

Adult Day Health Times

SMART MONEY INVESTED
IN THE FUTURE OF AGING

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Good Public Policy: Support Working Caregivers

Workforce Relies on Adult Day Health

Families are the backbone of Washington's caregiving network. About 75% of frail elders rely on family members – not institutions – to provide care for them.¹

Not surprisingly, caregiving is largely performed by women: they take care of children, elderly parents and in-laws, often while striving for full employment. Juggling these tasks can become overwhelming, and a caregiver may face hard choices. Should she cut her employment to part-time? Leave her job altogether? When economic survival is the overriding factor and she absolutely



must attend to her job, she may contemplate leaving a loved one at home in an unsupervised, unsafe situation.

Fortunately, a working caregiver can rely upon the safe and therapeutic environment of an adult day health center. In Washington, over 4,000 frail elders and disabled adults receive skilled nursing and rehabilitative treatments at adult day health centers, allowing them to remain living in the community (and out of nursing homes).

Alzheimer's and Caregiver Stress

Dementia is particularly devastating to the psychological health of families. Research shows that using adult day services alleviates caregiver stress, fatigue, and exhaustion², allowing them to not only have the time – but the energy – to attend to their jobs.

Adult day health is the ideal partner for both employers and working caregivers.

WASHINGTON CAREGIVERS³

FEMALE
55%
EMPLOYED
74%

CAREGIVING IMPACT

GO IN LATE
LEAVE EARLY
TAKE TIME OFF
53%

LEAVE OF ABSENCE
16%

CHANGE JOBS OR GO
TO PART-TIME
10%

FORCED TO GIVE UP
WORK ENTIRELY
5%

¹Institute for Health and Aging

²Joseph Gaugler et. al., Adult day service use and reductions in caregiving hours: effects on stress and psychological well-being for dementia caregivers, *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry* 2003; **18**: 55-62.

³AARP

A WORKING CAREGIVER: IN HER OWN WORDS

Sheribell has used adult day health for her husband Nic for almost five years. "It gets his mind stimulated," she says, "because I couldn't do that constantly for someone with brain damage. I have two nursing jobs—my regular shift is at night

so I need to be able to sleep during the day before my kids get home at 3:00 p.m. I wouldn't be able to function as a mom and a nurse and a caretaker without adult day health."