnover, and stress, with damaging effects on employee productivity and morale. Working caregivers report making adjustments in both caregiving and employment to accommodate their dual roles. At work, many caregivers rearrange their schedules, reduce their overall hours, take leave without pay, and even forgo career opportunities or quit their jobs to fulfill elder care responsibilities at home. Companies we interviewed who address these conflicts believe their elder care and work/family programs improve their ability to recruit and retain employees.

---

## Most Useful Options Are Prevalent, but Often Not Identified as Caregiver Assistance

Most employees in our survey have access to at least one option of the type employed caregivers report finding most useful in balancing work and family responsibilities, namely schedule flexibility and information about elder care services. However, many flexible scheduling options were not designed as elder care and may not be recognized or supported by managers and supervisors for use by employees caring for the elderly. Other options designed especially to assist caregivers, such as financial assistance, are available to many fewer employees.

---

<sup>4</sup>R. Stone and P. Kemper, "Spouses and Children of Disabled Elders: How Large a Constituency for Long-Term Care Reform?" *The Milbank Quarterly*, Vol. 67, Nos. 3-4 (1989), pp. 485-505.

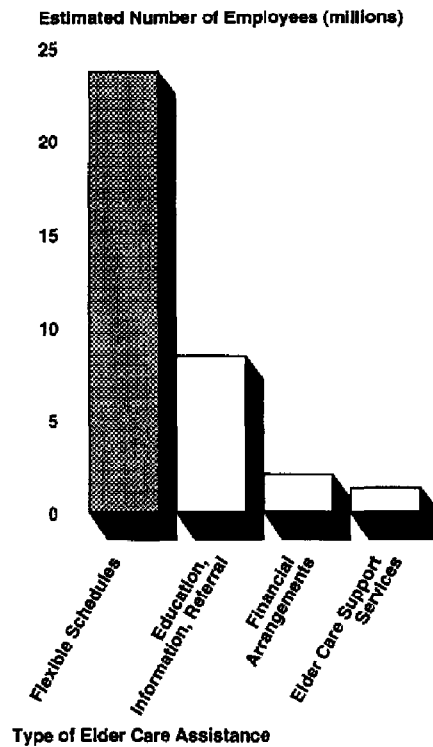
## Many Employees Have Access to Options Caregivers Need Most

More than 23 million working Americans have access to flexible schedules, elder care information, or both through their employers. These types of support are most valuable to working caregivers in maintaining their work and family roles, according to caregiver surveys.<sup>5</sup> Overall, a flexible work schedule is the most common elder care option employees have (see fig. 1). A minimum of 23 million people work for companies that offer some type of leave policy or alternative work schedule that employees could use when providing care for an elderly relative or friend.<sup>6</sup> At least 8 million Americans work for employers who provide some form of information about elder care services and aging to their staff.

<sup>5</sup>R. Stone and P. Short, "The Competing Demands of Employment and Informal Caregiving to Disabled Elders," *Medical Care*, Vol. 28, No. 6 (June 1990), pp. 513-26; A. Scharlach, E. Sobel, and R. Roberts, "Employment and Caregiver Strain: An Integrative Model," *The Gerontologist*, Vol. 28, No. 6 (1991), pp. 778-87; J. Anastas, J. Gibeau, and P. Larson, "Working Families and Eldercare: A National Perspective in an Aging America," *Social Work*, Vol. 35, No. 5 (Sept. 1990), pp. 405-11.

<sup>6</sup>This leave does not include vacation days, but does include other paid and unpaid absences, such as sick days and leave without pay, if the benefit could be used to provide elder care.

**Figure 1: Flexible Schedules Are the Most Common Form of Elder Care Assistance**



Notes: Estimates are the minimum number of employees who work for companies that offer at least one benefit in the categories shown.

Flexible schedules include paid sick and family leave, leave without pay, flex-time, compressed schedules, flex-place, part-time with benefits, temporary reduction of work hours, and job-sharing, if they could be used for elder care.

Education and information and referral includes elder care reference materials, seminars, caregiver information fairs, company promotion campaigns, and in-house and contractual information and referral services.

Financial arrangements include cash subsidies for elder care services, including respite and in-home care, and long-term care insurance for employees' spouse, parents, or parents-in-law.

Elder care support services include employee support groups, case management for elderly dependents, and employer-sponsored adult or intergenerational day care.

**The most common flexible scheduling practice that could be used for elder care is leave without pay, which is available to at least 18 million**



---

working Americans.<sup>7</sup> Also prevalent are temporary reductions in work hours, flex-time, and paid sick leave, each of which is available to a minimum of about 6 million employees. Other options companies offer that allow their employees flexibility include job-sharing and paid family leave.

Although not initially intended to address elder care needs, flexible schedules can be of significant assistance to caregivers. Flexibility is important to caregivers both in providing care during traditional work hours and in responding to unexpected needs. For example, a midday physician's appointment or temporary bedrest after hospitalization are easier to accommodate when a caregiver has a flexible work schedule. Surveys of working caregivers show that caregivers use flexibility at work to accommodate elder care responsibilities by rearranging their schedules or reducing total work hours, and by taking unpaid leave.

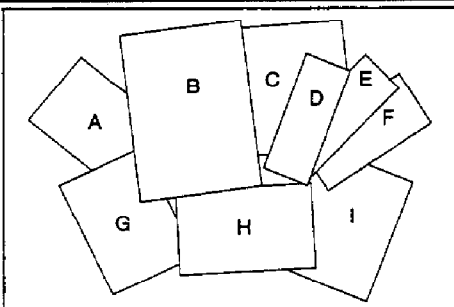
At least 2.6 million employees have access through work to elder care information and referral services, which help them identify and access community resources for the elderly. Such services are either provided in-house or operated by an outside contractor. Other informational resources range from elder care reference materials, such as brochures, videos, and service directories, which are available to more than 4 million employees, to seminars on aging or elder care issues, available to 3 million workers, and to caregiver information fairs, where service providers are invited to market their services, available to 1 million employees.

Elder care information is especially valuable to working caregivers because of the often-changing needs of the disabled elderly. Furthermore, many caregivers live far from their elders and are providing assistance long distance. When new needs arise, caregivers need to know what resources are available in their elders' communities, or what situations to expect. Information and referral services allow employees to act efficiently to locate and use services, even in other states, thus reducing the amount of time they must spend on this task. Some companies enhance their informational resources by conducting campaigns to promote or publicize their elder care program or by training managers about company practices and employee eligibility (see fig. 2).

---

<sup>7</sup>Our survey data do not reflect the impact of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which was implemented in August 1993. The act mandates leave without pay for employees to care for immediate family members with serious health conditions—including the elderly.

Figure 2: Some Companies Use Promotional Materials to Publicize Their Elder Care Programs to Employees



Legend:

- A Hewitt Associates
- B The Travelers Companies
- C Johnson & Johnson
- D Work/Family Elder Directions, Inc.
- E First Interstate Bank
- F Aetna
- G Champion International Corporation
- H Work/Family Directions, Inc.
- I Time Warner

---

### More Widespread Recognition and Promotion of Flexible Schedules Could Enhance Effectiveness and Use

While flexible scheduling options were common, they were often not specifically developed to assist caregivers to the elderly, but for broader purposes. Companies generally do not recognize and promote the use of these options for elder care. Experts and managers we interviewed who are engaged in promoting private sector elder care believe that the failure to identify and promote flexible scheduling options diminishes the value of these options for helping balance work and caregiving responsibilities.

Specifically, they believe that supervisors and managers must be both aware and supportive of accommodating employees' caregiving needs. This awareness increases the likelihood that managers and employees will know when and how to use the flexible scheduling options available. Some companies have found employees reluctant to discuss elder care concerns at work because they question the legitimacy of seeking caregiving assistance there. According to an official we interviewed at one company with a well-utilized elder care program, "We have to continuously let people know what we have" to ensure that such options are known and used. When employers identify and promote the use of all options that can assist caregiving by their employees, they may be more likely to be used to provide continued home care.

---

### Other Elder Care Programs Are Rare or Less Useful

Two commonly available employee benefits often associated with work and family issues are dependent care assistance plans (DCAP) and counseling. Their usefulness to caregivers, however, is limited. At least 12 million people work for companies that offer DCAPs—flexible spending arrangements allowing employees to exclude dependent care expenses, for either elder or child care, from taxable income. For example, expenditures may be made under a DCAP to pay for child care for young children. Experts and employers believe, however, that employed caregivers generally do not find DCAPs useful for elder care. This situation occurs because elderly dependents generally cannot meet two Internal Revenue code requirements to qualify expenditures on their behalf for exclusion under a DCAP: the dependents must spend at least 8 hours a day with and receive over half their financial support from their caregiver.

Counseling assistance, frequently through an employee assistance program (EAP), is available to at least 5 million employees. While some companies use their EAPs to organize and deliver elder care assistance, many EAP personnel have less knowledge about aging issues than other employee family concerns.

About 3 million employees have access through their employers to a variety of other, less common elder care options, designed specifically to address caregiving needs. These options include support groups for employed caregivers; case management services for disabled elderly dependents; and long-term care insurance coverage for an employee's spouse, parents, or parents-in-law. A very few companies sponsor adult or intergenerational day care centers.

### Future Availability and Other Factors Will Affect Multiple Benefits of Elder Care

Corporate elder care assistance has the potential to benefit employers and their caregiving employees by reducing conflicts between work and family responsibilities. Caregivers with access to flexible work schedules and/or elder care information may be better able to provide the informal care generally preferred by elderly persons. However, many factors will influence this potential benefit, including the extent to which available options are recognized, promoted, and used, as well as the future availability of elder care assistance.

### Current and Future Elder Care Assistance Could Benefit Caregivers, Employers, and the Elderly

Assistance currently available to working caregivers through their employers has the potential to help them continue providing home care for the elderly. According to recent analysis, informal caregiving can reduce the risk of institutionalization for seriously disabled persons by almost one-third. Having a spouse or adult child in the caregiving role for 3 or more years was the leading factor in reduced risk of nursing home admission.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the burden on informal caregivers, including the lack of social and other support, places their care recipients at high risk for nursing home admission. Indeed, evidence shows that caregiver characteristics, including the quality of their support systems, are better predictors of institutional placement than patient characteristics.<sup>9</sup>

We found elder care information and flexibility in balancing work and family roles are available to a substantial portion of the workforce in medium and large companies. The ultimate impact of elder care assistance on the prevalence of informal caregiving, however, depends on the extent to which it is recognized and used effectively by caregivers. Promotion by employers of all options that can facilitate caregiving could help assure

<sup>8</sup>Deborah Pearlman and William Crown, "Alternative Sources of Social Support and Their Impacts on Institutional Risks," *The Gerontologist*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1992), pp. 527-35.

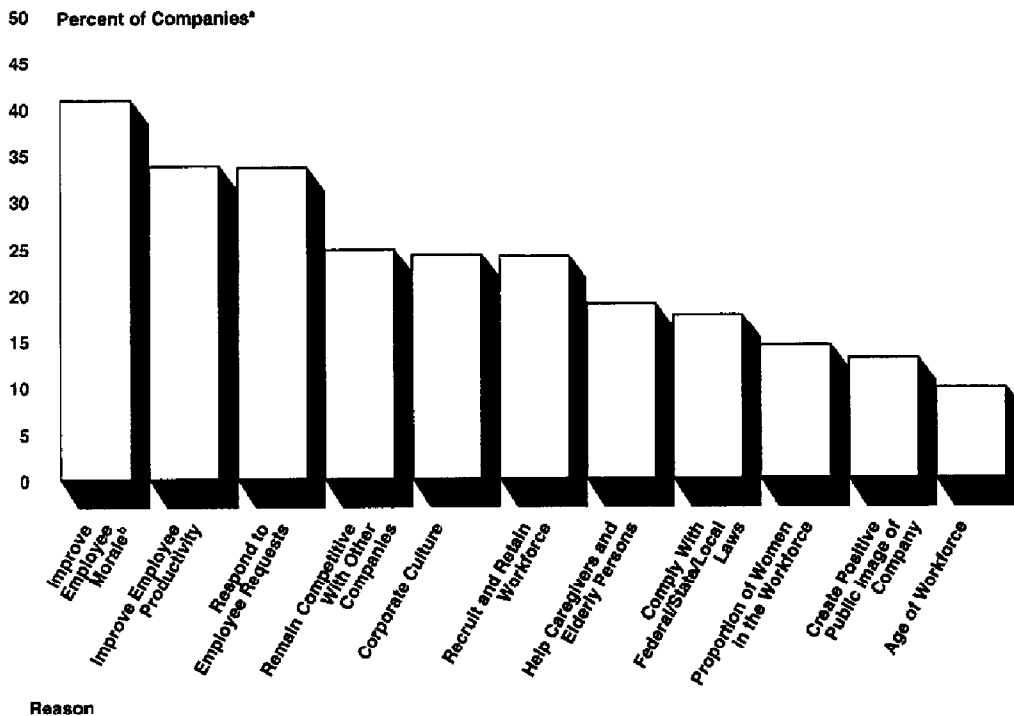
<sup>9</sup>E. Colerick and L. George, "Predictors of Institutionalization Among Caregivers of Patients with Alzheimer's Disease," *Journal of the American Gerontological Society*, No. 34 (1986), pp. 493-98; S. McFall and B. Miller, "Caregiver Burden and Nursing Home Admission of Frail Elderly Persons," *Journal of Gerontology*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (1992), pp. S73-79.

---

that employees use elder care assistance effectively to maintain their caregiving and help their elders avoid or delay institutionalization. National polls have shown the disabled elderly prefer to live in their own homes and communities as long as possible.

While most employees represented in our survey work for companies that are uncertain about increasing their support for elder care, at least 8 million work for companies that are planning to make additional support available or to expand the availability of existing support. Many companies that responded to our survey reported that the perceived future benefits to their organization, such as improved productivity and morale, motivated them to plan new or expanded elder care assistance for their employees. Companies already offering elder care assistance most often cited these business-related reasons as important factors in their decision to do so. Employee requests and corporate culture were also frequently noted as key reasons for implementing elder care policies. These factors were often more influential than demographic ones, such as the percent of women in the workforce or the average staff age, for the one-third of companies in our study that offer specific elder care assistance (see fig. 3).

**Figure 3: Business Factors Are More Important to Companies Than Demographic Ones in Offering Corporate Elder Care Assistance**



\*Percent of companies reporting the factor had a great or very great impact on their decision to offer elder care assistance.

<sup>b</sup>Sampling error for this estimate is plus or minus 14 percent.

A minimum of 1.6 million people work for companies with no plans to expand or offer elder care options. However, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which became effective August 5, 1993, requires all companies with a staff of 50 or more to allow employees up to 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period to care for family members or attend to a personal illness. In addition, at least nine states and the District of Columbia already had laws mandating similar leave options for companies.<sup>10</sup> These state laws, along with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, offer greater flexibility to American workers who previously could not take leave without pay to care for relatives. The

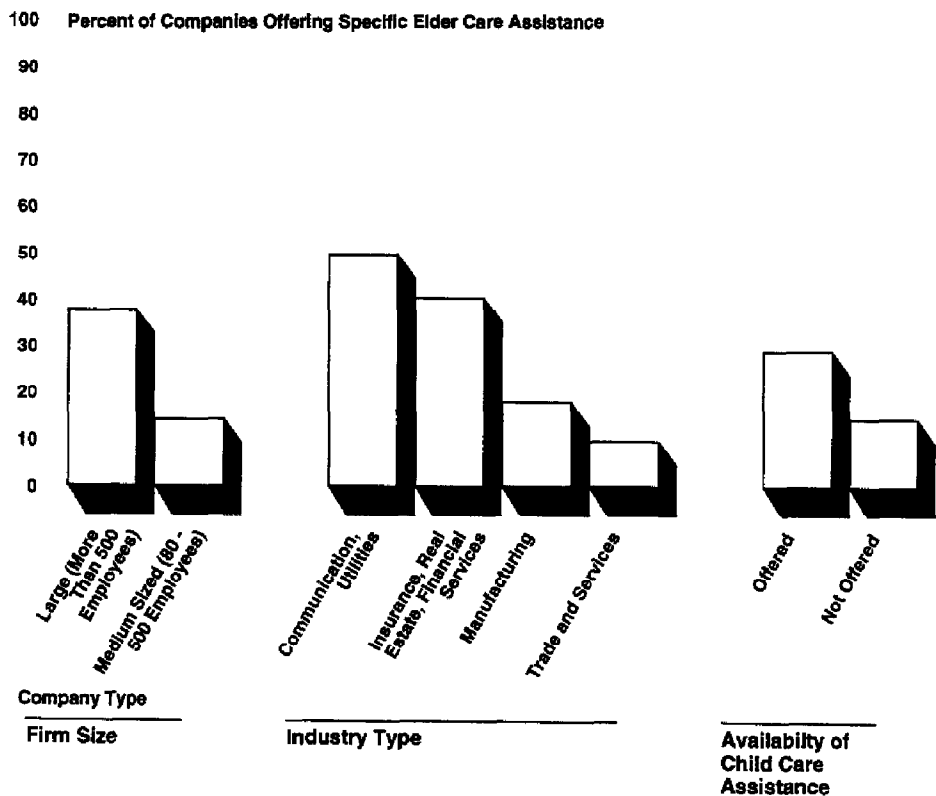
<sup>10</sup>"The Changing Environment of Work and Family," EBRI Issue Brief Number 138 (June 1993), pp. 14-15.

new law may also raise corporate awareness of dependent care issues as workers take advantage of their increased schedule flexibility.

### Variations by Company and Employee Type May Affect Future Growth

Currently, access to elder care policies designed specifically to assist with informal caregiving varies with corporation type. Communication, utility, financial, real estate, and insurance companies are most likely to have elder care assistance for their employees. Companies with more than 500 employees, and those offering child care assistance, also are more likely to have such programs. Smaller companies, and trade, service, and manufacturing firms, in contrast, are least likely to offer policies designed specifically to address caregiving responsibilities (see fig. 4).

**Figure 4: Specific Elder Care Assistance Is Most Common in Larger Firms, Certain Industries, and Companies With Child Care Benefits**



Within companies, policies designed especially for caregivers are frequently not available to all employees. About two-fifths of companies limit elder care assistance options to certain staff. These options are most likely to be available to all full-time and permanent staff, and least likely to be open to part-time and temporary employees. Adoption of elder care programs by more companies may not, therefore, assist all staff with elder care responsibilities. Conversely, there is room for growth in such assistance among companies currently offering elder care options if they expand these options to a larger portion of their workforce.

The implications of current access trends for future employee access to elder care assistance are unclear. The greatest employment growth in the next 10 years is predicted among service industries, which are least likely to be providing elder care assistance to their employees now. In addition, the number of well-educated, professional workers is expected to increase appreciably. Traditionally, this group of highly paid workers has had the greatest access to family support options of all types, including elder care assistance. Companies currently providing child care benefits but not elder care options are another likely source of future elder care assistance, because of their orientation to work/family issues.

### Several Factors May Limit Expansion and Impact of Assistance

While overall access to corporate elder care assistance will probably increase, its growth and impact are likely to be limited by several factors. The majority of employers represented in our survey, 87 percent, said that elder care issues were, at most, of only some importance to their companies. Companies are currently less focused on employees' elder care needs relative to other work/family concerns such as child care. In general, many more employees have child care responsibilities than elder care ones. Generally, firms in our study reported little or no need for elder care assistance among their staff, although most firms had not assessed their employees' elder care needs in the 24 months preceding our survey. However, at least 4 million people work for companies represented in our survey that had recently examined the elder care needs of their staff.

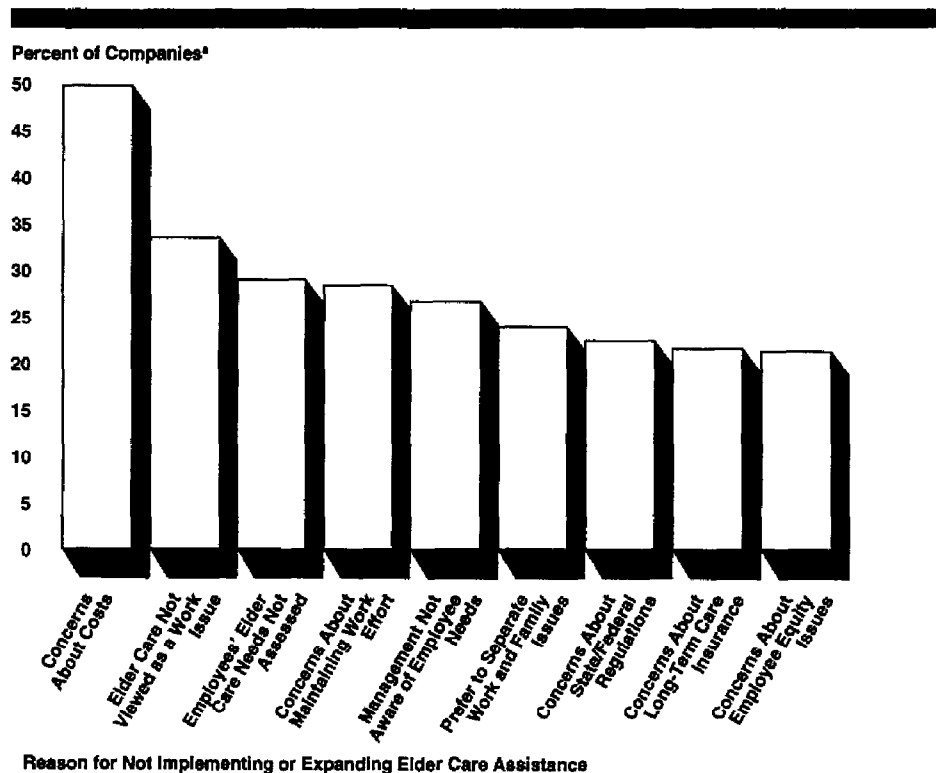
Additionally, many companies have concerns about the perceived costs of offering elder care assistance. Many elder care options, however, such as publishing the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's toll-free Eldercare Locator number<sup>11</sup> or promoting existing flexible schedules, are generally very inexpensive. Nonetheless, cost concerns were the most

<sup>11</sup>The Eldercare Locator number, 1-800-677-1116, is part of the Administration on Aging's National Eldercare Campaign.



frequently cited disincentive to initiating or expanding elder care assistance (see fig. 5). Less common reasons that companies report for not expanding access to elder care assistance include their view of elder care as separate from work or their concerns about maintaining equitable benefits for employees who do not have elder care responsibilities.

**Figure 5: Perceived Cost of Elder Care Assistance Is Leading Reason Companies Do Not Plan to Expand Benefits**



<sup>a</sup>Percent of companies reporting the factor had a great or very great impact on their decision not to expand elder care assistance.

## Conclusions

Many companies have an opportunity to offer enhanced elder care assistance to their employees, often at little cost. This assistance can benefit caregivers by easing work and family conflicts, the elderly by maintaining their independence at home, and employers by improving worker recruitment and retention.

---

Informal caregivers currently play a central role in providing informal care to the elderly in their homes and communities. Companies can benefit when they address work/family conflicts that can adversely affect employees' work performance. The magnitude and types of elder care policies, programs, and practices our survey found to be available have the potential to strengthen the informal care network. Actively promoting existing options that caregivers find useful, especially those that provide flexibility and information about elder care services, can further strengthen the capacity of working caregivers to better balance their work and family roles, thereby enabling them to continue providing care.

---

We discussed a draft of this report with officials from the Department of Health and Human Services, and they generally agreed with our findings. We are sending copies of the report to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and other interested parties. Copies will be made available to others on request. Please call me on (202) 512-7215 if you or your staff have any questions concerning this report. The major contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane L. Ross".

Jane L. Ross  
Associate Director,  
Income Security Issues



# Contents

Letter		1
Appendix I Objectives, Scope, and Methodology	GAO's Survey Methodology	20 20
Appendix II Employee Estimates and Sampling Errors		23
Appendix III Survey Instrument		25
Appendix IV Major Contributors to This Report		45
Tables	Table I.1: GAO Sample of Medium and Large Companies	22
	Table II.1: Selected Estimates of Access to Employee Benefits	24
Figures	Figure 1: Flexible Schedules Are the Most Common Form of Elder Care Assistance	6
	Figure 2: Some Companies Use Promotional Materials to Publicize Their Elder Care Programs to Employees	8
	Figure 3: Business Factors Are More Important to Companies Than Demographic Ones in Offering Corporate Elder Care Assistance	12
	Figure 4: Specific Elder Care Assistance Is Most Common in Larger Firms, Certain Industries, and Companies With Child Care Benefits	13
	Figure 5: Perceived Cost of Elder Care Assistance Is Leading Reason Companies Do Not Plan to Expand Benefits	15

## Abbreviations

DCAP	dependent care assistance plan
EAP	employee assistance program



# Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The Honorable Olympia Snowe asked us to determine (1) the extent and nature of company practices currently offered to assist employees who care for the elderly, (2) planned changes in those practices, and (3) the potential of company practices to further support informal caregivers.

To meet these objectives, we conducted a nationwide mail survey of medium and large companies with 100 or more employees. Furthermore, we interviewed benefits and human resources managers to obtain additional information to supplement the questionnaire. We also reviewed literature on corporate involvement in elder care assistance and informal caregiving, and discussed our work with elder care experts.

We conducted our work between February 1992 and September 1993 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

## GAO's Survey Methodology

### Questionnaire Development and Pretesting

We designed a questionnaire to obtain information about current and future employer practices, policies, and programs that directly or indirectly help employees or retirees in caring for elderly relatives or friends, i.e., elder care. We discussed development of the questionnaire with academic elder care experts at the University of California-Berkeley, the University of Southern California, and Portland State University (OR). We also discussed the questionnaire with representatives from organizations active in elder care research and consulting, including the New York Business Group on Health, the Washington Business Group on Health, the Families and Work Institute, and The Creedon Group. In addition, some of these experts reviewed draft copies of our survey.

Our questionnaire was pretested with officials at six companies in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. These companies represented a range of industry types. Using the pretest results, we revised the questionnaire to try to ensure that (1) respondents would easily be able to provide the information requested and (2) all questions were relevant, clear, and free from bias.

---

## Sample Development

Using data procured from Database America, a company that sells information about businesses in the United States, we constructed a universe of 88,448 for-profit companies with 100 or more employees, excluding to the extent possible companies that did not meet our criteria. Based on this information, we stratified our sample by industry type and employee size (see table I.1). We drew a random sample of 1,200 companies—120 in each of 10 strata. We developed weights for estimation based on the ratio of the sample to the universe in each stratum.

In early November 1992, we mailed the questionnaire to the 1,200 companies selected. A postcard follow-up was sent to all nonrespondents 2 weeks later; additional reminders were sent in January and February 1993. In April 1993, we called all companies that had still not responded to encourage their participation.

---

## Sample Adjustment and Response Rate

Although the initial sample size was 1,200 companies, based on returned questionnaires, telephone calls to company officials, and database research, we adjusted our sample to 730 eligible participants. We excluded entities that were not eligible for the survey, including those that (1) were nonprofit or government agencies, (2) were out of business, (3) were branches or divisions of larger companies, (4) were duplicate entries, or (5) had fewer than 80 employees. We included those reporting between 80 and 99 employees because they reasonably may have had 100 at the time the universe was constructed.

Early analysis of these surveys revealed that several respondents had appreciably more or fewer employees than their stratification criteria indicated. Allowing for some workforce growth or loss, we excluded those companies classified as medium-sized (100-499 employees) but reporting 600 or more staff, and those classified as large (500 or more employees) but reporting 400 or fewer staff to eliminate the bias resulting from their misclassification. Based on these adjustments, our final valid number of respondents was 407. Initial and adjusted sample sizes are shown by stratum in table I.1.

**Appendix I**  
**Objectives, Scope, and Methodology**

**Table I.1: GAO Sample of Medium and Large Companies**

Strata	Size		Adjusted sample <sup>a</sup>	Final responses
	Universe	Sample		
Mining, Construction, Selected Transportation (100-499 employees)	9,335	120	55	25
Manufacturing (100-499 employees)	26,107	120	80	53
Communication and Utilities (100-499 employees)	1,805	120	47	21
Wholesale Trade and Services (100-499 employees)	33,245	120	53	22
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (100-499 employees)	4,375	120	68	31
Mining, Construction, Selected Transportation (500 or more employees)	1,368	120	90	35
Manufacturing (500 or more employees)	5,147	120	106	71
Communication and Utilities (500 or more employees)	335	120	93	68
Wholesale Trade and Services (500 or more employees)	5,550	120	56	24
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (500 or more employees)	1,181	120	82	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,448</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>407</b>

<sup>a</sup>Does not include companies with fewer than 80 employees; government, or private, not-for-profit entities; those that are out of business; or branches or divisions of larger companies.

These 407 responses resulted in an overall response rate of 56 percent. A telephone survey of selected nonrespondents did not reveal any meaningful differences between respondents and nonrespondents. However, we obtained insufficient information to generalize our findings to the universe of nonrespondents.



---

# Employee Estimates and Sampling Errors

---

---

Table II.1 contains estimates, based on our survey data, of the number of employees with access to various types of options that could be used for elder care. In order to be conservative, we focused our report on the "minimum" estimates presented in the table. These minimum estimates were calculated so that there is only about a 5-percent chance that the actual number of employees with the option is lower than the estimate.

**Appendix II**  
**Employee Estimates and Sampling Errors**

**Table II.1: Selected Estimates of Access to Employee Benefits**

Numbers in Millions			
<b>Benefit type</b>	<b>Estimate of total number of employees with access</b>	<b>One-tailed sampling error</b>	<b>Minimum number of employees with access</b>
Paid sick leave	14.1	8.3	5.8
Paid family leave	a	a	a
Other paid leave, excluding vacation	2.6	1.6	1.0
Leave without pay	27.0	8.9	18.1
Flex-time	12.4	6.0	6.4
Compressed work schedule	7.4	4.6	2.8
Flex-place	4.7	4.3	0.4
Part-time employment with benefits	11.6	5.4	6.2
Temporary reduction in work hours	13.7	7.2	6.5
Job-sharing	7.7	5.3	2.4
Elder care reference materials	7.0	2.8	4.2
Seminars on aging and elder care	5.6	2.6	3.0
Caregiver information fairs	2.8	1.6	1.2
Company campaign to publicize elder care program	4.2	1.8	2.4
In-house elder care information and referral services	2.9	1.7	1.2
Contracts with outside agencies to provide information and referral	4.8	2.0	2.8
Support groups for caregivers	5.8	3.3	2.5
Counseling on legal, personal, or financial elder care issues	13.3	8.3	5.0
Case management for the elderly	1.8	1.2	0.6
Employer-sponsored adult or intergenerational day care	a	a	a
Dependent care reimbursement plans	20.9	9.0	11.9
Cash subsidies for respite care	a	a	a
Cash subsidies for in-home services	a	a	a
Cash subsidies for other elder care	a	a	a
Long-term care insurance for nursing home care	3.2	1.7	1.5
Long-term care insurance for home and community-based care	3.1	1.7	1.4

aToo few cases for valid statistical analysis.

---

# Survey Instrument

---

In this appendix, we present our survey instrument and a summary of the responses. Each question includes the weighted summary statistics and the unweighted actual number of respondents that answered each question. In each case, we use the format we believe best represents the data, including frequencies, medians and ranges. Because of the extreme variation among responses, means are not shown.

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

**U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
SURVEY OF COMPANIES REGARDING ELDER CARE PRACTICES, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

**INTRODUCTION**

The U.S. General Accounting Office has been asked by the Congress to conduct a study on the extent, if any, to which companies have practices, policies or programs that, directly or indirectly, help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends. This is often referred to as elder care. Even if your company does not have any such policies, we are interested in your response. Our objective is to inform Congress on emerging elder care activities in the private sector that may affect federal programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.

We are surveying your company as part of a nationwide random sample of businesses to ask about the extent and types of practices, policies, and programs, if any, which businesses have regarding elder care. We need information about each company's experiences, even if the company does not have any of these practices, policies or programs, in order to obtain an accurate picture of what companies are doing.

Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used in any way to identify your company and its practices. They will be combined with those of other respondents and summarized as part of a report to the Congress. We also will send a copy of the report to survey respondents.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

This questionnaire should be completed by the person who is most knowledgeable about employee policies and work/family issues in your company. This person may wish to seek the help of others in completing this questionnaire.

Please answer the questions for your company, that is, the company to which this questionnaire was addressed. Do not include information for a parent company or a subsidiary group that your company may own.

Throughout this questionnaire, we will be using the terms elder care to mean any employer practice, policy or program which directly or indirectly helps employees or retirees in caring for elderly relatives or friends.

If you have any questions, please call Jim Musselwhite, collect, at (202) 512-7259. Please return the completed questionnaire within 10 working days of receipt, in the enclosed pre-addressed business envelope. If the envelope is misplaced, please send your questionnaire to:

Margaret Nicklas/Jim Musselwhite  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
NGB/Income Security Issues  
441 G St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20548

**INDUSTRY AND COMPANY SIZE**

As mentioned before, please answer the following questions for your company, that is the company to which this questionnaire was addressed. Do not include information for a parent company or a subsidiary group that your company may own.

1. Which of the following best describes your organization? (*Check one.*) n=407
  1. 100% Private-for-profit
  2. 0% Private non-profit
  3. 0% Public (or Governmental)
  4. 0% Quasi-public (or governmental)
  5. 0% Other (*Please specify.*)
2. Does this company have any field offices, plants, or branches? (*Check one.*) n=404
  1. 59% Yes -->(GO TO QUESTION 3)
  2. 41% No -->(GO TO QUESTION 5)

Appendix III  
Survey Instrument

3. How many field offices, plants, or branches does this company have? (Enter number.) n=322

Median=4 field offices, plants, or branches

4. Is your location considered the corporate headquarters office for your company? (Check one.) n=334

1. 84% Yes  
2. 16% No

5. In what type of industry does your company primarily conduct its work? (Check one.) n=405

1. <1% Agriculture/forestry/fisheries  
2. 1% Communication  
3. 3% Construction  
4. 5% Finance  
5. 1% Insurance  
6. <1% Real estate  
7. 48% Manufacturing  
8. 2% Mining  
9. 6% Retail trade  
10. 15% Services  
11. 1% Transportation  
12. 1% Utilities  
13. 8% Wholesale trade  
14. 9% Other industry (Please specify.)  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. About how many full-time and part-time employees work at your company, including all locations? (Enter number.) n=407

1. Number of full-time Range = 30 - 240,000 employees  
2. Number of part-time Range = 0 - 15,000 employees

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

**PRACTICES, POLICIES, OR PROGRAMS THAT AFFECT ELDER CARE**

7. Listed below are practices, policies, or programs that a company might have which could, directly or indirectly, help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends. We have divided these into six areas: leave policies, alternate work schedules, education, information and referral, support services and financial arrangements. In the following please:

(A) check whether or not your company has each of the following practices, policies, or programs, and if the company does,

(B) check whether or not each of these practices, policies, or programs is available to all of your company's employees, and if not, to what percentage it is available.

PRACTICE, POLICY, OR PROGRAM	(A) Does company have practice, policy or program? (Check one for each row.)					If yes -->	(B) If have, what is availability to employees?	
	No, has never considered (1)	No, doesn't have, but has considered in the past (2)	No, doesn't have, but is considering (3)	No, but will have within next three years (4)	Yes, have (5)		Is this available to all employees?	If no, to about what percentage is this available?
							Yes	No
<b>LEAVE POLICIES</b>								
A. Paid sick leave which an employee could use to care for elderly relatives or friends n=398	64 %	4 %	3 %	<1 %	29 %	If yes --> n=108	72 %	28 % Range: 3% - 99 %
B. Paid family leave which an employee could use to care for elderly relatives n=399	84 %	5 %	6 %	1 %	4 %	If yes --> n=30	88 %	12 % Range: 25% - 99 %
C. Excluding vacation leave, any other type of paid leave which an employee could use to care for elderly relatives or friends n=395	83 %	4 %	3 %	<1 %	10 %	If yes --> n=39	56 %	44 % Range: 3% - 95 %
D. Leave-without-pay usable to care for elderly relatives or friends n=398	30 %	2 %	3 %	<1 %	65 %	If yes --> n=278	90 %	10 % Range: 10% - 99 %

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

PRACTICE, POLICY, OR PROGRAM	(A) Does company have practice, policy or program? (Check one for each row.)					If yes -->	(B) If have, what is availability to employees?		
	No, has never considered (1)	No, doesn't have, but has considered in the past (2)	No, doesn't have, but is considering (3)	No, but will have within next three years (4)	Yes, have (5)		Is this available to all employees?		If no, to about what percentage is this available?
							Yes	No	
<b>ALTERNATE WORK SCHEDULES</b>									
E. Flex-time which allows an employee to choose arrival/departure hours during a fixed hour work day and/or mid-day flex n=404	54%	13%	5%	<1%	28%	If yes --> n=159	31%	69%	Range: 1% - 95%
F. Compressed work schedule which allows an employee to work more hours a day with a shorter work week n=402	60%	13%	6%	<1%	20%	If yes --> n=105	26%	74%	Range: 1% - 95%
G. Flex-place which allows an employee to work at home or "telecommute" n=404	83%	9%	2%	1%	6%	If yes --> n=50	13%	87%	Range: 1% - 50%
H. Part-time employment which allows an employee to work permanently in a part- time position with partial or full benefits n=405	49%	6%	1%	1%	43%	If yes --> n=194	36%	64%	Range: 1% - 99%
I. Allowing temporary reduction in work hours n=396	51%	4%	2%	<1%	43%	If yes --> n=137	73%	27%	Range: 5% - 98%
J. Job-sharing which enables two part-time employees to share one full-time job n=400	73%	9%	6%	<1%	12%	If yes --> n=89	37%	63%	Range: 1% - 80%

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

PRACTICE, POLICY, OR PROGRAM	(A) Does company have practice, policy or program? (Check one for each row.)					If yes -->	(B) If have, what is availability to employees		
	No, has never considered (1)	No, doesn't have, but has considered in the past (2)	No, doesn't have, but is considering (3)	No, but will have within next three years (4)	Yes, have (5)		Is this available to all employees?		If no, to about what percentage is this available?
							Yes	No	
<b>EDUCATION AND INFORMATION/ REFERRAL</b>									
K. Elder care reference materials such as brochures, videos, newspaper articles, etc. n=405	81%	5%	6%	1%	7%	If yes --> n=68	96%	4%	Range: 25% - 99%
L. Seminars on aging or elder care issues n=406	83%	5%	7%	1%	5%	If yes --> n=50	89%	11%	Range: 5% - 99%
M. Caregiver information fairs where elder care service providers are invited to market their services n=406	90%	3%	4%	1%	2%	If yes --> n=28	75%	25%	Range: 15% - 99%
N. Company campaign to promote or publicize its elder care program to company employees using fliers, newsletters, speakers, etc. n=406	91%	3%	3%	1%	2%	If yes --> n=37	88%	12%	Range: 33% - 99%
O. In-house elder care information and referral services provided by company to help employees access community services for the elderly n=407	84%	3%	6%	<1%	7%	If yes --> n=47	90%	10%	Range: 10% - 90%



**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

PRACTICE, POLICY, OR PROGRAM	(A) Does company have practice, policy or program? (Check one for each row.)					If yes -->	(B) If have, what is availability to employees?		
	No, has never considered (1)	No, doesn't have, but has considered in the past (2)	No, doesn't have, but is considering (3)	No, but will have within next three years (4)	Yes, have (5)		Is this available to all employees?		If no, to about what percentage is this available?
							Yes	No	
P. Training to inform managers about company's elder care practices, policies or programs and/or increase awareness of managers regarding employee participation in these activities n=407	89%	2%	5%	1%	3%	If yes --> n=19	93%	7%	25%
Q. Contract(s) with outside agencies to provide elder care information and referral services to employees n=406	91%	1%	3%	<1%	4%	If yes --> n=49	80%	20%	Range: 50% - 99%
<b>ELDER CARE SUPPORT SERVICES</b>									
R. Support group(s) for employees with elder care responsibilities n=407	92%	3%	3%	<1%	2%	If yes --> n=13	98%	2%	33%
S. Individual counseling on legal, financial, or personal affairs related to elder care responsibilities n=405	88%	1%	2%	<1%	10%	If yes --> n=78	94%	6%	Range: 10% - 99%
T. Either assessment or coordination of employees' older relatives or friends' social service needs by the company or an outside agency-- also known as case/care management n=406	95%	1%	2%	<1%	2%	If yes --> n=19	100%	0%	N/A

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

PRACTICE, POLICY, OR PROGRAM	(A) Does company have practice, policy or program? (Check one for each row.)					If yes -->	(B) If have, what is availability to employees?		
	No, has never considered (1)	No, doesn't have, but has considered in the past (2)	No, doesn't have, but is considering (3)	No, but will have within next three years (4)	Yes, have (5)		Is this available to all employees?		If no, to about what percentage is this available?
							Yes	No	
U. Having employer-sponsored adult or intergenerational day care n=404	96%	1%	2%	0%	1%	If yes --> n=1	100%	0%	N/A
<b>FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS</b>									
V. Flexible spending accounts (FSA)-- also known as dependent care assistance plan (DCAP) or reimbursement account usable for elder care n=406	68%	7%	5%	<1%	19%	If yes --> n=160	65%	35%	Range: 10% - 99%
W. Cash subsidies for respite care for employee's elderly relative or friend n=402	97%	2%	1%	0%	<1%	If yes --> n=1	100%	0%	N/A
X. Cash subsidies for elder in-home services such as home health or homemaker and chore n=405	98%	<1%	1%	0%	<1%	If yes --> n=2	100%	0%	N/A
Y. Cash subsidies for other elder care services n=404	98%	1%	1%	0%	0%	If yes --> n=0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Z. Long term care insurance covering either spouse, parents, or parents-in-law for nursing home care n=403	88%	3%	2%	2%	5%	If yes --> n=34	89%	11%	Range: 75% - 97%

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

PRACTICE, POLICY, OR PROGRAM		(A) Does company have practice, policy or program? (Check one for each row.)					If yes -->	(B) If have, what is availability to employees?		
		No, has never considered (1)	No, doesn't have, but has considered in the past (2)	No, doesn't have, but is considering (3)	No, but will have within next three years (4)	Yes, have (5)		Is this available to all employees?		If no, to about what percentage is this available?
								Yes	No	
AA.	Long term care insurance covering either spouse, parents, or parents-in-law for home and community based services n=403	86%	4%	3%	2%	5%	If yes --> n=30	98%	2%	Range: 30% - 80%
BB.	Other practice, policy or program (Specify.) n=214						If yes -->			
CC.	Other practice, policy or program (Specify.) n=192						If yes -->			

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

8. Did you check "yes" to any of parts "K" to "CC" in Question 7 (pages 5-8), that is, does your company have any practices, policies, or programs related to elder care education, information and referral, support services or financial arrangements? (*Check one.*) n=487

1. 32% Yes --> (GO TO QUESTION 9)
2. 68% No --> (GO TO QUESTION 14 ON PAGE 12)

9. Consider the practices, policies, or programs that your company currently has, as indicated in parts "K" to "CC" in Question 7. Are all of these practices, policies, or programs available to all employees? (*Check one.*) n=230

1. 67% Yes -->(GO TO QUESTION 11)
2. 33% No -->(GO TO QUESTION 10)

10. Please indicate whether or not each of the following categories of employees in your company, for the most part, have these elder care practices, policies, or programs. (Question 7 - parts "K" to "CC") available to them? (*Check one for each row.*)

CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYEES	Yes (1)	No (2)	Does Not Apply (3)
1. Full-time employees n=68	82%	5%	13%
2. Part-time employees n=65	47%	36%	17%
3. Permanent employees n=65	80%	5%	14%
4. Temporary employees n=61	2%	70%	28%
5. Employees in all occupations n=66	52%	32%	16%
6. Employees in all geographic locations n=63	58%	28%	14%
7. Other employee categories ( <i>Please specify.</i> ) n=33			

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

11. Listed below are reasons why a company might adopt a practice, policy, or program to help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends. In your opinion, how much importance, if any, did each of the following reasons have in your company's decision to adopt its current elder care practices, policies, or programs?

**(CHECK ONE FOR EACH REASON.)**

REASON	Little or No Importance (1)	Some Importance (2)	Moderate Importance (3)	Great Importance (4)	Very Great Importance (5)	Does Not Apply (6)
1. To recruit and retain work force n=203	21%	19%	20%	13%	11%	16%
2. To improve employee productivity while on the job n=201	12%	19%	19%	23%	11%	16%
3. To remain competitive with other companies n=203	10%	23%	26%	18%	7%	17%
4. To respond to union negotiations for benefits n=199	36%	1%	4%	2%	5%	53%
5. To improve employee morale n=202	8%	22%	14%	27%	14%	15%
6. To respond to employee requests n=200	14%	18%	14%	24%	9%	21%
7. To help caregivers and elderly persons n=199	12%	21%	23%	14%	5%	25%
8. To fulfill community responsibility n=202	18%	22%	24%	7%	1%	28%
9. To create positive public image of company n=202	15%	14%	34%	11%	2%	24%
10. To comply with either federal, state, or local laws/regulations n=198	29%	12%	9%	11%	6%	32%
11. Other reason (Please specify.) n=24						

12. In your opinion, how much influence, if any, did each of the following factors have on your company's decision to adopt its current practices, policies, or programs to help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends?

**(CHECK ONE FOR EACH FACTOR.)**

FACTOR	Little/No Influence (1)	Some Influence (2)	Moderate Influence (3)	Great Influence (4)	Very Great Influence (5)	Does Not Apply (6)
1. Age of work force n=201	39%	18%	21%	7%	3%	12%
2. Media attention on work/family elder care issues n=200	39%	24%	18%	5%	1%	13%
3. Personal experiences of management n=199	35%	25%	16%	7%	1%	17%
4. Corporate culture n=202	16%	16%	31%	21%	4%	13%
5. Proportion of women in work force n=198	44%	13%	17%	11%	3%	12%
6. Other influence (Please specify.) n=29						

Appendix III  
Survey Instrument

13. Regardless of whether or not they were implemented because of elder care concerns, please indicate the order, from the first to the most recent, in which the following categories/subcategories of current practices, policies, or programs were implemented in your company. (Enter order-- 1=first, 2=second, 3=third, etc; if two categories/subcategories, were implemented at the same time, enter the same number; if not implemented, enter "NA".)

TYPES

- A. 1st=71% LEAVE POLICIES which include:  
 2nd=10% · Paid sick leave  
 3rd=7% · Paid family leave  
 4th=<1% · Any paid type of leave  
 5th=1% other than vacation leave  
 NA=12% · Leave without pay  
 n=199
- B. 1st=10% ALTERNATE WORK  
 2nd=46% SCHEDULES which include:  
 3rd=15% · Flex-time  
 4th=2% · Compressed work schedule  
 5th=<1% · Flex-place  
 6th=<1% · Part-time employment with  
 NA=27% partial or full benefits  
 n=194 · Temporary reduction in work  
 hours  
 · Job-sharing
- C. 1st=6% EDUCATION which includes:  
 2nd=4% · Elder care reference materials  
 3rd=18% · Seminars on aging or elder  
 4th=7% care issues  
 5th=3% · Caregiver information fairs  
 NA=62% · Company campaign to  
 n=178 promote elder care  
 · Training for managers to  
 inform and increase awareness  
 of elder care
- D. 1st=6% INFORMATION/REFERRAL  
 2nd=9% which include:  
 3rd=14% · In-house elder care  
 4th=9% information and referral  
 5th=2% services  
 6th=1% · Contract(s) with outside  
 NA=60% agencies to promote elder care  
 n=174

TYPES

- E. 1st=2% ELDER CARE SUPPORT  
 2nd=1% SERVICES which include:  
 3rd=14% · Support group(s) for  
 4th=2% employees with elder care  
 5th=5% responsibilities  
 6th=3% · Individual counseling on  
 NA=74% legal, financial, or personal  
 n=171 affairs related to elder care  
 responsibilities  
 · Services received by older  
 relatives and friends of  
 employees  
 · On-site intergenerational day  
 care
- F. 1st=16% FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS  
 2nd=25% which include:  
 3rd=25% · Flexible spending account  
 4th=3% (FSA) also known as  
 5th=<1% Dependent Care Assistance  
 6th=1% Plan (DCAP) or  
 NA=30% reimbursement account for  
 n=198 elder care  
 · Cash subsidies for respite or  
 adult day care  
 · Cash subsidies for in-home  
 services such as home health  
 or homemaker and chore  
 · Cash subsidies for other  
 services  
 · Long term care insurance  
 covering spouse, parents, or  
 parents-in-law for nursing  
 home care  
 · Long term care insurance  
 covering spouse, parents, or  
 parents-in-law for home and  
 community-based services

- G. \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER (Please specify.)  
 n=32

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

14. In your experience, how great a need, if any, does your company have for elder care policies, programs, and policies? *(Check one.)* n=387

- 1. 58% Little or no need
- 2. 31% Some need
- 3. 9% Moderate need
- 4. 1% Great need
- 5. 1% Very great need

15. In part (A), please check whether or not your company has ever used each of the following methods for assessing employee needs for elder care. If yes, please check in part (B) if this method is used periodically or not.

METHOD	(A) Used method? <i>(Check one for each method.)</i>			(B) Does the company use this method periodically? <i>(Check one for each method if checked yes in (A).)</i>	
	Yes (1)	No (2)		Yes (1)	No (2)
1. Conducted review of either recruitment, attendance, retention, or turnover rates of employees n=388	17%	83%	If yes --> n=84	90%	10%
2. Conducted focus groups which included questions on employees' needs related to elder care responsibilities n=389	8%	92%	If yes --> n=38	61%	39%
3. Conducted a survey of employees' needs, which included questions on elder care needs n=390	11%	89%	If yes --> n=73	64%	36%
4. Met either as a work/family or elder care committee within the company n=389	6%	94%	If yes --> n=39	86%	14%
5. Met outside the company, as a member of either a business group, coalition, or with other organizations involved in work/family issues n=386	14%	86%	If yes --> n=85	70%	30%
6. Other method <i>(Please specify.)</i> n=77			If yes -->		

16. In the last 24 months, has your company assessed its employees' need for elder care? *(Check one.)* n=320

- 1. 13% Yes
- 2. 87% No

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

**POSSIBLE FUTURE PLANS FOR ELDER CARE**

17. In the next three years, will your company initiate any new-- or expand the availability of existing-- practices, policies, or programs to help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends? (*Check one.*) n=393

1. 5% Yes, will do both-- will initiate new and expand availability of existing practices, policies, or programs
2. 2% Yes, will initiate new practices policies, --->(GO TO QUESTION 18)  
or programs only
3. 2% Yes, will expand availability of existing practices, policies, or programs only
4. 22% No, neither  
--->(GO TO QUESTION 20, ON PAGE 15)
5. 68% Don't know

18. In your opinion, of how much importance, if any, is each of the following reasons in your company's future plans to initiate new/expand the availability of existing practices, policies, or programs to help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends?

**(CHECK ONE FOR EACH REASON.)**

REASON	Little or No Importance (1)	Some Importance (2)	Moderate Importance (3)	Great Importance (4)	Very Great Importance (5)	Does Not Apply (6)
1. To recruit and retain work force n=87	13%	12%	26%	16%	32%	<1%
2. To improve employee productivity while on the job n=86	15%	12%	16%	22%	36%	0%
3. To remain competitive with other companies n=87	6%	10%	34%	24%	25%	0%
4. To respond to union negotiations for benefits n=85	42%	10%	5%	1%	1%	42%
5. To improve employee morale n=85	<1%	22%	22%	32%	23%	0%
6. To respond to employee requests n=86	8%	21%	21%	32%	16%	3%
7. To help caregivers and elderly persons n=87	8%	32%	32%	15%	11%	2%
8. To fulfill community responsibility n=86	12%	32%	24%	30%	<1%	2%
9. To create positive public image of company n=86	10%	14%	38%	23%	13%	2%
10. To comply with either federal, state, or local laws/regulations n=85	20%	6%	11%	14%	35%	13%
11. Other ( <i>Please specify.</i> ) n=7						



**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

19. In your opinion, how much influence, if any, will each of the following factors have in your company's future plans to initiate new/expand the availability of existing practices, policies, or programs that help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends?

(CHECK ONE FOR EACH FACTOR.)

FACTOR	Little or No Influence (1)	Some Influence (2)	Moderate Influence (3)	Great Influence (4)	Very Great Influence (5)	Does Not Apply (6)
1. Age of work force n=99	22%	24%	26%	16%	11%	0%
2. Media attention on work/family elder care issues n=99	15%	28%	39%	16%	1%	0%
3. Personal experiences of management n=98	12%	16%	45%	20%	8%	0%
4. Corporate culture n=99	7%	18%	43%	20%	12%	0%
5. Proportion of women in work force n=99	23%	24%	40%	8%	4%	<1%
6. Other factor (Please specify.) n=13						

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

20. Listed below are potential reasons why a company might not implement any, or might not implement more, practices, policies, or programs that help employees care for their elderly relatives or friends. In your opinion, overall, to what extent, if any, is each of the following a reason why your company does not have any/for is not implementing more, elder care practices, policies, or programs.

*(CHECK ONE FOR EACH REASON.)*

REASON FOR NO/NOT MORE ELDER CARE	Little or No Extent (1)	Some Extent (2)	Moderate Extent (3)	Great Extent (4)	Very Great Extent (5)
1. Company has met employees' elder care needs n=370	75%	12%	9%	4%	0%
2. Company has determined that employees have little or no elder care needs or responsibilities n=365	60%	17%	8%	10%	5%
3. Management is not aware of employees' elder care needs n=374	38%	21%	14%	14%	13%
4. Company has not assessed need for elder care n=369	41%	17%	12%	14%	15%
5. Company has determined that employees have a need for elder care, but has not yet developed an approach to meet the need n=365	78%	10%	8%	3%	1%
6. Company prefers to keep work issues separate from private family matters n=368	38%	17%	21%	8%	15%
7. Company has concerns about equity issues for employees who do not have elder care needs n=366	41%	20%	18%	10%	11%
8. Company is not able to provide similar elder care programs for employees in different geographic locations n=360	72%	10%	9%	5%	4%
9. Company has concerns about cost(s) related to implementing elder care policies or programs n=380	21%	17%	12%	22%	28%
10. Employees do not view elder care as a work issue n=371	32%	20%	15%	20%	14%
11. Company has concerns about difficulty in scheduling employee hours to maintain work effort and provide elder care n=373	36%	21%	15%	12%	16%
12. Company is not familiar with flexible spending accounts (FSAs), also known as Dependent Care Assistance Plans (DCAPs), for elder care n=360	60%	14%	11%	9%	5%
13. Company has concerns about state and local laws and regulations n=367	47%	20%	10%	7%	15%
14. Company has concerns about issues related to private long term care insurance n=370	42%	20%	17%	8%	13%
15. Other reason <i>(Please specify.)</i> n=25					

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

**OPINIONS ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ROLE IN EMPLOYER ELDER CARE**

21. In your opinion, should the federal government have any role in the following employer elder care activities? If yes, please check how useful, if at all, each of the following activities would be for your company if each was provided by the federal government.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ROLE IN ELDER CARE ACTIVITY	(CHECK ONE FOR EACH ROW.) Should the federal government have any role in this elder care activity?			(IF YES, CHECK ONE FOR EACH ROW.)			
	Yes	No		Not Useful (1)	Somewhat Useful (2)	Moderately Useful (3)	Very Useful (4)
1. Providing information to companies about area agencies on aging which offer information on non-government as well as government services for the elderly n=394	72%	28%	If yes ---> n=277	3%	45%	28%	24%
2. Requiring that vendors which supply elder care services meet uniform standards n=396	67%	33%	If yes ---> n=279	6%	33%	24%	38%
3. Offering technical advice/assistance to businesses that are interested in developing elder care programs n=397	64%	36%	If yes ---> n=222	3%	48%	31%	18%
4. Disseminating information to the public about elder care activities involving employers n=393	49%	51%	If yes ---> n=180	1%	52%	27%	20%
5. Providing either financial assistance or incentives to small businesses to develop elder care programs n=394	49%	51%	If yes ---> n=180	6%	37%	26%	31%
6. Improving the long term care system n=390	74%	26%	If yes ---> n=280	2%	30%	23%	45%
7. Passing laws or developing regulations which govern company provision of elder care n=395	19%	81%	If yes ---> n=65	6%	41%	19%	33%
8. Other activity (Please specify.) n=7			If yes --->				

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

22. Consider the elder care activities listed in the previous question. In your opinion, how great a role, if any, should the federal government have, in general, in providing assistance to companies to support their elder care activities? (*Check one.*) n=400

1. 21% No role  
2. 22% Little role  
3. 36% Moderate role  
4. 8% Great role  
5. 6% Very great role  
6. 6% No opinion/Don't know

23. Once again, consider the elder care activities listed in the question 21. In your opinion, how great a role, if any, should the federal government have in regulating elder care activities in companies? (*Check one.*) n=398

1. 47% No role  
2. 25% Little role  
3. 15% Moderate role  
4. 2% Great role  
5. 5% Very great role  
6. 7% No opinion/Don't know

**PRACTICES, POLICIES, OR PROGRAMS THAT AFFECT CHILD CARE**

24. Does your company currently have any practices, policies, or programs that directly or indirectly help employees with their child care? (*Check one.*) n=404

1. 30% Yes --> (*GO TO QUESTION 25*)  
2. 70% No --> (*GO TO QUESTION 27*)

25. Did your company develop child care practices, policies, or programs before or after developing elder care? (*Check one.*) n=217

1. 22% Before elder care  
2. 33% At roughly the same time  
3. 0% After elder care  
4. 45% Not applicable - do not have any elder care

26. Does your company have each of the following types of child care practices, policies, or programs?

*(Check one for each row.)*

CHILD CARE PRACTICES, POLICIES, OR PROGRAMS	Yes	No
1. Offer seminars on child care issues n=212	13%	87%
2. Provide information and referral services for child care n=211	40%	60%
3. Offer dependent care assistance plans (DCAPs)-- also known as flexible spending account (FSAs) or reimbursement accounts n=217	69%	31%
4. Have employer-sponsored child care center n=211	3%	97%
5. Subsidize employees for child care services n=211	5%	95%
6. Have other child care practices, policies or programs ( <i>Please specify.</i> ) n=161		

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

**GENERAL COMPANY INFORMATION**

27. About what percentage, if any, of your company's work force are professional-level staff, that is, managers or administrators, professionals (such as attorneys, accountants, etc.), technical specialists, or sales representatives? (*Enter percentage; if none, enter "0".*) n=393

Median = 20%      are managers,  
administrators,  
professionals, technical  
specialists, or sales  
representatives

28. About what percentage of your company's work force is male and what percentage is female? (*Enter percentage; if none, enter "0".*) n=388

1. Male      Median = 60%  
2. Female      Median = 40%

29. What is the average age, approximately, of your company's work force? (*Enter number of years.*) n=370

Median = 36 years

30. About what percentage of your company's work force is 40 years old or older? (*Enter percentage; if none, enter "0".*) n=356

Median = 35%

31. In your opinion, currently, how important, if at all, is the issue of elder care to your company? (*Check one.*) n=400

1. 50% Little or no importance  
2. 37% Some importance  
3. 11% Moderate importance  
4. 1% Great importance  
5. 1% Very great importance

32. In your opinion, compared to your current situation, in 10 years, will the issue of elder care be more or less important to your company? (*Check one.*) n=393

1. 7% Much more important  
2. 47% More important  
3. 45% About the same  
4. 0% Less important  
5. 1% Much less important

**COMMENTS**

33. In your opinion, what effect, if any, will elder care issues, and your company's approach to them, have on your company's operations in the next three years?

**Appendix III  
Survey Instrument**

34. Please provide below any comments that you might have about issues related to elder care in companies, or about any questions in this survey.

Please provide the following information concerning the person responsible for completing this questionnaire, so that we may call to clarify information, if necessary.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

-----  
TO ORDER A FREE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF GAO REPORTS ON AGING (Check box.)

- ☐ Please send me the latest annotated bibliography of GAO reports on aging issues, such as Medicare and Medicaid, income security and social services.

LMM/HEHS/11-2-92

## Major Contributors to This Report

---

### Health, Education, and Human Services Division, Washington, D.C.

Cynthia Bascetta, Assistant Director, (202) 512-7207  
Wayne Dow, Assistant Director  
James C. Musselwhite, Jr., Senior Social Science Analyst  
Luann Moy, Senior Social Science Analyst  
Margaret Nicklas, Evaluator  
Andrew Eschtruth, Evaluator  
Amy Ward, Research Assistant

---

### Office of the General Counsel, Washington, D.C.

George H. Bogart, Attorney-Adviser

---

### Detroit Regional Office

Donald P. Ingersoll, Regional Assignment Manager  
Sara Koerber Galantowicz, Evaluator-in-Charge





---

### **Ordering Information**

**The first copy of each GAO report and testimony is free. Additional copies are \$2 each. Orders should be sent to the following address, accompanied by a check or money order made out to the Superintendent of Documents, when necessary. Orders for 100 or more copies to be mailed to a single address are discounted 25 percent.**

**Orders by mail:**

**U.S. General Accounting Office  
P.O. Box 6015  
Gaithersburg, MD 20884-6015**

**or visit:**

**Room 1100  
700 4th St. NW (corner of 4th and G Sts. NW)  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
Washington, DC**

**Orders may also be placed by calling (202) 512-6000  
or by using fax number (301) 258-4066.**

**Each day, GAO issues a list of newly available reports and testimony. To receive facsimile copies of the daily list or any list from the past 30 days, please call (301) 258-4097 using a touchtone phone. A recorded menu will provide information on how to obtain these lists.**

---

**United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548-0001**

<p><b>Bulk Mail Postage &amp; Fees Paid GAO Permit No. G100</b></p>
---

**Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use \$300**

**Address Correction Requested**

---