

## Fact Sheet

# The “Typical” Caregiver of a Care Recipient Living in a Rural Area

National Alliance for Caregiving  
AARP

### WHO, CARING FOR WHO

The typical caregiver of someone who lives in a rural area is a non-Hispanic white 48.8 year old woman. They have lower education and household income than caregivers of those living in a suburban or urban area. Caregivers of someone living in a rural area typically do not live in a rural area themselves. They most often care for a parent or parent-in-law who is 66.9 years old; with their care recipient more likely to be a man. Their rural-living recipient has more conditions (1.8), typically long-term physical conditions, memory problems, or short-term physical conditions.

### DOING WHAT, WITH WHAT OTHER HELP

Caregivers of those living in rural areas have been providing care for 4.2 years on average. They provide more hours of care weekly (26.3 on average) and more often help with medical/nursing tasks, as well as helping with 1.7 ADLs and 4.5 IADLs. Caregivers of recipients living in a rural area are usually the primary unpaid caregiver and most have no paid help.

### WORK AND FINANCE

Caregivers of rural-living recipients typically work while providing care, for 34.8 hours per week and more often in an hourly job. Caregivers of rural-living recipients more often report high levels of financial strain and have experienced a greater number of financial impacts as a result of caregiving (1.9 on average), including stopping saving, taking on more debt, leaving bills unpaid or paying them late, and borrowing from friends and family.

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Caregivers of those living in a rural area are about 50-50 in terms of feeling they had a choice in taking on their caregiving role and in feeling their role gives them a sense of purpose or meaning. Caregivers of rural-living recipients more often have difficulty taking care of their own health and less often report having health insurance.



National Alliance for Caregiving  
1730 Rhode Island Ave., Suite 812,  
Washington, D.C., 20036



© AARP  
601 E Street, NW  
Washington DC 20049

**SERVICES & SUPPORTS**

Caregivers of those living in rural areas are especially likely to say that it is difficult to get affordable services in their care recipient's community. They more often would find helpful a program where caregivers are paid for some of their hours.

- 1 National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP, *Caregiving in the U.S. 2020* (Washington, DC: NAC and Washington, DC: AARP, May 2020).
- 2 ADLs include those tasks that provide assistance with basic personal tasks such as bathing, dressing, using the toilet, transferring to or from a bed or chair, caring for incontinence, and eating. IADLs are supports for everyday tasks, including housework, managing money, taking medication, shopping for groceries or clothes, using communication devices (like telephones), and caring for pets, among others. For more information, see <https://longtermcare.gov/the-basics/>.

**About the National Alliance for Caregiving**

*Established in 1996, the National Alliance for Caregiving is a non-profit coalition of national organizations focusing on advancing family caregiving through research, innovation, and advocacy. The Alliance conducts research, does policy analysis, develops national best-practice programs, and works to increase public awareness of family caregiving issues. Recognizing that family caregivers provide important societal and financial contributions toward maintaining the well-being of those they care for, the Alliance supports a network of 80+ state and local caregiving coalitions and serves as Secretariat for the International Alliance of Carer Organizations. Learn more at [www.caregiving.org](http://www.caregiving.org).*

**About AARP**

*AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org); AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).*

THIS REPORT WAS MADE POSSIBLE WITH GENEROUS SPONSORSHIP FROM



The John A. Hartford  
Foundation

