



CWHS

# Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 2008 CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Needing to regularly provide care for a family member or friend with an illness or disability has become a common experience. Caregivers are more likely to be women and to provide care during middle age—between ages 50 and 64.<sup>1</sup> Chronic conditions, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, dementia, and stroke, account for more than half the conditions for which friends and family members provide care. Some researchers have noted caregiving differences based on the gender of the caregiver, but nothing has been reported on gender differences of the care recipient.<sup>2-3</sup> Public health implications of caregiving are likely to be revealed in the circumstances of the care recipient in addition to those of the caregiver.

In 2008, California Women's Health Survey respondents were asked if they had provided care for someone during the previous year. If they had, questions were asked regarding demographics, health problems, health insurance, and long-term care insurance of their care recipients. They were also asked if they had been injured or missed work because of their caregiving activities. Caregivers reported information on their own race/ethnicity, age, and family income. The following data analyses were done on all women who reported that they had cared for someone in the previous year. Responses were weighted in these analyses by age and race/ethnicity to reflect the 2000 California adult female population. Comparisons between groups were evaluated using Chi-square and t-test statistics (see Table 1).

- About 20 percent of women reported being caregivers in the previous year.
- Male recipients of care were significantly older (70 years) than female care recipients (61 years).<sup>4</sup>
- Although care recipient gender differences were found, the rates were not reliable due to small sample sizes.
- Of the reported recipient diseases, women caring for females reported more cancer (16.6 percent), but less chronic disease (6.1 percent), and cardiovascular disease (8.6 percent) than those caring for males (9.1 percent, 7.6 percent, and 10.3 percent, respectively).<sup>4</sup>
- Women who cared for males were more likely to report missing work because of their caregiving activities (32.5 percent) than those who cared for females (23.4 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- Women who cared for males noted shorter distances traveled to their care recipient (44 minutes) than those caring for females (75 minutes).<sup>4</sup>

No differences were found in the caregivers' demographics (race/ethnicity, age, or family income) or their likelihood of being injured while caregiving among those caring for men versus women. There were also no gender differences among care recipients having health insurance or long-term care insurance (see Table 1).

## *Gender Differences Among Caregiver Recipients in California, 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 and increasingly a women's health issue that should be monitored. California women are taking on caregiving roles for both males and females. Women caring for males travel a shorter distance for caregiving, cared for older adults, and were more likely to miss work due to their caregiving activities than women caring for women.*

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Department of Health Care  
Services  
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Table 1  
**Characteristics of California Caregivers and Recipients by Gender of Recipient**

Variables	Male Care Recipients (Percent or Mean)	Female Care Recipients (Percent or Mean)	P Value
Age of caregiver			.1105
o Ages 18-29	11.7%	16.0%	
o Ages 30-39	22.5%	19.7%	
o Ages 40-49	22.8%	24.2%	
o Ages 50-59	16.7%	21.6%	
o Ages 60 and older	26.4%	18.5%	
Race/Ethnicity of caregiver			.9298
o White	58.1%	59.0%	
o Black/African American	8.7%	9.1%	
o Hispanic	23.6%	21.1%	
o Asian/Other	9.6%	10.9%	
Federal Poverty Level (FPL) of caregiver			.4988
o Women at or below 200% of the FPL	40.0%	37.3%	
o Women above 200% of the FPL	60.0%	62.7%	
Mean Age of Care Recipient	70 years	61 years	.05
Recipient's relationship to caregiver			.0001*
• Child	15.5%	6.9%	
• Spouse/partner	28.2%	*	
• Parent or parent -in- law	26.9%	49.8%	
• Grandparent or grandparent -in- law	7.9%	13.3%	
• Another relative	12.8%	11.3%	
• Friend	6.6%	15.5%	
• Not related	2.5%	3.1%	
Main health problem of recipient			.05
• Cancer	9.1%	16.6%	
• Chronic disease	7.6%	6.1%	
• Cardiovascular disease	10.3%	8.6%	
• Other	73.1%	68.8%	
Recipient had health insurance			.9067
• Yes	92.0%	92.3%	
• No	8.0%	7.7%	
Recipient had long-termcare insurance			.8389
• Yes	34.3%	35.2%	
• No	65.7%	64.8%	
Caregiver injured assisting recipient			.1497
• Yes	8.4%	5.5%	
• No	91.6%	94.5%	
Caregiver missed work assisting recipient			.05
• Yes	32.5%	23.4%	
• No	67.5%	76.6%	
Mean distance from caregiver to recipient	44 minutes	75 minutes	.05

\*Rate unreliable due to small sample size

Source: California Women's Health Survey, 2008

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- 1 Family Caregiver Alliance. *Who are California's informal caregivers?* [http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content\\_node.jsp?nodeid=1961](http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content_node.jsp?nodeid=1961). Published 2007. Accessed January 5, 2010.
- 2 Gallicchio L, Siddiqi N, Langenberg P, Baumgarten M. Gender differences in burden and depression among informal caregivers of demented elders in the community. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry*. 2002;17(2):154-163.
- 3 Kim Y, Baker F, Spillers RL. Cancer caregivers' quality of life: effects of gender, relationship, and appraisal. *J Pain Symptom Manage*. 2007;34(3):294-304.
- 4  $P < .05$

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