

**The Effect of Informal Caregiving on Work Productivity**  
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Intense caregiving can threaten the health and financial resources of caregivers. However the impact of caregiving on work productivity is unclear. The “Guided Care” study enrolled 876 older people at risk of high utilization of health services during the coming year, and 286 primary unpaid caregivers; 41.3% of these caregivers were employed either full-time or part-time (preliminary data). Using the Work Productivity and Activity Impairment (WPAI) Scale, 75% of the 118 working caregivers reported missing no work in the previous week due to caregiving; the 25% who reported missing any time missed an average of 6 hr of work. For all 118 working caregivers the average missed time was 1.5 hr a week, or 5.4% of their work time. The WPAI scale asked about the effect of caregiving on productivity during work, and the caregivers reported an average of 19.2% impairment in their ability to be productive while at work. The combination of missing 5.4% of work time and being only 80.8% productive while at work results in a total impact of 21.2% work productivity loss due to caregiving. Furthermore, both employed and unemployed caregivers reported an average of 27.1% impairment in usual activities due to caregiving. The Caregiver Strain Index score was positively correlated with the amount of work productivity loss (0.4) and usual activity impairment (0.56). These results suggest that providing care for a multimorbid older adult causes work productivity loss that is comparable to the work productivity loss caused by Asthma, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, and Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease.

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