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National Caregivers Day Highlights What Wisconsin Caregivers Need on the Job

Wisconsin businesses say in a new survey that the caregiving responsibilities their employees have at home are impacting them on the job. The finding comes from a statewide employer survey report released just in time for National Caregivers Day, recognized on February 15.

“National estimates indicate there are more than half a million family caregivers in Wisconsin currently,”¹ says Lisa Pugh, Executive Director of The Arc Wisconsin and co-chair of the Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance (WFACSA) which authored the new report. “The biggest finding from our survey is that nearly three-quarters of employers said that caregiving increases stress in the workplace.”

Find full results of the Wisconsin report here: <http://wisconsinarc.org/employer-engagement-workgroup>

The Arc has been a leader nationally in addressing family caregiver issues and putting forward policy solutions. This week The Arc also released a new [Report on Paid Family Leave and the Disability Angle](#). The report assesses the use of paid family leave policies across multiple states. Wisconsin does not currently have statewide paid family leave policy.

“This is really ground-breaking research on how workers with disabilities and working caregivers of people with disabilities use, need, and benefit from paid family and medical leave,” says Pugh. “The analysis found that multiple barriers and gaps limit workers’ access to leave, including fear of job loss and stigma against disabilities.”²

The WFACSA survey report released today found Wisconsin employers are more frequently offering strategies other than paid leave, including allowing flexible schedules (74%) and making referrals to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) (50%).

“We celebrate caregivers on this National Caregivers Day and every day and encourage others to do so as well,” says Pugh. “The Arc Wisconsin will continue to advocate for policies that support family caregivers who work hard to keep their loved ones healthy and living full lives in their homes and communities.”

The Arc Wisconsin advocates for and serves people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), including Down syndrome, autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, cerebral palsy and other diagnoses. The Arc Wisconsin has 15 local chapters and is connected to a network of more than 650 chapters across the country promoting and protecting the human rights of people with I/DD and actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes and without regard to diagnosis.

Editor’s Note: The Arc is not an acronym; always refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.

¹ National Center on Caregiving <https://www.caregiver.org/caregiving-across-states-50-state-profiles-2014>

² <https://blog.thearc.org/2019/02/04/workers-speak-out-on-disability-and-health-new-report-on-paid-family-leave-and-the-disability-angle/>