

Care receivers in Canada, 2018

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Wednesday, January 22, 2020

In 2018, an estimated 3 million people in Canada received some form of care at home to cope with a long-term health condition, physical or mental disability or problems related to aging. Receiving care at home is often considered a desirable option for those requiring chronic, palliative or rehabilitative care, as it allows them to remain at home longer and maintain a sense of independence.

Most care receivers are 65 years of age and older

Canadians are living longer and the population is aging as the large cohort of baby boomers enter their retirement years. Our approach to addressing health challenges is also evolving with a shift in emphasis from institutionalized care to home care.

Although Canadians aged 65 and older represented the largest proportion of care receivers (39%), receiving care for a long-term health condition, a physical or mental disability or problems related to aging was not uncommon for younger people. About one in six care receivers (13%) were between the ages of 15 and 24.

Family or friends are the most common source of support

Care can come from a variety of sources, including unpaid care from family members or friends, paid care from professionals, or a combination of the two. Most care receivers (89%) reported receiving care from family members or friends and half also received professional help. Relatively few care receivers (11%) relied exclusively on paid professional care.

Care recipients typically received about seven hours of help a week from family members or friends, and about two hours a week of professional help.

More than 8 in 10 care receivers (81%) were satisfied with the balance of help from family members or friends, and professionals. Those who were dissatisfied generally wanted more professional help.

Most care receivers are women

Partly reflecting their longer life expectancy and corresponding greater representation among seniors, women accounted for 54% of care receivers aged 55 to 74, and 62% of care receivers aged 75 years and older.

Women of all ages were more likely to receive care than men, with the exception of men aged 15 to 34 who represented a slight majority of care receivers (56%).

Mental health is the most common reason for care

Mental health problems were the most commonly reported reason for receiving care. Almost one in five (18%) care recipients reported mental illness as the main health condition or problem for which they received help. Other common reasons for care included problems related to aging (9%), cardiovascular disease (7%) and all other neurological diseases (7%) excluding mental illness, Alzheimer's and dementia.

While mental health was cited as the most common reason for receiving care overall, problems related to aging (21%) was cited as the most common reason for receiving care among those aged 65 years and older.

Among all care receivers, men were slightly more likely to be receiving care for a mental health problem (19%) than women (17%), whereas women (11%) were almost twice as likely as men (6%) to be receiving care for problems related to aging.



Note to readers

These results are based on data from the 2018 General Social Survey – Caregiving and Care Receiving. The analysis covers the population aged 15 years and older and living in a private household (20,258 respondents representing almost 31 million Canadians).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [4502](#).

Over the next few months, Statistics Canada will be releasing results from the 2018 General Social Survey on Caregiving and Care Receiving as part of the "Care Counts" series. This series delves into key trends and societal changes influencing caregiving and care receiving in Canada.

Today, as part of the second "Care Counts" release, Statistics Canada is releasing a profile Canada's 3 million care receivers with a new infographic titled "[Care counts: Care receivers in Canada, 2018](#)."

The previous "Care Counts" release includes an infographic titled "[Care counts: Caregivers in Canada, 2018](#)," a profile of Canada's 7.8 million caregivers and a study examining the support received by caregivers released in *Insights on Canadian Society*, titled "[Support received by caregivers in Canada](#)."

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).