



CWHS

Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 2008 CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

The number of people in the United States in need of long-term care is expected to rise from 13 million in 2000 to 27 million in 2050, an increase of more than 100 percent.¹ Informal caregivers (e.g., family or friends), rather than formal caregivers (e.g., convalescent home or assisted living providers), provide the majority of long-term care services. As the "baby boom" generation retires, the number of informal caregivers is estimated to rise from 20 million in 2000 to 37 million in 2050, an increase of 85 percent.¹ California is reported to have the largest number of informal caregivers of any state in the nation, with an estimated 3.4 million Californians providing care at an estimated value of \$36.3 billion.² Less attention has been given to caregiving as a public health issue. However, a growing body of literature has noted differences between women caregivers and non-caregivers involving demographics and health status, mental health status, and health behaviors.³⁻¹¹ Information about the characteristics of caregivers and the impact caregiving may have on their lives could inform future prevention policies.

In 2008, the California Women's Health Survey (CWHS) respondents were asked, "During the past 12 months, did you provide care or help to a family member or friend because of their long-term illness or disability?" In addition to demographic information, to assess health status, women were asked about their overall health, their mental health status, the last time they had a routine medical checkup, if

they ever had a Pap test or mammogram, if they had a drink in the past month, and if they misused prescription drugs during the past 12 months. Responses were weighted in these analyses by age and race/ethnicity to reflect the 2000 California adult female population. Differences between groups were evaluated using the Chi-square test and t test (see table for results).

Demographic Variables

- Of respondents, ages 18 and older, 20.3 percent reported being caregivers in the past 12 months.
- White and African American/Black women were more likely to be caregivers (58.8 percent and 9.5 percent, respectively) than non-caregivers (51.1 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively). However, Hispanics and Asian/Other women were less likely to be caregivers (21.9 percent and 9.9 percent, respectively) than non-caregivers (28.0 percent and 14.9 percent, respectively).¹²
- Women caregivers were slightly more likely to be ages 45 and older (50.3 percent) than non-caregivers (43.9 percent).¹³
- A higher proportion of caregivers were married (64.7 percent) than non-caregivers (61.0 percent).¹⁴

Differences in Characteristics Between California Women Caregivers and Non-Caregivers, 2008

Department of Health Care Services
California Department of Public Health
Office of Women's Health

Public Health Message:
Caregiving is an emerging public health issue that should be monitored. As the population in California ages, more women will become involved in caregiving, which can impact their health and livelihood. Women caregivers could benefit from support services and programs that focus on the importance of their health.

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- Women with a college education or higher were more likely to be caregivers (51.2 percent) than non-caregivers (45.2 percent). However, women with less than a high school diploma were less likely to be caregivers (16.3 percent) than non-caregivers (20.5 percent).¹⁴
- No significant differences were found in poverty level and employment status by caregiver status.

Health Status

- Caregiving women reported higher rates of feeling overwhelmed (“very often” and “often”) in the previous 30 days (17.7 percent) than non-caregivers (10.5 percent).¹²
- No significant difference was found in general health status between women caregivers and non-caregivers.

Health Behaviors

- Caregivers reported slightly lower rates of having a routine medical checkup in the past year (73.7 percent) than non-caregivers (77.7 percent).¹⁴
- Women caregivers reported higher rates of ever having a Pap test (96.4 percent) than non-caregivers (92.2 percent).¹²
- Women caregivers reported less misuse of prescription drugs in the past 12 months (4.8 percent) than non-caregivers (7.4 percent).¹⁵
- No significant difference was found between women caregivers and non-caregivers for ever having had a mammogram or at least one drink in the past month.

Table 1

Differences Between California Women Caregivers and Non-caregivers

| Variables | Caregivers Percent | Non-caregivers Percent | P Value |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Demographic Variables | | | |
| • Race/Ethnicity | | | .0001 |
| ○ White | 58.8% | 51.1% | |
| ○ African American/Black | 9.5% | 6.1% | |
| ○ Hispanic | 21.9% | 28.0% | |
| ○ Asian/Other | 9.9% | 14.9% | |
| • Age | | | .001 |
| ○ Ages 18 to 44 | 49.7% | 56.1% | |
| ○ Ages 45 and older | 50.3% | 43.9% | |
| • Federal Poverty Level (FPL) | | | .1869 |
| ○ Women at or below 200% of the FPL | 38.4% | 41.4% | |
| ○ Women above 200% of the FPL | 61.6% | 58.6% | |
| • Education | | | .01 |
| ○ Less than high school degree | 16.3% | 20.5% | |
| ○ High school graduate/GED | 29.9% | 28.2% | |
| ○ Technical school/some college | 2.3% | 2.7% | |
| ○ College graduate/post graduate or professional degree | 51.2% | 45.2% | |
| • Marital status | | | .01 |
| ○ Married | 64.7% | 61.0% | |
| ○ Divorced | 9.7% | 6.5% | |
| ○ Widowed | 3.8% | 6.7% | |
| ○ Separated | 3.0% | 2.7% | |
| ○ Never married | 13.0% | 15.8% | |
| ○ A Member of an unmarried couple | 5.8% | 7.4% | |

Differences in Characteristics Between California Women Caregivers and Non-Caregivers, 2008

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Table 1

Differences Between California Women Caregivers and Non-caregivers (cont.)

| Variables | Caregivers Percent | Non-caregivers Percent | P Value |
|--|--------------------|------------------------|---------|
| • Employment status | | | .2448 |
| o Full time | 27.3% | 28.9% | |
| o Part time | 12.5% | 12.5% | |
| o Self-employed | 8.7% | 6.6% | |
| o Out of work for more than 1 year | 2.5% | 2.1% | |
| o Out of work for less than 1 year | 4.4% | 3.8% | |
| o Homemaker | 18.8% | 22.4% | |
| o Student | 5.5% | 5.1% | |
| o Retired | 13.3% | 13.7% | |
| o Unable to work | 6.9% | 4.9% | |
| Health status | | | |
| • General health status | | | .1507 |
| o Excellent | 19.0% | 22.3% | |
| o Very good | 31.6% | 30.7% | |
| o Good | 28.5% | 28.8% | |
| o Fair | 16.6% | 13.5% | |
| o Poor | 4.2% | 4.8% | |
| • How often felt overwhelmed in past 30 days | | | .0001 |
| o Very often | 10.6% | 4.8% | |
| o Often | 7.1% | 5.7% | |
| o Sometimes | 21.0% | 17.2% | |
| o Rarely | 28.2% | 29.1% | |
| o Never | 33.1% | 43.3% | |
| Health behaviors | | | .01 |
| • How long since last routine medical checkup | | | |
| o Within the past year | 73.7% | 77.7% | |
| o Within the past 2 years | 10.5% | 10.6% | |
| o Within the past 5 years (more than 2 years to 5 years) | 7.4% | 5.4% | |
| o More than 5 years | 6.9% | 3.7% | |
| o Never had a check-up | 1.5% | 2.6% | |
| • Ever had a Mammogram* | | | .9575 |
| o Yes | 92.4% | 92.5% | |
| o No | 7.6% | 7.5% | |
| • Ever had a PAP Test | | | .0001 |
| o Yes | 96.4% | 92.2% | |
| o No | 3.6% | 7.8% | |
| • During past month had at least one drink | | | .5162 |
| o Yes | 47.2% | 45.6% | |
| o No | 52.8% | 54.4% | |
| • During past 12 months ever misused prescription drugs | | | .05 |
| o Yes | 4.8% | 7.4% | |
| o No | 95.2% | 92.6% | |

*Only included women ages 40 and older

Source: California Women's Health Survey, 2008

- 1 US Department of Health and Human Services and Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. *The Future Supply of Long-Term Care Workers in Relation to the Aging Baby Boom Generation. Report to Congress.* Washington DC: Dept of Health and Human Services; 2003.

*Differences in
Characteristics Between
California Women
Caregivers and Non-
Caregivers, 2008*

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- 2 Family Caregiver Alliance. *Issue paper #1 June 2007- Caregivers at risk: a public health concern.* http://caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content_node.jsp?nodeid=1962. Published 2007. Accessed January 5, 2010.
- 3 Family Caregiver Alliance. *Who are California's informal caregivers?* http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content_node.jsp?nodeid=1961. Published 2007. Accessed January 5, 2010.
- 4 Zhang J, Vitaliano PP, Lin HH. Relations of caregiving stress and health depend on the health indicators used and gender. *Int J Beh Med.* 2006;13(2):173-181.
- 5 Toseland RW, Rossiter CM, Peak T, Smith GC. Comparative effectiveness of individual and group interventions to support family caregivers. *Soc Work.* 1990;35(3):209-217.
- 6 McGuire LC, Anderson LA, Talley RC, Crews JE. Supportive care needs of Americans: a major issue for women as both recipients and providers. *J Women's Health.* 2007;16(6):784-789.
- 7 Family Caregiver Alliance. *A population at risk.* http://caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content_node.jsp?nodeid=1822. Accessed January 5, 2010.
- 8 Scharlach A, Sirotnik B, Bockman S, Neiman M, Ruiz C, Dal Santo T. *A Profile of Family Caregivers: Results of the California Statewide Survey of Caregivers.* Berkeley, CA: Center for the Advanced Study of Aging Services, U.C. Berkeley Press, 2003; http://cssr.berkeley.edu/pdfs/FamCareProfile_Entire.pdf. Accessed January 5, 2010.
- 9 Whittier S, Coon D, Aaker J. *Caregiver Support Interventions.* Research Brief 10. Washington DC: National Association of State Units on Aging; 2002.
- 10 Flaskerud JH, Tabora B. Health problems of low-income female caregivers of adults with HIV/AIDS. *Health Care Women Int.* 1998;19(1):23-36.
- 11 von Känel R, Mausbach BT, Patterson TL, et al. Increased Framingham Coronary Heart Disease Risk Score in dementia caregivers relative to non-caregiving controls. *Gerontol.* 2008;54(3):131-137.
- 12 $P < .0001$
- 13 $P < .001$
- 14 $P < .01$
- 15 $P < .05$

Submitted by: Patricia Lee, Ph.D. and Terri Thorfinnson, J.D., Department of Health Care Services, California Department of Public Health, Office of Women's Health, (916) 440-7633, Patricia.Lee@dhcs.ca.gov