LABOR OF LOVE:
A Study of Attitudes toward Caregiving and Senior Care Services

Trusted Media Brands Inner Circle Community – January 2018
Objective

- Gain insight on attitudes of caregivers toward home care services

Survey

- A survey was launched to members of the Trusted Media Brands Inner Circle Community
- Timing: December 2017
- Total Responses: 257
- Total Comments: 167
More than half (51%) are CAREGIVERS OR RECEIVE CARE IN THE HOME

Q: Are you currently a caregiver to a friend/relative in the home or are you receiving care in the home?

49% I am neither a caregiver nor receive care
44% I am a caregiver or coordinate others who provide caregiving services
7% I receive care from someone else in the home
Among current caregivers, most are Adult Children or a Spouse/Partner.

Q: What is your relationship to the care recipient?

I wish I had been better educated on what sources of help there were available for elderly people to make more informed decisions on my mother’s care.
Q: What is the main problem or illness of the person receiving care?

- Alzheimer's/Dementia: 25%
- Frailty: 18%
- Cancer: 12%
- Heart Disease: 10%
- Mental/Emotional Illness/Depression: 7%
- Stroke: 5%
- Arthritis: 4%
- Diabetes: 4%
- Back Problems: 2%
- Surgery/Wounds: 1%
TIME SPENT AS A CAREGIVER

Length of Time as Caregiver

- 21.62% Less than 6 months
- 7.21% 6 months-1 year
- 17.12% 1-4 years
- 9.91% 4-10 years
- 44.14% 10 years or more

Hours Spent Per Week as Caregiver

- 10% <5 Hours Per Week
- 19% 5-10 Hours Per Week
- 21% 10-20 Hours Per Week
- 50% >20 Hours Per Week

Q1: How long have you been a caregiver?  Q2: How much time do you spend with caregiver duties (including companionship, household chores, medication, personal care, etc.) whether personally caring for someone or managing others who provide caregiving services?
TOP SERVICES PROVIDED

While duties are diverse, companionship is the top need caregivers fulfill

Q: What do you assist with or provide services for as a caregiver (check all that apply)

- Companionship: 12.5%
- Doctor’s Appointments: 12.1%
- Transportation: 11.5%
- Meal Preparation: 10.9%
- Household Chores: 10.7%
- Shopping: 10.7%
- Medication: 9.1%
- Other Appointments: 8.7%
- Personal Care/Incontinence Care: 6.8%
- Other Medical Care: 5.0%
- Other Please Specify: 2.0%

I also do activities such as exercise class and games. I am in charge of meal planning and supplies.

Anything and everything she needs
CAREGIVING TAKES A TOLL

Emotional well-being was cited as the most likely negative impact from caregiving

Q: Does your time spent caregiving have a negative impact on your life in any of the following areas?

- **21%** Time spent with family/others
- **16%** Finances
- **16%** Physical health
- **11%** Employment/chances for employment
- **23%** Emotional well-being

The bottom line is that we have to take care of ourselves too. Some days I just wanted to go to bed and never get up. We cared for her as long as we could, then made that decision that no one wants to make.
The positive impact is that I am confident my mom is receiving the best care possible. She feels loved and is surrounded by family. We can’t leave her alone so it does impact our lives (since we have 3 little ones) but I know that the end is near as she is terminal – so what’s a little negative impact when she has given me and my sister so much.

“I know I’ll never get these moments again so I treasure the time spent.”

Yes, it does give me joy (and relief) to know that my mother is receiving good care and isn’t being neglected by strangers in a facility. At times, she reminisces and I hear stories that I would never have heard.

“...so I treasure the time spent.”

Yes, it is a labor of love. Every day I have with my loved one is a good one no matter what.
FROM CAREGIVER TO CAREGIVER

Q: What is the most important advice you could give someone who is going to become a caregiver for a friend or family member?

Find someone to help and, if possible, find a backup to the helper. You cannot do it all so don’t set that expectation for yourself. This may well be a marathon, stay strong and positive.

Take a minute at a time. Be patient.

Take time out for yourself. Get someone to cover you and take a vacation from the added responsibilities every now and then.

There will be times when you will become angry, frustrated, sad, but that is all NORMAL!!!! Try not to beat yourself up with guilt. And remember they can’t help it.
HOME CARE SERVICES
THE MAJORITY WOULD CONSIDER OUTSIDE SERVICES

79% Would consider using in-home care services from an outside agency or individual

They can be very beneficial if you can find the right person.

These services for me include housekeeping which has been a godsend.

It is more important for the person receiving the care to feel comfortable with the home-care service provider than it is for the family to like them.
### TOP CONCERNS IN USING HOME CARE SERVICES

**Q:** Whether or not you would consider using in-home care services, how concerned are you with these aspects of home-care services from an outside agency or individual?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Very Concerned</th>
<th>Concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost/Affordability</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding the Right Service/Provider</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Care Provided</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trusting Home Care Personnel</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in Finding the Right Home Care Personnel</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navigating the Insurance Coverage or Government Agencies to Manage Costs</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Disruption of Having a Stranger in the Home</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stress/Emotional Advice on Care Needed/Planning for Care</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Advice on Care Needed/Planning for Care</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing/Coordination of Care Services</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Support from Family in Coordinating Care</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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</tbody>
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**I am very concerned that if I would ever need these services, I could never afford them.**

**I would be concerned about the reliability of the staff; if the background checks on the staff are complete or even if they have background checks at all; I wouldn’t want a really young person in charge – I’d want a mature, experienced person.**
TOP OF MIND COMPANIES

Visiting Angels & Home Instead are the most often mentioned companies on an unaided basis

Q: Which, if any, home-care service companies or agencies have you heard of?
NEED FOR MORE EDUCATION AND CLARITY

Q: In retrospect, is there anything you wish you knew more about before you became a caregiver?

I wish I knew more about Diabetes

Almost every type of assistance is for those at poverty level and Medicaid. What happens to middle class seniors on a fixed income?

Financial planning and organization

 While the population is aging and this subject has more available information than anytime before, I still feel like I am figuring things out for myself. Who knew that a UTI can completely incapacitate an elderly person? Learned that the hard way.

I wish I knew more about resources that could help me

FIRST AID KNOWLEDGE

Hiring in-home assistance without going through an agency is a potential legal land mine that I am not sure I have yet figured out – there are seemingly no resources to help navigate that.
- Caregivers say **emotional well-being** is the most common negative impact.

- **A Labor of Love**: Most also share the rewards they feel they receive from caregiving.

- **Home Care Services** are something most would consider.

- **Top Concerns include:**
  - **Affordability** of outside care
  - **Trust** in the quality of care
  - **Finding the right person** to provide services

- Caregivers wish they had **more guidance and education** in navigating their role.
Trusted Media Brands Inner Circle is an online insights community of more than 3,000 of our most engaged consumers, the print and digital consumers of Reader’s Digest, Taste of Home and The Family Handyman.

Through weekly interaction, members provide insight through discussion boards, quick polls and surveys.