

# MICHIGAN'S CAREGIVERS NEED SUPPORT

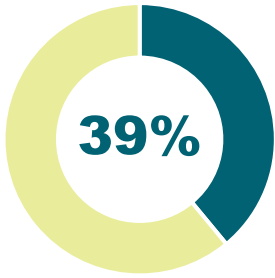
Meet Michigan's caregivers

## CHRT

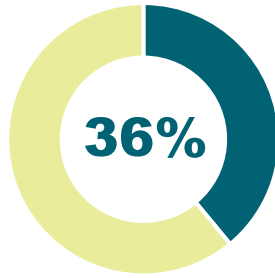


## Who are Michigan's unpaid caregivers?

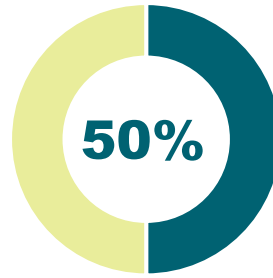
Michigan has an estimated **1.7 MILLION** unpaid caregivers



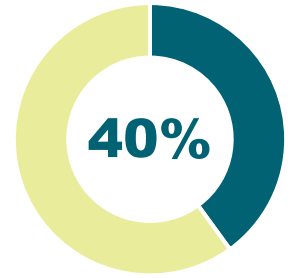
...are **MALE**



...are **people of COLOR**



...are **EMPLOYED**



...are **UNDER 55**

## What services do they provide?

- Unpaid caregivers **HELP FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS, and NEIGHBORS** in many ways.
- **Support for independence:** Completing household chores, shopping for groceries, preparing meals, managing finances, and providing transportation.
- **Support for daily life:** Feeding, bathing, dressing, and toileting.
- These services are **IMMENSELY VALUABLE** and reduce the need for **MORE COSTLY FORMS OF CARE.**

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## Understanding caregiver needs

### What benefits do unpaid caregivers offer society?



Informal caregivers provide **ECONOMIC VALUE** to the tune of \$470 billion annually.



Caregiver well-being is associated with **BETTER HEALTH OUTCOMES** for their care recipients.

### What challenges do unpaid caregivers face?



Caregivers are more likely to report **POOR FINANCIAL STATUS**.



Caregivers are more likely to **FORGO CARE** for their own health, mental health, and dental needs.



The most frequent reported challenge for caregivers is **SOCIAL ISOLATION**.



Health risks associated with social isolation and loneliness include **HIGHER MORTALITY RATES**.

### In spring 2020, CHRT surveyed Michigan caregivers...

**63%** felt anxious about their ability to provide care

**50%** gave financially to those they care for

**39%** spent 6+ hours caregiving per week

Michigan's current caregiver support system falls short.

**Supports fail to reach those in need.** Of unpaid caregivers who want help, 42 percent don't know where to get it.

**Limited program options.** Most programs offer dementia support, yet 2 in 3 providing care to persons over 65 have other needs.

**Disparities in access.** Many of Michigan's caregivers do not identify as such or are reluctant to engage in support programs.

**Staffing shortages.** Organizations most frequently report staffing shortages as a barrier to engaging caregivers in programs.

**Long wait times.** Caregivers seeking respite face long wait times or reduced options due to shortage of direct care respite workers.

**Incomplete participant data.** Data limitations make it difficult to assess the full scope of support program successes or failures.

Caregiver supports don't reach everyone in need.



### More likely to participate:

Caregivers aged 75+

Female caregivers

White caregivers



### Less likely to participate:

Younger caregivers

Male caregivers

Racial/ethnic minority caregivers

### Recommendations for state legislators



Push for funding broadband connectivity in underserved areas. Improved high-speed internet access is critical for supporting caregivers that seek to engage with programs online.



Support AAAs and other organizations as they navigate the logistics of integrating online and in-person program offerings post-pandemic.



Support efforts to increase and coordinate the reach of training statewide and prevent redundancy in programming. Improving efficiency of reach will be essential in the fact of staffing shortages.

### Recommendations for funders



Ensure that funding is allocated to all programs for evaluation activities, including collecting and aggregating participation data. Current gaps in data collection prevent full understanding of program successes and limitations.



Fund projects that aim to investigate barriers to caregiver support participation among hard-to-reach populations including younger caregivers, male caregivers, and racial and ethnic minority caregivers.

### Recommendations for caregiver organizations



Reach out to marginalized groups to offer caregiver assistance program information and ensure programs are inclusive and equitable.



Use inclusive language when recruiting participants and advertising programs. Individuals tending to a loved one's needs or helping out a neighbor may not identify with the title, 'caregiver' and forgo supports using only that term.



Seek out opportunities to reach new audiences. For example: Build collaborations with schools to reach parents who are 'sandwich' caregivers.

### Recommendations for community members



Share information about caregiver support services with your co-workers, friends, and neighbors. Many programs still count on word-of-mouth for successful recruitment.



Care about those who care for others. Reach out to caregivers to offer assistance when you can and educate yourself about the needs of caregivers.