

Who Provides Long-Term Care in the U.S.? (Updated)

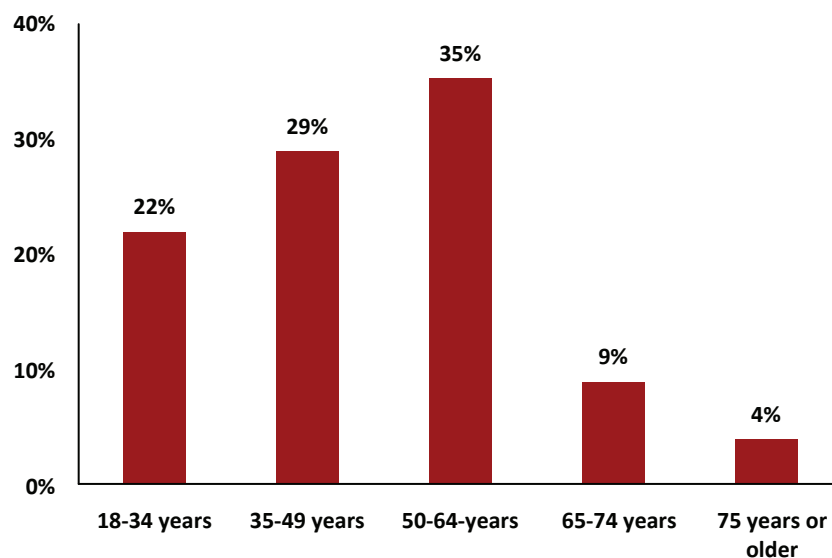
Most long-term care is provided, unpaid, by family members and friends. This is sometimes called “informal” caregiving. Paid long-term care services are provided formally by a wide variety of professionals, with the largest share coming from the “direct care workforce,” including home health aides, certified nursing assistants, and personal care aides.

This fact sheet describes both unpaid and paid long-term care providers across the U.S. All of the references accessed to produce this fact sheet are provided for further review.

Informal Caregivers

- Over three-quarters (78%) of people living in the community who need long-term care get support exclusively from informal, or unpaid, caregivers.¹
- In 2009, **65.7 million** people in the U.S. served as informal caregivers to an adult or child. Of these, **43.5 million** provided care to an adult age 50 and older.²
- Informal caregivers are **48 years** of age on average. About half (51%) of caregivers are between the ages of 18 and 49 years (See Figure 1).²

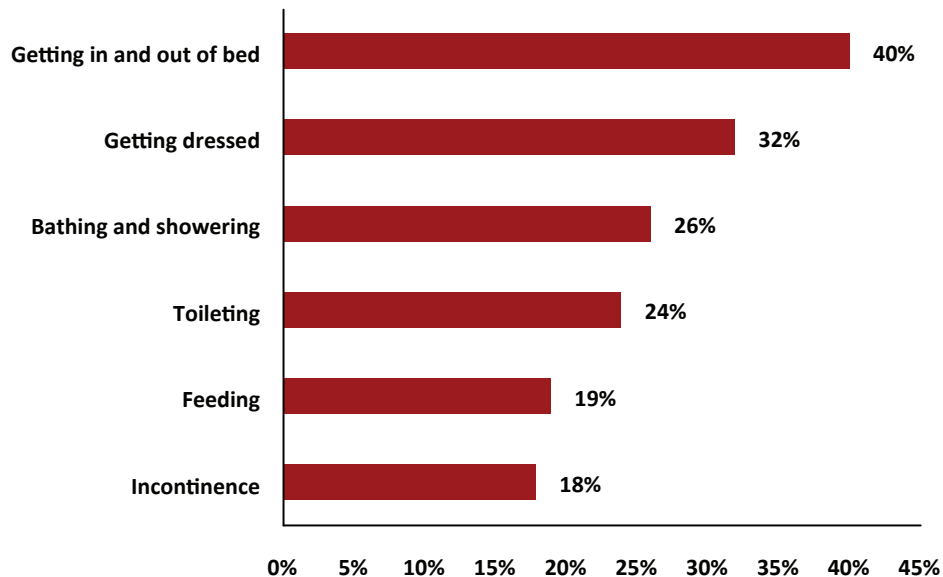
FIGURE 1 Informal Caregivers in U.S. by Age, 2009



Source: National Alliance for Caregiving, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Caregiving in the U.S., 2009.

- Informal caregivers for Americans age 50 and older are **predominantly female** (66%).²
- Nationally, **72%** of informal caregivers are White; **13%** are African-American; **12%** are Hispanic and **2%** are Asian-American.²
- A large **majority (86%)** of informal caregivers provide care for a relative, with over one-third (36%) taking care of a parent. One in seven (14%) care for a disabled child.²
- **Fifty-six percent** of caregivers help their loved one with at least one activity of daily living (ADL). The most common of these is helping the care recipient get in and out of bed or a chair (40%; See Figure 2).²

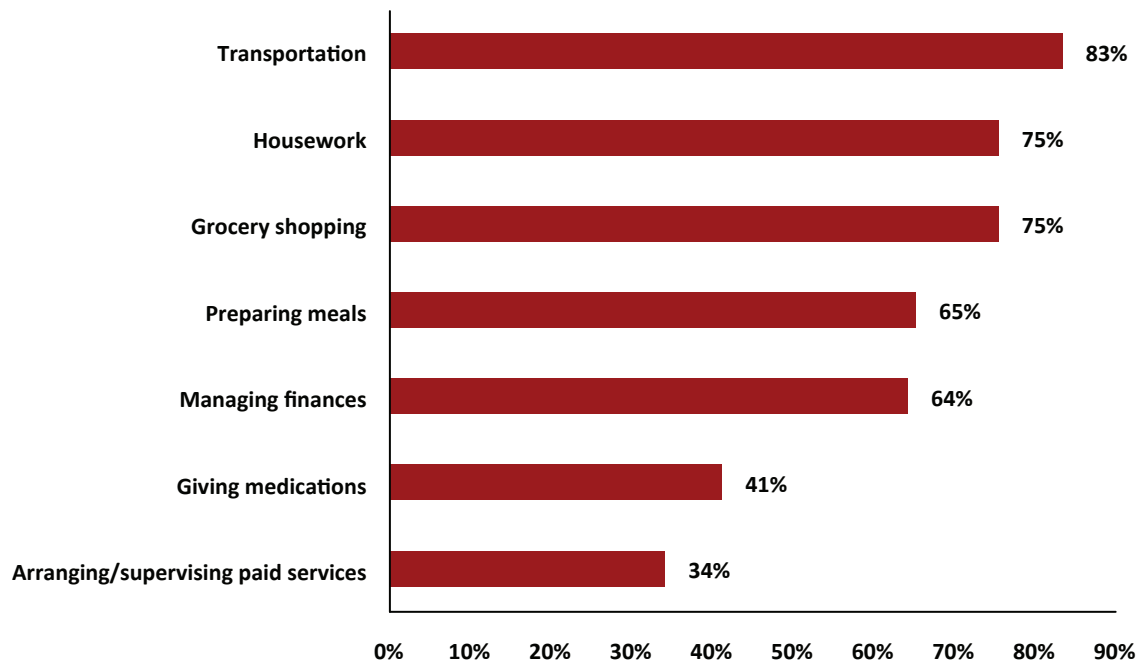
FIGURE 2 Assistance with Activities of Daily Living Provided by Informal Caregivers, Nationally, 2009



Source: National Alliance for Caregiving, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Caregiving in the U.S., 2009.

- On average, informal caregivers of adults assist with **4.4** out of seven instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs). The most common of these is providing transportation (83%; See Figure 3).²
- On average, informal caregivers spend **20.4 hours per week** providing care. Those who live with their care recipient spend an average of 39.3 hours per week in this role.²
- Informal caregivers provide an average of **4.6 years** of care, with 31% providing care for five years or more.²
- Duration of caregiving varies by age. Caregivers age 65 or older provide care for an average of **7.2 years**, compared to **4.9 years** for 50- to 64-year-old caregivers and **3.7 years** for younger caregivers.²

FIGURE 3 Assistance with Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Provided by Informal Caregivers, Nationally, 2009



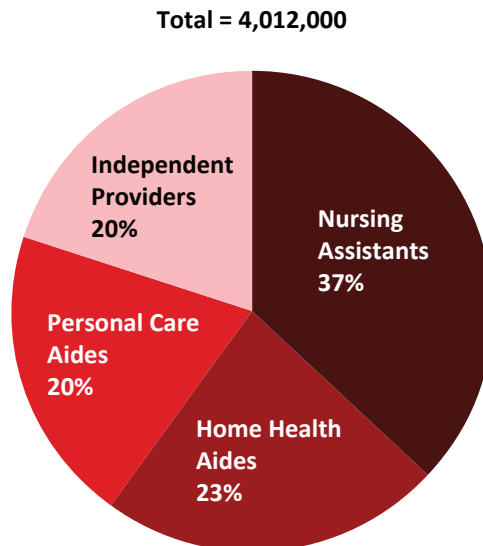
Source: National Alliance for Caregiving, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Caregiving in the U.S., 2009.

- **Over 15 million** Americans provide unpaid care for a person with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia.³
- In 2009, the estimated economic value of unpaid caregiving in the U.S. was approximately **\$450 billion**, more than both federal and state spending for medical and long-term care services in that year.⁴
- **Sixty-six percent** of caregivers for friends or loved ones living in the community say that at least one other unpaid caregiver helps their care recipient, while only 35% use paid help from aides, housekeepers, or other people paid to help their care recipient.²
- Compared to younger caregivers, those **caregivers age 65 or older are most likely to be sole unpaid caregivers**, without the support of other unpaid caregivers (47% vs. 30% of younger caregivers). Caregivers living with care recipients are also twice as likely to be sole caregivers (49% vs. 25% living separately).²

Formal Caregivers

- **Between 70% and 80%** of paid long-term care in the U.S. is provided by direct care workers, which include home health aides, certified nursing assistants, and personal care aides.⁵
- In 2011, the U.S. direct-care workforce totaled about **4 million** workers.⁵
- **Over 3.2 million (80%)** of these direct-care workers were employed as nursing assistants, home health aides, and personal care aides (See Figure 4).⁵
- An estimated **800,000** independent providers were employed across the country in public programs that provide personal care services. Independent providers are employed directly by consumers (See Figure 4).⁵
- The **majority** of direct care workers are female (**88%**); the average age of direct care workers is 42 years.⁵
- **Forty-eight percent** of direct care workers in the U.S. are White, **31%** are African-American, and **15%** are Hispanic. **Seven percent** are of other races/ethnicities.⁵

FIGURE 4 U.S. Direct Care Workforce, 2011



Source: PHI. America's Direct-Care Workforce, May 2012 Update. 2012.

- Approximately **46%** of direct care workers, nationally, provide care in institutional settings. The remainder provide care in home and community settings.⁶
- By 2018, home- and community-based direct care workers are likely to outnumber facility-based workers by nearly **two to one**.⁷
- Turnover among direct care nursing home staff is almost **50%**, nationally.⁸

References

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