

The business case for a carer-friendly workplace



1 in 9 Australians are carers.¹



Caring will affect every one of your employees at some stage. They are either caring now, will care for someone in the future, or will need care themselves.

Creating a carer-friendly workplace is good employment practice and makes excellent business sense. Research shows that carer-friendly workplaces benefit from:

- Improved staff retention
- Reduced recruitment and training costs
- Reduced stress, sick leave and absenteeism
- Improved staff morale and engagement
- Increased productivity²

Workforce management

Advances in medical technology mean that people with disability are living longer, while Australians are retiring later and choosing to age at home. In the coming years, more people than ever before will need to take on caring responsibilities. Creating a carer-friendly workplace will be essential to manage the growing impact of caring on an aging workforce.

Productivity and performance

Work-life strain



Juggling work and care can be challenging. Without adequate support, carers report higher stress and work-life strain that impacts their health and wellbeing, and their productivity at work³. Many carers reduce their working hours, relinquish opportunities, or leave the workforce altogether.

By providing real options to balance work and care, workplaces can reduce stress and absenteeism, while increasing employee engagement, loyalty and productivity at work.

Staff retention and cost savings

Although caring affects all age groups, most working carers are aged between 45-64 years. People in this age bracket usually hold substantial skills, experience and corporate knowledge – and they can be costly to replace. Some estimates suggest that replacing a competent staff member can equal nearly a year of that employee's salary⁴.

By focusing on retaining skilled workers rather than recruiting and training new staff, employers stand to make substantial savings.

Attracting talent

A flexible, carer-friendly workplace also contributes to an organisation's reputation as an 'employer of choice' for the growing numbers of skilled job seekers who want greater flexibility at work.

Corporate social responsibility

2.2 Billion
unpaid hours



Supporting staff to balance work and care has wider benefits for the community and the economy. Each year, carers contribute an estimated \$77.9 billion of unpaid labour to the Australian economy – the equivalent of 2.2 billion hours of unpaid care a year⁵. Enabling staff to balance work and care contributes to the wellbeing of individual carers and their families, and demonstrates a commitment to good corporate citizenship.

¹Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

²Supporting Working Carers: The Benefits to Families, Business and the Economy, Final Report of the Carers in Employment Task and Finish Group, HM Government, Employers for Carers and Carers UK (2013). Evidence was based on research with 200+ employers in the UK.

³Duxbury, L., Higgins, C. and Shroeder, B. (2009), Balancing paid work and caregiving responsibilities: A closer look at family caregivers in Canada. A report submitted to the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

⁴Lynn, L and Phelps R, PwC (2010). Failure to retain competent employees costing UK businesses £42bn a year. Accessed from http://pwc.blogs.com/pres_room/2010/10/failure-to-retain-competent-employees-costing-uk-businesses-42bn-a-year.html

⁵Deloitte Access Economics (2020) The value of informal care in 2020.