NORTHEAST
BUSINESS GROUP ON HEALTH

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Employers Can Ease the Burdens of Employee Caregivers

In honor of National Family Caregiver Awareness month, the Northeast Business Group on Health encourages employers to assess and enhance support resources and policies.

NEW YORK, New York, [October 19, 2026] — Former First Lady and passionate family caregiver advocate Rosalynn Carter famously said: "there are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers."

Northeast Business Group on Health CEO Kim Thiboldeaux had the privilege of collaborating with Mrs. Carter and The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers located in Americus, Georgia on caregiving initiatives that addressed helping employees manage the burdens and embrace the unexpected joys of caregiving. Kim urges employers to reframe caregiving as a workplace issue rather than a personal responsibility. "All employers, from small businesses to the largest companies, can play a critical role in helping employees cope with the challenges of caregiving," Kim said.

The economic burden of caregiving is significant

The statistics are stunning. In 2023, AARP "estimated [the] economic value of family caregivers' unpaid contributions was approximately $600 billion, based on about 38 million caregivers providing an average of 18 hours of care per week." Just two years later, a study conducted by Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and sponsored by Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc., suggested that "there are 44.58 million caregivers in the U.S. performing the equivalent of an estimated $873.5 billion worth of labor each year." The study's findings go on to indicate that "nearly half of U.S. states (48%) are on the brink of an unpaid family caregiving emergency."

Family caregivers serve many roles: chef, financial planner, chauffer, housekeeper, personal stylist and bather, physical and emotional supporter, care coordinator and more. Increasingly, their responsibilities extend to medical and nursing tasks for which little training, education, and support are provided. "For many employees, their caregiving responsibilities are the equivalent of an additional part-time job. For some, it can even be the equivalent of a full-time job," Kim said.

Zety's Gen X Caregiving Report, released in July 2026, surveyed over 1,000 Gen X workers and found that:

- 54% say caregiving causes stress and burnout at work
- 44% struggle to stay focused and productive

- 22% spend more than 16 hours a week providing care to loved ones

Actions with big impact

Millions of employees are balancing work with caring for children, aging parents, or other dependents, and employers are increasingly looking for practical solutions. NEBGH has robust resources on caregiving including a microsite created in partnership with AARP Family Caregiving, featuring a guide, fact sheets, checklist, tips and videos for employers, managers, and affected employees. These resources are available at no cost.

The goal of NEBGH's caregiving initiative is to:

- help employers understand the scope and impact of caregiving in the workforce
- provide practical tools that help employers support working caregivers
- advance workplace policies and benefits that improve employee wellbeing and productivity

"NEBGH developed these resources because caregiving has become one of the most significant workforce issues affecting employers and employees," Kim said. "More than that, caregiving is a societal issue. Making these and most of our resources publicly accessible was a deliberate choice."

Assess and act

National Family Caregiver Awareness month offers organizations an opportunity to review their resources and policies, and take actions that will support employee wellbeing which, in turn, can help sustain performance and productivity, as well as contribute to retention and company loyalty. "There is no one-size-fits-all approach to creating a caregiving-friendly workplace," Kim said. "But every employer can make a commitment to improving their workplace culture to be more responsive to caregiving employees' needs."

About NEBGH

The Northeast Business Group on Health (NEBGH) is a non-profit, employer-led, multi-stakeholder coalition of over 200 employers, healthcare organizations, and benefits stakeholders committed to driving healthcare value and improving outcomes for employees and their families. NEBGH empowers its members—who collectively cover more than 9 million lives in the U.S. and 15.5 million globally—to achieve excellence in healthcare delivery, benefits design, and the consumer experience.

Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, NEBGH helps members improve employee health and well-being while obtaining the highest value from the programs and services they receive. NEBGH is widely recognized for producing trusted, high-quality conferences that offer timely, evidence-based content and attract decisionmakers across the healthcare and benefits ecosystem. In recognition of its leadership, NEBGH was named a Healthy People 2030 Champion by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

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