

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!



# Talking About Caregivers in Mental Health in the Workplace

## Why talk about it?

According to a survey by Concilivi (2024):

- 40% of respondents reported that their reality is not recognized by their employer.
- 41% reported avoiding disclosing their caregiver status to their employer for fear of judgment or missed opportunities.

These figures highlight a persistent taboo. Together, we have the power to foster more inclusive and supportive workplaces!

Talking about the realities of mental health caregivers at work helps to:

- Reduce stigma and feelings of isolation among caregivers
- Foster a culture of inclusion and support for everyone
- Encourage employees to seek help sooner, which can prevent burnout, decreased productivity, absenteeism and more
- Build trust among employees, managers and the organization

💡 Talking about it opens the door to a culture where everyone can thrive, embracing both their strengths and vulnerabilities.

## How to bring it up at work?

Many managers and colleagues don't know how to respond when an employee or coworker mentions their responsibilities as a caregiver for someone with a mental health disorder. They may worry about responding appropriately, being intrusive or awkward, or crossing personal boundaries.

These fears, which contribute to the persistent taboo surrounding caregivers in mental health, often stem from a lack of information. But approaching the topic with respect and openness is easier than you might think. It's not about having all the answers—it's about opening the conversation with kindness.

💬 Three simple ways to respond:

"Thank you for sharing this with me. Would you like me to help you find some resources?"

"I'm here to listen if you need me."

"What could help you better balance your role as a caregiver with your work?"

## Best practices in the workplace

### 👉 Responding with kindness

- Listen without judgment: acknowledge the reality without downplaying or dramatizing it.
- Ask open-ended questions: allow the person to express their own needs.
- Respect boundaries: let the person decide what they want to share.

### 👉 Turning openness into support

- Offer flexibility: adjust schedules, allow remote work or temporarily modify tasks.
- List the available resources: the EAP, CAP santé mentale and its regional associations.
- Reiterate that asking for help is a right, not a privilege.

### 👉 Creating an inclusive culture

- Normalize discussions: coffee chats, awareness sessions and testimonials.
- Communicate regularly about support policies to reduce stigma and build trust.
- Train managers to listen, guide and support caregivers effectively.

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## Knowing how to better respond, support and refer

Just by reading this fact sheet, you've already taken an important step toward better understanding the realities of caregivers in mental health in the workplace. What's next?

### 1. Deepening your understanding of caregivers in mental health

Learn about the challenges, needs and strengths of caregivers in mental health. This knowledge is the first key to providing better support. A wealth of information is available online, including at [capsantementale.ca](https://capsantementale.ca).

### 2. Facilitating access to support services

Regularly remind employees about the available services (e.g., EAP). Add CAP santé mentale, its regional associations, and the CAP Mieux-Être platform to your internal resource directories. Digital tools can serve as a bridge to support groups, workshops and one-on-one guidance.

### 3. Investing in relationships

While standards and policies provide structure, it's the quality of human connection that transforms the workplace. Managers, colleagues and organizations all share the responsibility of recognizing and valuing the realities of caregivers. Building an inclusive and caring culture is key to long-term solutions.

### 4. Keeping the conversation alive within your organization

Talk about it! Display posters, share awareness video clips, plan coffee chats, mention it in newsletters, organize targeted training sessions... small actions are enough to keep the dialogue going.

To support you, CAP santé mentale offers a practical workplace toolkit: video clips, posters, activities, business cards and information designed to raise awareness without adding to your workload.

Consult the [From Dialogue to Action: Awareness and Training to Support Caregivers](#) fact sheet for more information on how awareness and training can help you establish a lasting culture of inclusion and caring within your organization.

Visit [ImpactReel.ca/en](https://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**

#### 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>

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