

## Evaluation of a Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Program (CFWP) Intervention of the Health of Caregiver-Employees (CEs)

### CONTEXT

- Caregiver-employees (CEs) are more likely to be stressed, depressed, have reduced productivity and lower job satisfaction than the general population.
- Generally, caregiver educational interventions have shown evidence of reduction in adverse symptoms; however, no research has examined this issue from a workplace perspective.
- A comprehensive multi-pronged framework was designed to examine all aspects of a Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Program (CFWP) intervention:
  - Phase I – CE Longitudinal Survey
  - Phase II – Economic evaluation
  - Phase III- Workplace-Wide Survey

### Research Objectives

The following research objectives address this issue:

1. Using a pre-post comparative case study design, we examined the effectiveness of a CFWP intervention in a workplace to determine impact on CE health and work outcomes.
2. We implemented a cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis to assess the economic impacts of the CFWP intervention. This included the determination of: investments - such as monies, time and other resources, and; savings resulting from reduced work illness, improved performance, reduced absenteeism, and reduced turnover.
3. We simultaneously examined the differences that exist between carer-employees and those who do not identify as carer-employees in the workplace.

### What is the importance of this research?

Caregiver-employees (CEs) are a large proponent of Canadian society, especially as the population continues to age. Increasingly, the working population is being tasked with providing unpaid care to the aging population. CEs often have conflicts with work-life balance due to the pressures of managing full-time paid work with caregiving demands. Caregiver-friendly workplace programs (CFWPs) are intentional organization changes and/or accommodations designed to improve the CEs' work-life balance. However, little is known regarding effectiveness and uptake of CFWPs, as the literature on CEs is sparse and understudied.

This multi-phased project explored effectiveness of our designed CFWP intervention using a qualitative and quantitative lens, examining: CE health and work outcomes; the economic impacts for the workplace, and; how the CE experience compares to employees who do not identify as CEs.

### How was the study done?

#### **Phase I**

- Data: Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews
- were conducted with CE participants at three time points: T1 (N=43), T2 (N=30), T3 (N=21)
- Methods: Statistical analysis

#### **Phase II**

- Data: Data was collected about employer and employee costings and salary
- Methods: Cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis from a health economist perspective

#### **Phase III**

- Data: Workplace-wide survey data was collected
- at two time points: T1 (n = 757), T2 (n = 824)
- Methods: Statistical analysis



## Key Message

There is a need to develop CFWPs as the intervention proved effective in improving CEs' health and work outcomes, and economic well-being. Further, the intervention proved to be cost-effective for the workplace. As CEs are projected to be a growing demographic cohort in the coming years as the Canadian population continues to age, CFWPs are critical to CEs sustainability.

### What did the researchers find?

(1) Addressing the **first research objective**, we found that:

1. The intervention significantly reduced adverse health outcomes, such as depression, psychosocial health, and self-reported health ( $p > 0.5$ );
2. The intervention significantly reduced negative work outcomes related to: work role function, job security, schedule control, work-family conflict, family-work conflict, supervisor and co-worker support ( $p > 0.5$ );
3. In the pre-test interview, participants mentioned that their concerns related to work-life balance included: mental and physical impacts of caregiving on their health, work culture concerns, sustainability of their CE role, and lack of awareness of health and social services;
4. With the previous point in mind, themes mentioned in the post-test interview by participants in interviews regarding the intervention included: solidification of caregiver identity, enhanced CE confidence and awareness, achieving a balance between caregiver and employment, and use of flexible workplace accommodations.

(2) Addressing the **second research objective**, the economic evaluation determined that the intervention was cost-effective:

1. The economic impact in the "no intervention" scenario is estimated at \$33,841,789 (\$32,922 per case) for CEs, and \$8,916,341 (\$8,674 per case) for employers, and;
2. The implemented intervention is estimated at a positive net benefit of \$48,010 to \$676,657.

(3) Addressing the **third research objective**:

- a) Both time periods conclude that the awareness of CFWPs positively impacts the amount of support received, which sequentially improves the workplace experience; thus, the intervention was effective.

## Selected Publications

### Published

Williams, A., Tompa, E., Lero, D., Fast, J., Yazdani, A., Zeytingolu, I. (2017). *Evaluation of caregiver-friendly workplace policy (CFWP): on the health of full-time caregiver employees (CE): Implementation and cost-benefit analysis*. BMC Public Health, 17(1),728

Mofidi, A., Tompa, E., Williams, A., Yazdani, A., Lero, D., Mortazavi, S. (2019). *Impact of a Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Policies Intervention: A Prospective Economic Evaluation*. **Journal of Occupation and Environmental Medicine**.

### In Process

Ding, R., Parnell, M., Sethi, B., and Williams, A. (2020). *Carer experiences with social services and supports and their identified solutions to role strain*. **In process**.

Ding, R., Dardas, A., Wang, L., Williams, A. (2020). *Evaluation of a Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Program (CFWP) intervention of the health of full-time caregiver employees (CEs): a time series analysis of intervention effects*. **Human Performance**.

Ding, R., Dardas, A., Wang, L., Williams, A. (2020). *Evaluation of a Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Program (CFWP) intervention of the workplace experience of full-time caregiver employees (CEs): a time series analysis of intervention effects*. **Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine**.

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