

Invisible
role,

a lasting
impact!

Caregivers in mental health can experience systemic **isolation**, mental and emotional overload, and a **lack of appropriate support** at work.

Let's open the discussion !



Caregivers in Mental Health: Who They Are and Their Needs

Who are caregivers in mental health?

Caregivers in mental health can be parents, children, siblings, partners, extended family members, friends, colleagues or anyone else connected in some way to a person living with a mental health disorder. They represent a diverse range of ages and experiences.

They may be:

- ✦ A **spouse**, father and manager, who is juggling a busy daily life while supporting a partner with bipolar disorder. At times, he must face the judgment of others before finding his own coping strategies.
- ✦ A working **mother** who has tried to control everything since her son's first psychotic episode. Torn between anxiety, exhaustion and ambivalence, she carries the weight of the family alone while denying her own need for help.
- ✦ A **father** working in construction who is struggling to understand his daughter's anxiety disorder. Frustrated and helpless, he finds himself caught between denial, unmet expectations and a reality he cannot face alone.
- ✦ An only **daughter**, now a mother herself and working as a civil servant, who is living in the shadow of her mother's depressive disorder. Torn between responsibility and a desire for independence, she seeks balance between support and freedom.
- ✦ A **brother**, who is juggling his job, children and constant worries about his sister's obsessive-compulsive disorder and addiction, and silently struggling with guilt, confusion and a sense of helplessness.
- ✦ A **friend** who is feeling a strong responsibility to support a long-time friend who refuses any help from his family despite being in great distress. Although she must juggle her own work and family life, she is always there for him. Still, she is struggling with a heavy mental burden and guilt, fearing he might feel abandoned.

Often overlooked, caregivers in the workplace face complex challenges that affect their professional lives. According to a recent survey by CAP santé mentale (2025):

- 82% of respondents find or have found it difficult to balance their work responsibilities with their role as a mental health caregiver.
- 54% of respondents indicated that their role as a mental health caregiver has had an impact on their career path.

Among these impacts:

- 91% reported mental or emotional overload
- 72% reported presenteeism
- 71% reported feelings of guilt
- 67% reported decreased performance or productivity
- 58% reported burnout

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What are their needs?

Workplaces play a major role in shaping the work-life balance of caregivers in mental health. A supportive employer can help meet several key needs:

- Recognition: understanding and validating the role of the caregiver.
- Flexibility: flexible hours, remote work, temporary accommodations, possibility of taking personal calls during work hours, etc.
- Safe spaces for dialogue: opportunities to speak openly about their reality without fear of being judged or treated differently.
- Access to information and resources: knowing where to go for help (internally and externally). tourner pour obtenir de l'aide (interne et externe)

Several studies (Centre d'intégration au marché de l'emploi, 2018; Concilivi, 2024; Gagnon & Beaudry, 2019) confirm that flexibility and formal recognition are the most effective measures to support caregivers. Examples of effective actions include:

- Remote work, flexible hours, bank of hours
- Right to disconnect, predictable scheduling
- Inclusive HR policies, work-life balance committees
- Training sessions and awareness activities

What are the benefits for the employer?

Supporting caregivers in mental health is a win-win investment for employers and employees.

Benefits include:

- Reduced absenteeism and presenteeism
- Stronger talent retention
- Increased productivity and efficiency
- Enhanced employer brand image (social responsibility)

💡 According to Concilivi (2023), organizations that implement work-life balance measures have a 20% higher retention rate.

★ Promoting work-life balance for caregivers in mental health means investing in the resilience of our workplaces. It's a compassionate, urgent and deeply strategic action.

Consult the [Talking About Caregivers in Mental Health in the Workplace](#) fact sheet for more information on how to navigate this reality in your workplace.

📱 Visit [ImpactReel.ca/en](https://www.impactreel.ca/en) to explore some **additional tools**, or reach out directly to our **member associations** to receive **support tailored** to your needs (training on the reality of caregivers, workplace training and more):

1 855 272-7837

Visit [ImpactReel.ca/en](https://www.impactreel.ca/en)



Sources

CAP santé mentale. (2025). Les proches en santé mentale et le milieu de travail ou d'études. Centre d'intégration au marché de l'emploi. (2018). Guide sur la proche aidance et l'emploi pour le personnel d'intervention en employabilité travaillant auprès des personnes proches aidantes. Concilivi. (2023-2024). Outils et statistiques sur la conciliation travail-famille. Gagnon, M., & Beaudry, C. (2019). Le bras de fer de la conciliation vie professionnelle-responsabilités de soins des aidantes en emploi : entre équilibre et décrochage. *Enfances Familles Générations*, 32. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1064513ar>