



Rutgers Center for
State Health Policy

New Jersey Office of Legislative Services
Trenton, New Jersey
April 10, 2007



Who are New Jersey's Caregivers? Findings from the NJ Family Health Survey

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Caregivers in New Jersey



- Presentation based on *Health and Employment Challenges for Working-Age Caregivers in New Jersey*, issued by the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy.
- Data are from the New Jersey Family Health Survey (NJFHS)
 - Statistically representative sample of 2,265 NJ families
 - Conducted in late 2001 and early 2002
 - Telephone interview with the adult most knowledgeable about the health and health care needs of family

Defining Caregivers



- Caregivers in survey households were defined in two ways:
 - Asked if family members with activity limitations received help from anyone
 - Asked if family members provided help to other people with “personal care, running errands, or managing money matters” because of a physical or mental health problem
 - Only caregivers living in survey households are included

Caregivers in New Jersey



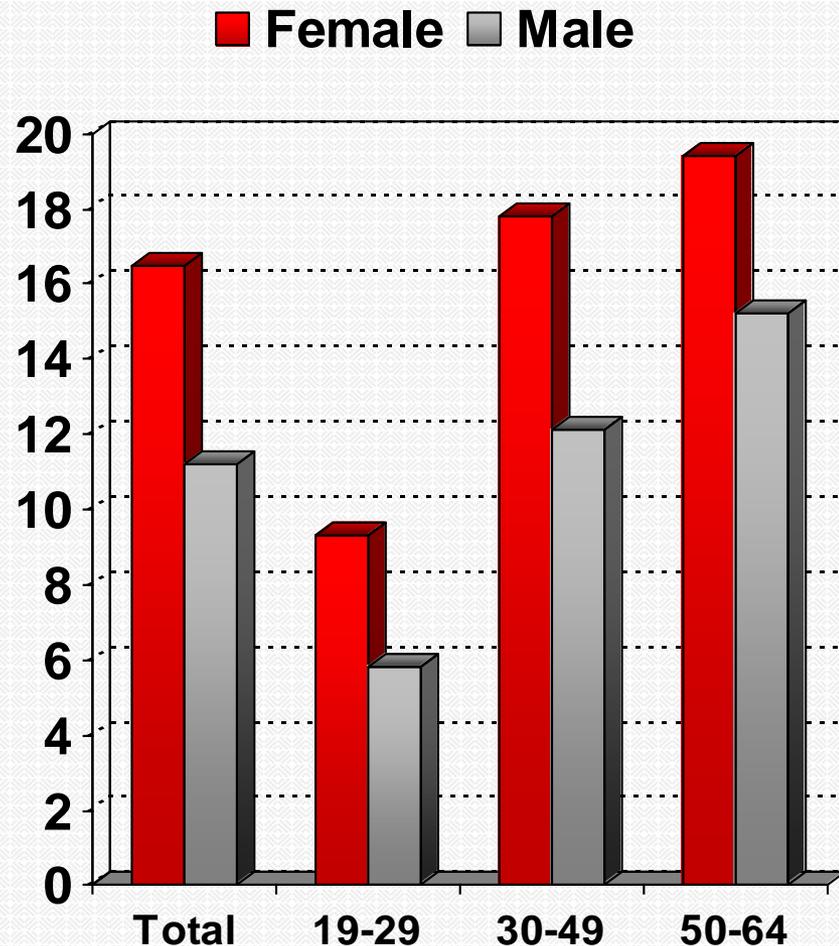
- Approximately 904,000 adult caregivers in New Jersey in 2001
- Informal caregivers contribute 924 million hours of care annually (Arno, 2006)
- Annual market value of labor is over \$9 billion
- 78% of NJ caregivers are ages 19-64

Working-Age Caregivers in New Jersey



- One in seven adults ages 19-64 reports providing care for a family member or friend
- Most caregivers are non-Hispanic white and born in the U.S.
- 11% of caregivers are non-Hispanic African American and 9% are Hispanic

Percent of Caregiving by age and gender, adults 19-64

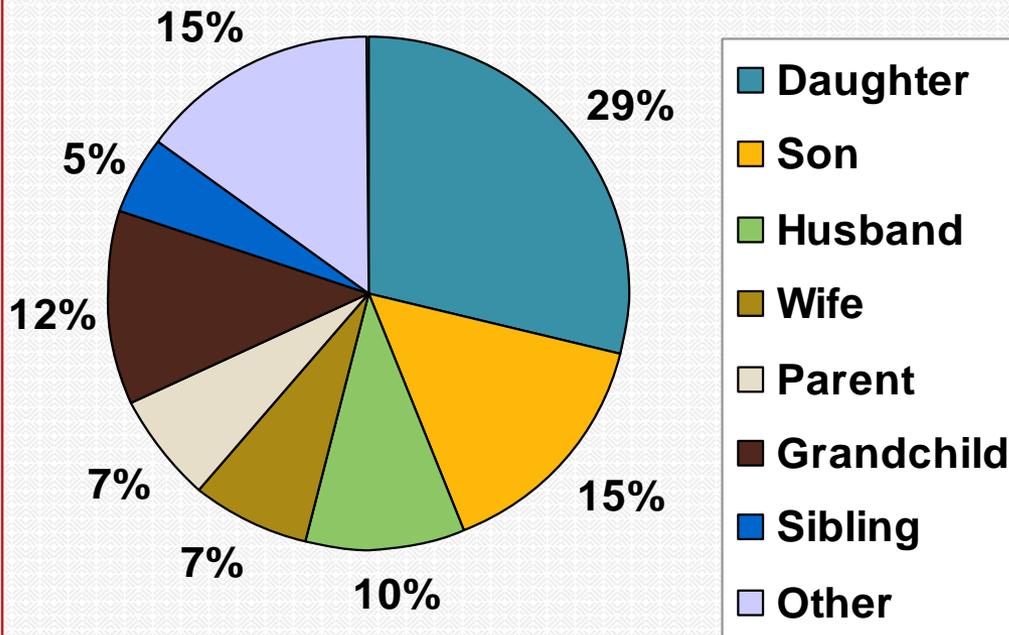


- Women more likely than men to be caregivers
- Men more likely to be caregivers as they age
- Almost 1/5 of women 50-64 give care to a family member or friend

Who are New Jersey Caregivers?



Relationship to Care Recipient



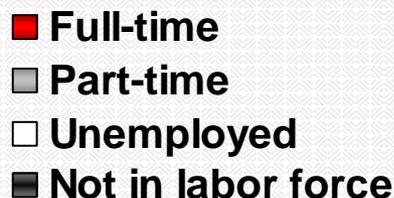
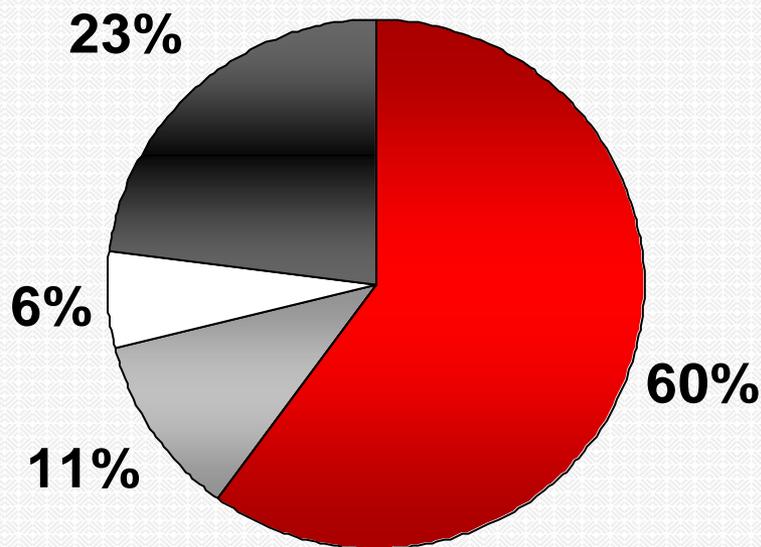
- Adult daughters and sons are 40% of caregivers
- Spouses are 17%
- Adult grandchildren and parents are 19%
- About 1/3 are married with children; 1/3 are single with no children

Who are New Jersey Caregivers?



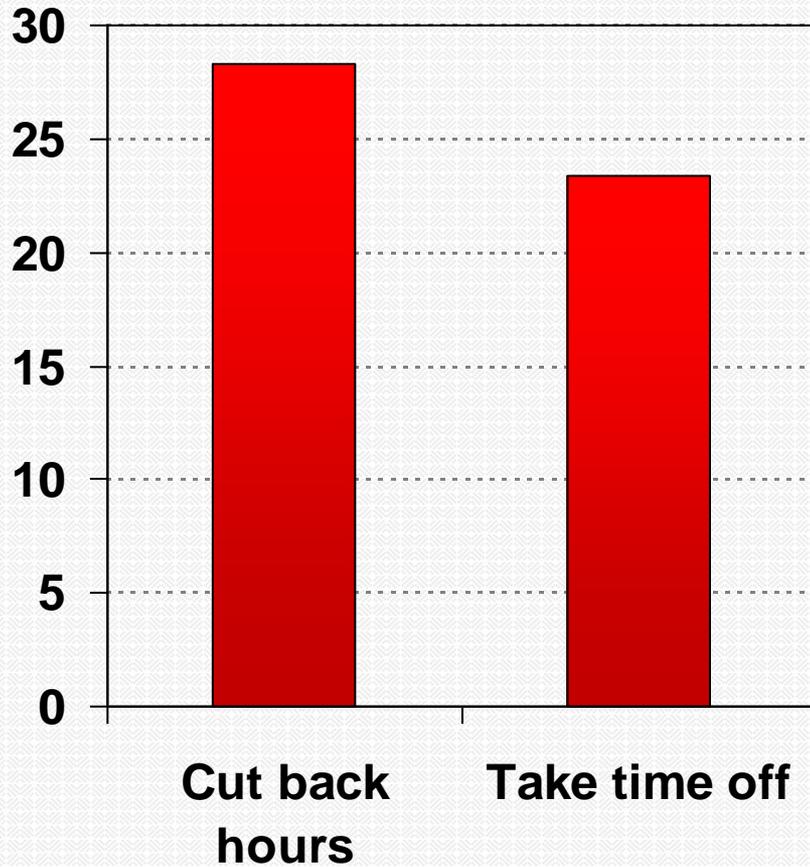
- Caregivers are similar to other working age adults in education, employment status, poverty status, and insurance coverage
- Most have a high-school education and over 1/2 have more
- Over 3/4 are over twice the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but 6% are below the FPL
- 3/4 have private insurance, but 16% are uninsured

Employment Status of Caregivers Ages 19-64



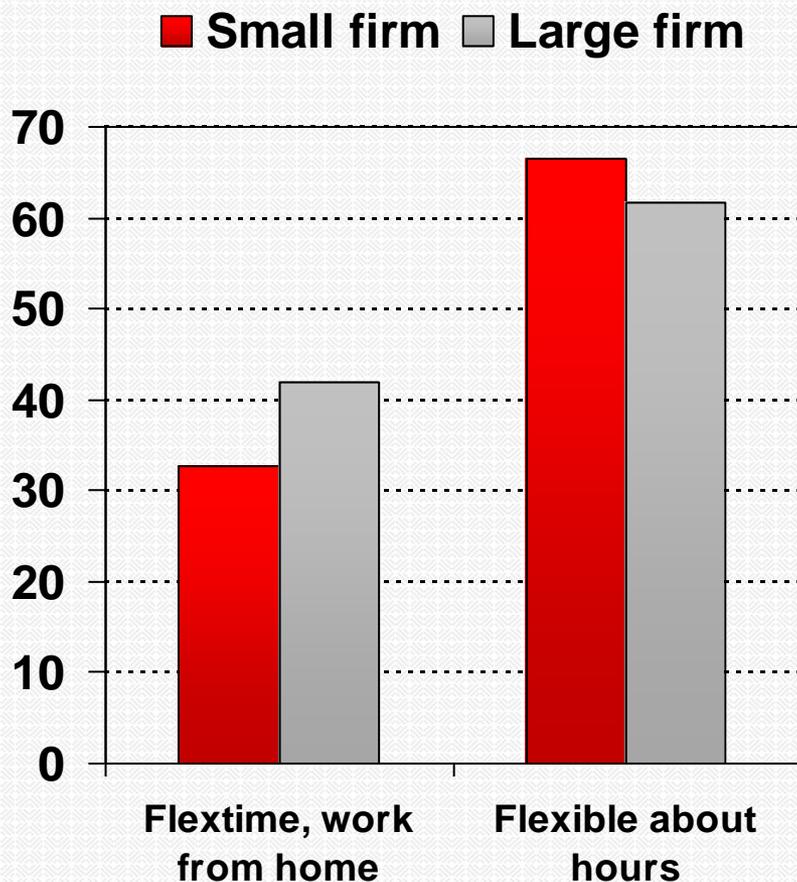
- Over 70% of caregivers are employed
- Women are more likely to combine full-time employment with caregiving
- Over 1/2 of uninsured caregivers are employed

Impact of Caregiving on Work



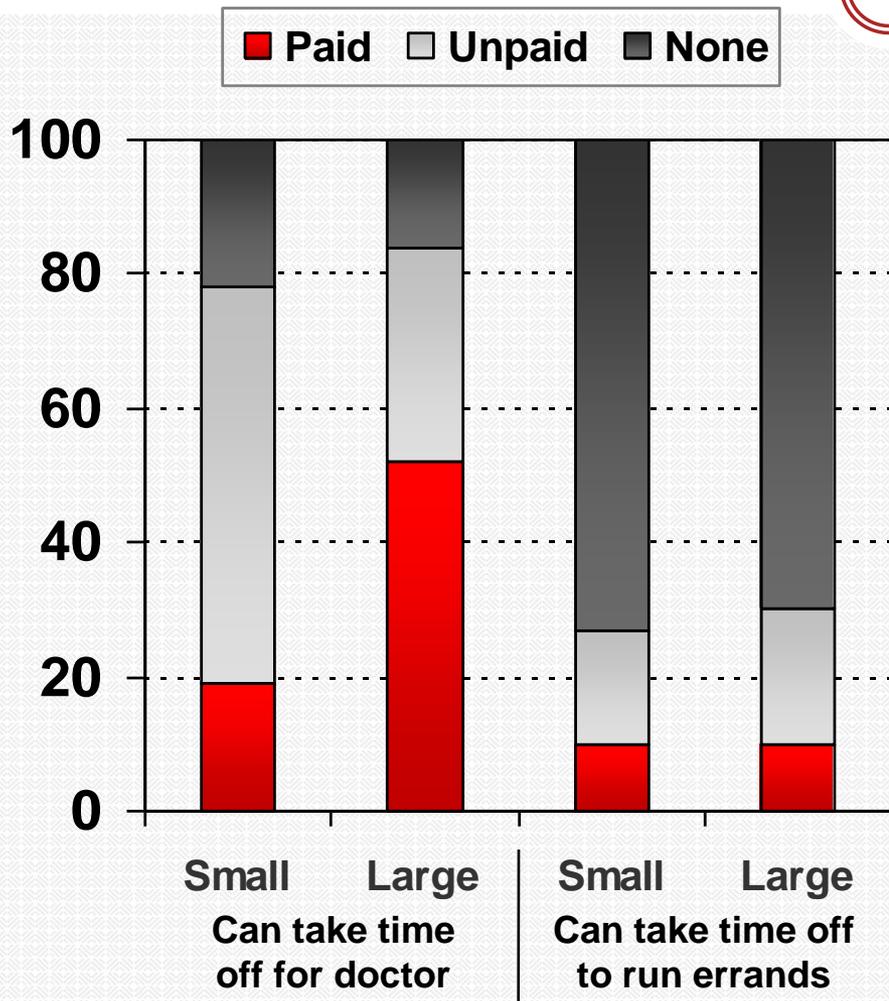
- 13% of caregivers said they had to quit a job because of caregiving
- Nearly 30% had to cut back on hours
- Nearly 1/4 had to take time off regularly

Percent of Working Caregivers Able to be Flexible About Work



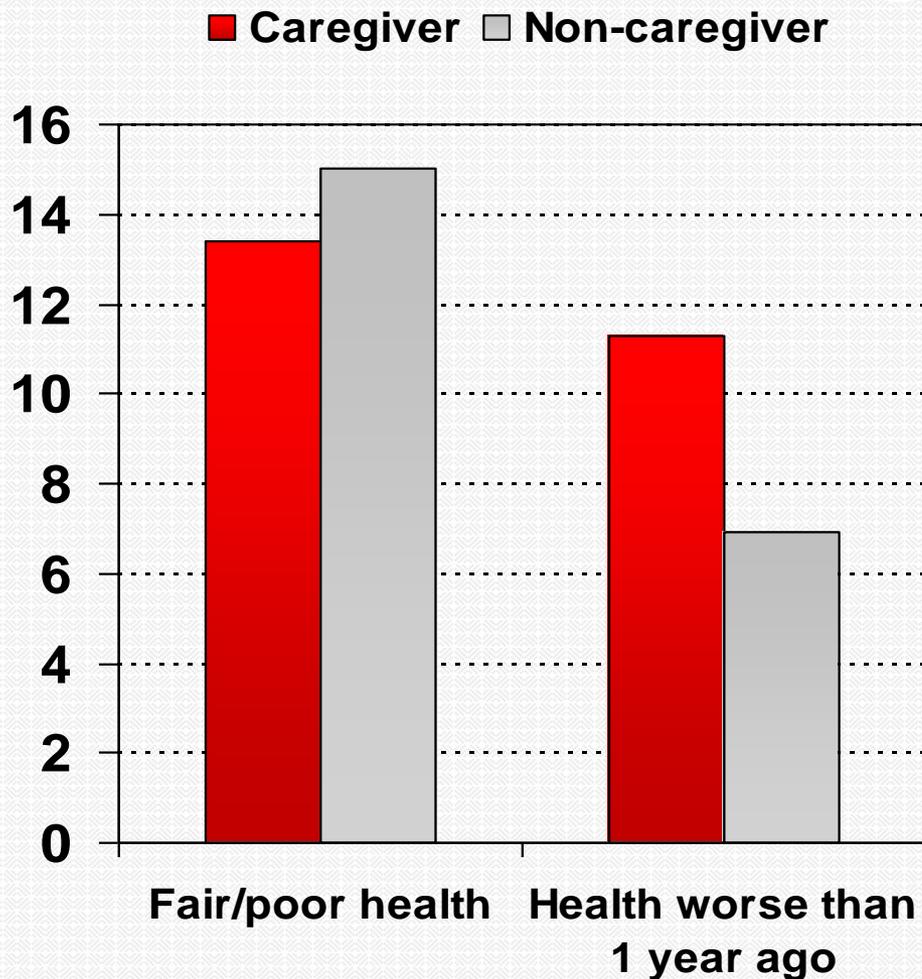
- Flexibility by an employer can help to ease stress of caregiving
- 40% working at large firms (50+ employees) can use flextime or work at home
- Almost 2/3 of employers are flexible about hours when person needs to provide care

Percent of Working Caregivers Who Can Take Time from Work



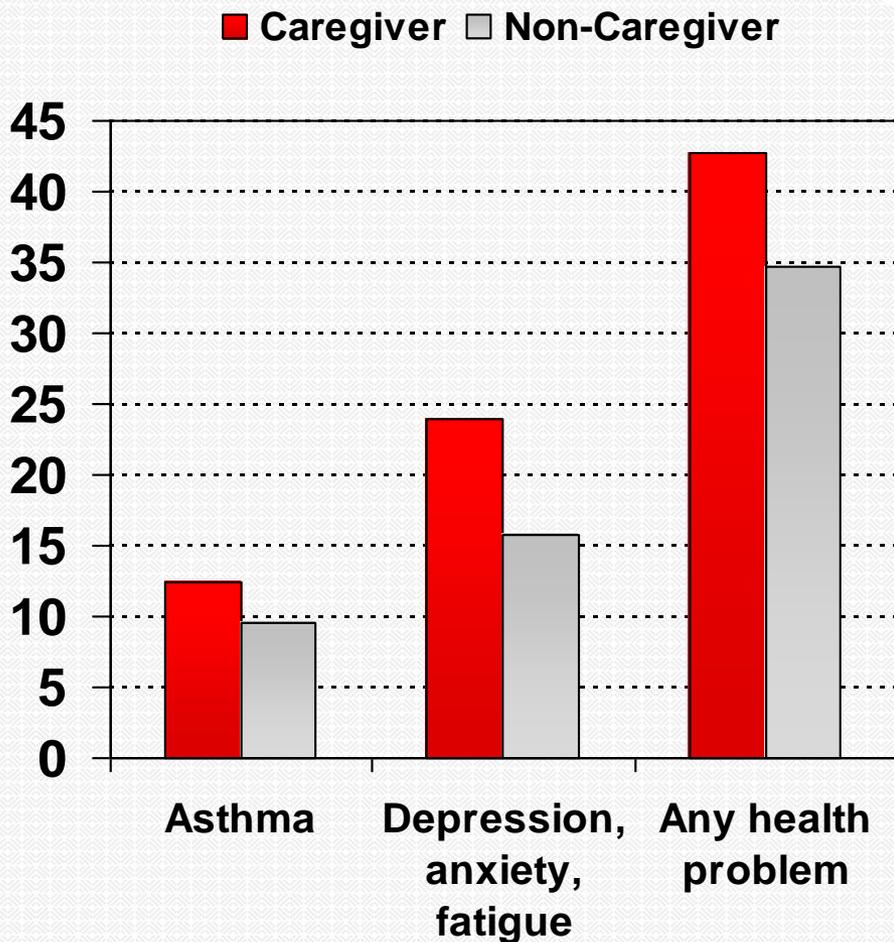
- 50% working at large firms can take time off to take care recipient to the doctor; over 1/2 at small firms use unpaid time
- 10% of employers allow paid time off to run errands; 15-20% allow unpaid time off

Self-Assessed Health by Caregiver Status



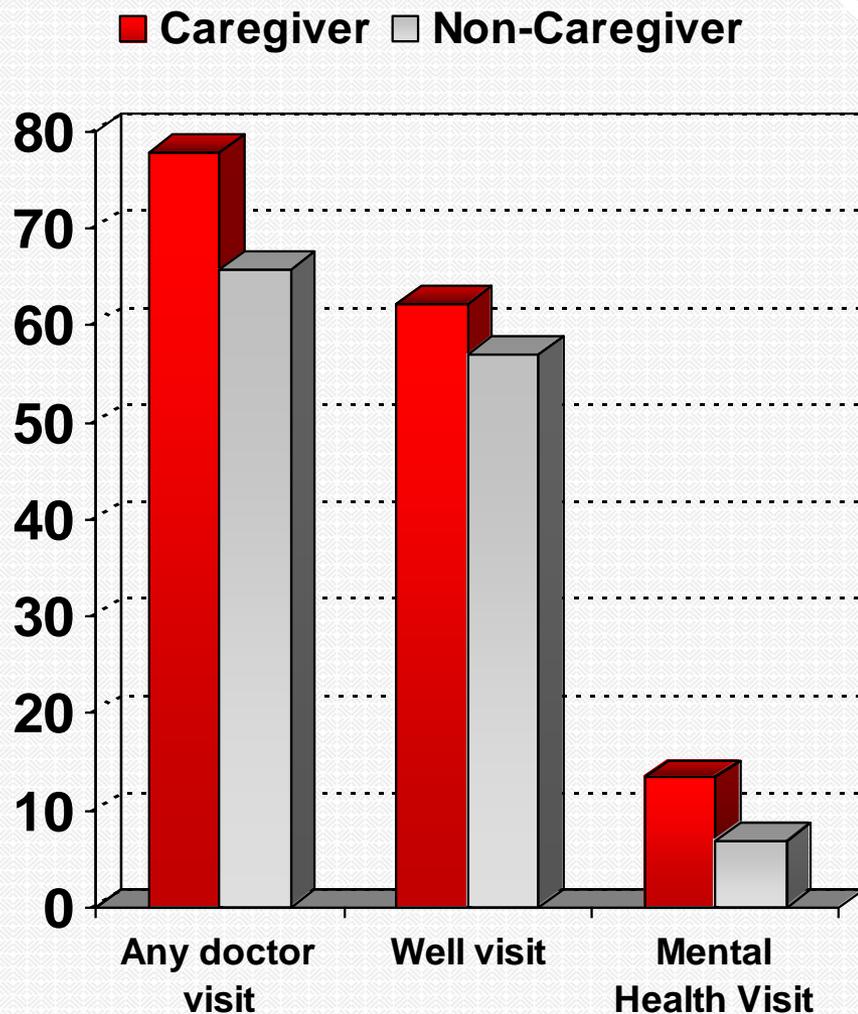
- Caregivers were nearly twice as likely to report that their current health is worse than a year ago

Caregivers Report More Health Problems



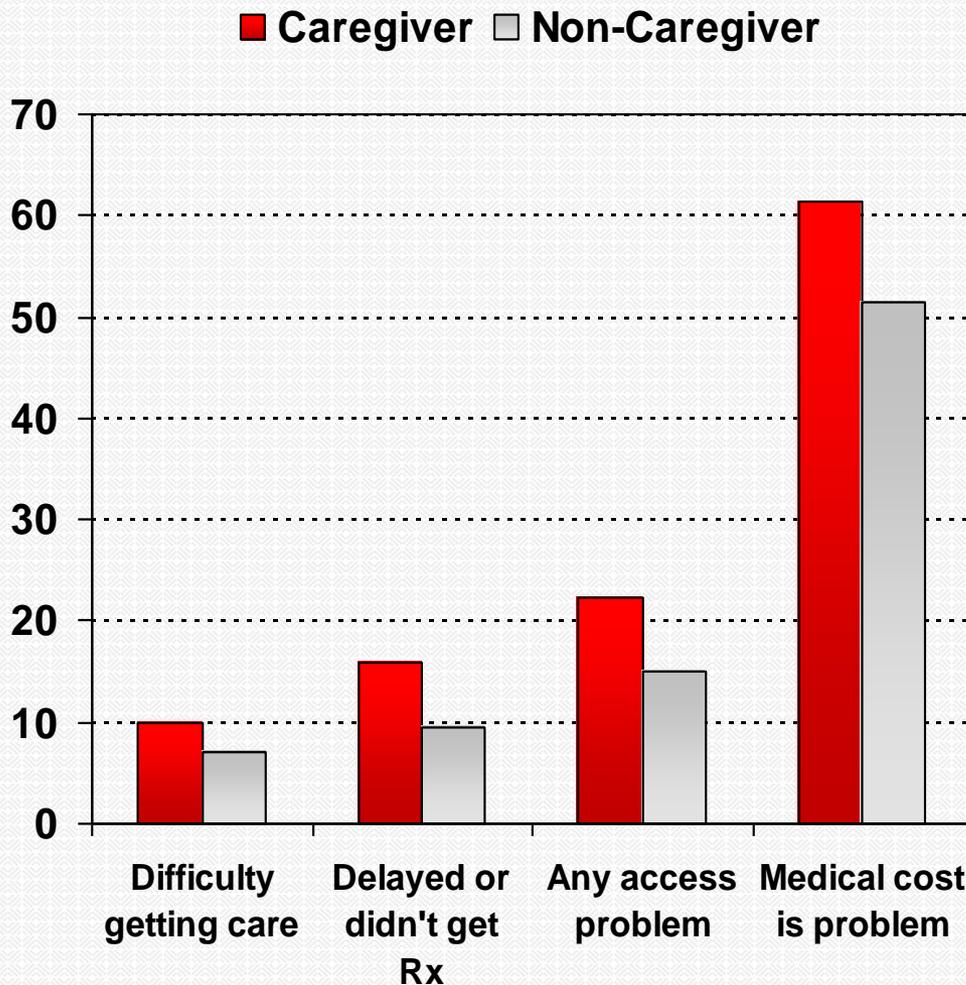
- Caregivers about 50% more likely to have asthma or experience depression, anxiety, and/or fatigue in the past 3 months
- Women are more vulnerable to health problems than men
- Married women half as likely to report a health problem as single women

Health Care Utilization of Adults Ages 19-64



- Caregivers more likely to have a doctor visit in the past year
- Caregivers reported an average of 6 visits during the past year
- Nearly twice as many caregivers have mental health visits

Percent of Adults Ages 19-64 Experiencing Access Problems



- Caregivers report more problems accessing health care than non-caregivers
- Even after adjusting for insurance status and poverty, caregivers are 40% more likely to report problems

Caregiver Support Services



- Caregiver NJ website: www.caregivernj.nj.gov
- NJEASE: 1-877-222-3737
- *A Pocket Guide to Caregiver Resources in New Jersey*

- Few survey respondents had looked into services in 2001, but 15% had looked into home care

Issues for the Future



- Since 70% of NJ caregivers are working, policies to provide flexibility at work are important
- New funding would enable promotion and maintenance of current services and provide more options for caregivers
- Financial eligibility should be expanded to provide support to middle income caregivers

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