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AARP Kentucky Caregiving in the Workplace Survey

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AARP Kentucky Caregiving in the Workplace Survey

Report Prepared by Erica Dinger

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Background

As parents and loved ones age, many employees find themselves in the role of caregiver to their aging family members. This caregiving role may interfere with their role as employee—through absenteeism, early departure from work, late arrival to work, personal phone calls, and emotional distraction. The costs associated with this loss of productivity and with employee attrition are high; overall costs of caregiving to U.S. companies have been estimated at 11.4 billion dollars annually—or \$1,142 per employee per year¹.

In order to assess what resources are available in Kentucky to employees who are caring for an older relative, AARP Kentucky commissioned this study of companies in the Commonwealth who have at least one employee. 2,000 businesses were contacted through a mail survey directed to their human resources department, and 296 (15%) responded. This survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 5.3 percent.

Highlights

- More than four in ten (43%) respondents said that their employees had provided care or assistance to an older person.
- Three in ten (31%) say that an employee has asked for time off for caregiving, while only 3 percent say an employee has requested time off under the Family Medical Leave Act.
- Funeral or bereavement leave (33%), flexible work schedules (26%), and job security (24%) are the most common services or programs offered to caregivers. However, 39 percent say they offer no programs or services for caregivers.
- Covering the employee's time (40%) is the biggest barrier to implementing caregiving programs or services.
- Almost six in ten (57%) say that caregiving has an effect on employee performance.
- Over half (55%) would be interested in learning more about resources available for caregiving employees.

¹ *The Metlife Study of Employer Costs for Working Caregivers*, 1997. Metlife Mature Market Group, Westport, CT.

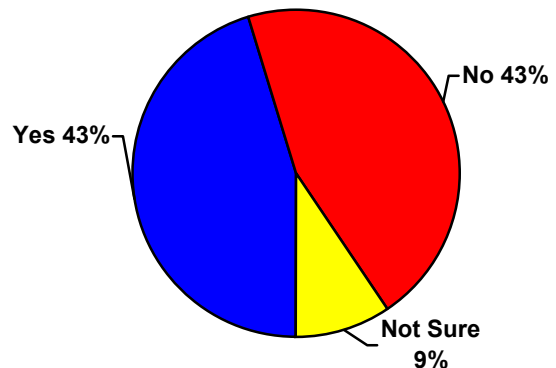
Findings

Four in ten employers believe their employees have provided caregiving services in the last two years.

Four in ten employers say that they have an employee who has provided care or assistance to an older person during the last two years. An equal percentage said that they did not know of any employees who were caregivers.

Those respondents who said they had an employee who was a caregiver (n=127) were then asked to estimate what percentage of their employees were caregivers: 35 percent said 0-5 percent were caregivers, 18 percent said 6-10 percent, 17 percent said 11-40 percent, and 17 percent said 50 percent or more. Five percent were unsure of how many of their employees were caregivers.

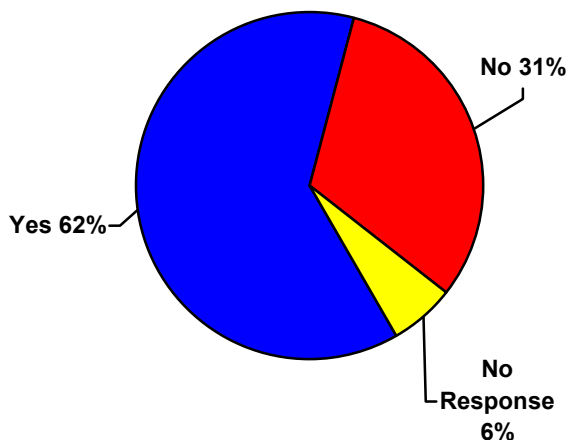
**Whether Employees are Caregivers
(N=296)**



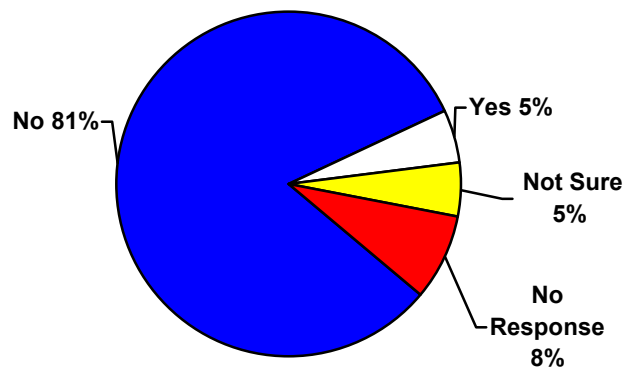
Most companies offer benefits but the majority do not offer an employee assistance program.

Over six in ten Kentucky companies say they offer benefits to their employees, such as health insurance or paid time off. However, only five percent provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). An EAP typically provides confidential short-term counseling to employees having difficulties in their personal and/or work life, as well as offering referral services.

**Whether Employers Offer Employee Benefits
(N=296)**



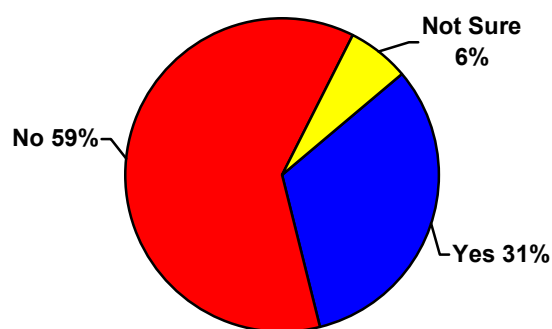
**Whether Companies Have an EPA
(N=296)**



Many employers believe their employees would be comfortable asking for time off for caregiving, and more than a quarter of employees have done so.

Three-fourths (75%) of employers believe that their employees would be comfortable asking for time off for caregiving activities. Three in ten (31%) report that employees have asked for time off to assist an older person. However, only three percent have requested time off under the Family Medical Leave Act.

Whether Employees Have Asked for Time off for Caregiving (N=239)*

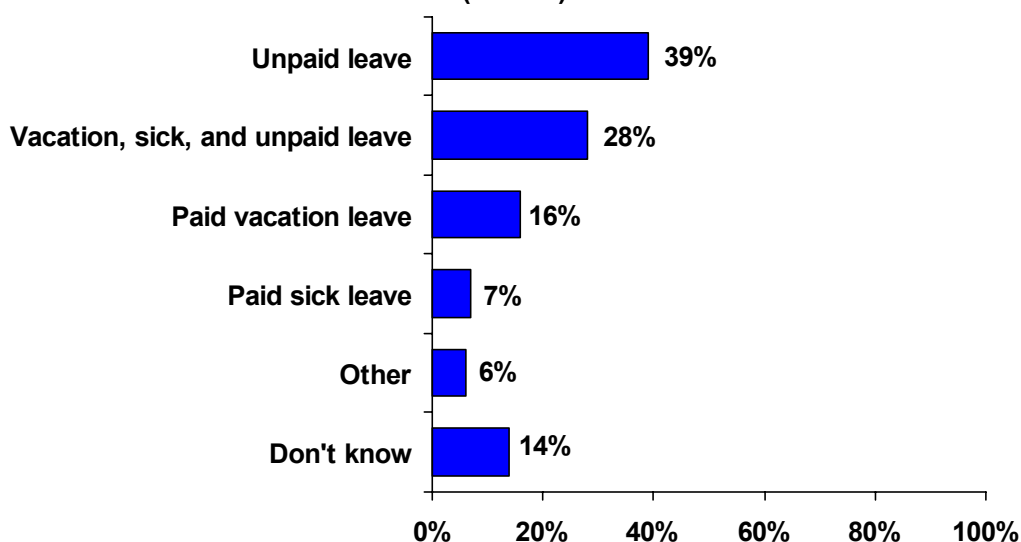


** Responses for employers with two or more employees only.*

Kentucky employees typically would use unpaid leave if they need time off for caregiving activities.

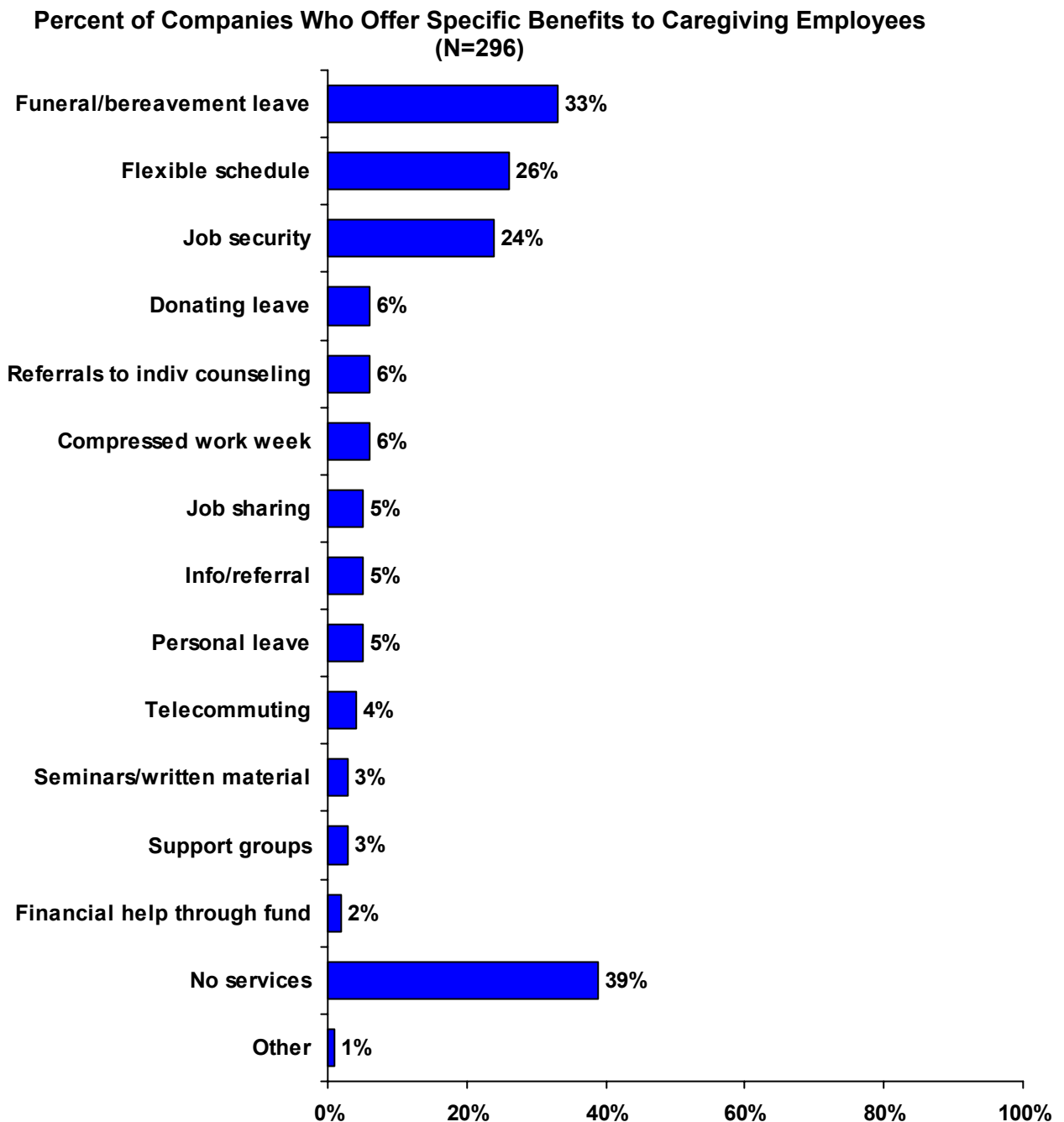
Four in ten respondents said that if an employee took time off to take care of an older parent or relative they would use their unpaid leave time, while almost three in ten said an employee would use a combination of vacation time, sick leave, and unpaid leave to do so.

Type of Leave Employees Would Use if They Took Time Off to Take Care of an Older Relative (N=296)



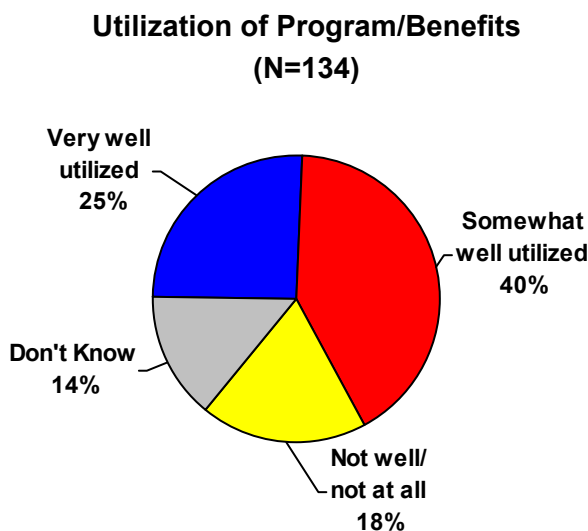
A third of companies offer funeral leave for caregiving employees.

Fully 39 percent offer no services to caregiving employees. However, many companies do offer services. Funeral/bereavement leave, flexible work schedules, and job security are the most commonly offered benefits for caregiving employees among companies in Kentucky. Some companies also offer more creative benefits, such as support groups, special funds, and allowing other employees to donate time to the caregiving employee.



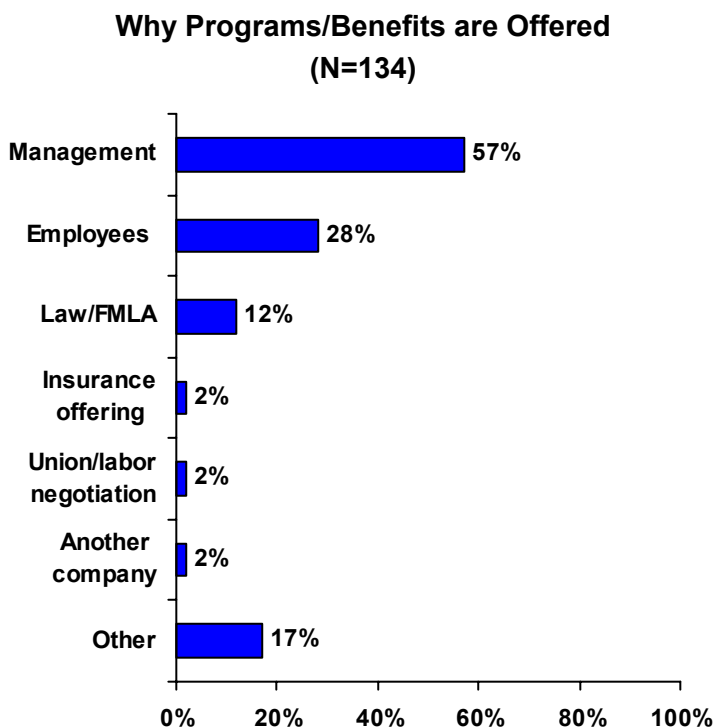
Most caregiving programs have been in place for five or more years and are well utilized.

Almost six in ten (58%) companies that have a program or benefit for caregivers (n=134) say that the program or benefit has been in place for five years or more. Fourteen percent say the program has been in place for two to five years. In addition, almost two-thirds (64%) say the program or benefit is *very* or *somewhat well utilized*.



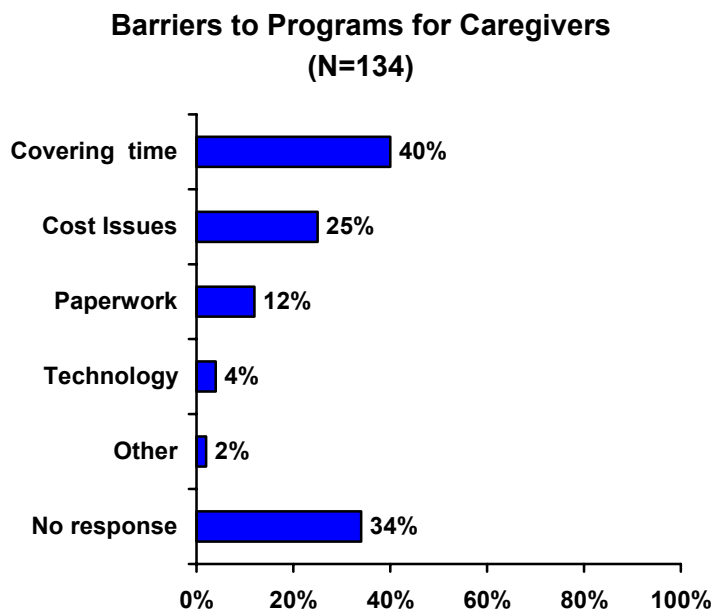
Programs and benefits are offered because management saw a need for them.

Almost six in ten respondents say that programs and benefits are offered to caregivers because management saw a need for them. Almost three in ten say that employees asked for such programs, while about ten percent say such programs were mandated by the law or by the Family Medical Leave Act.



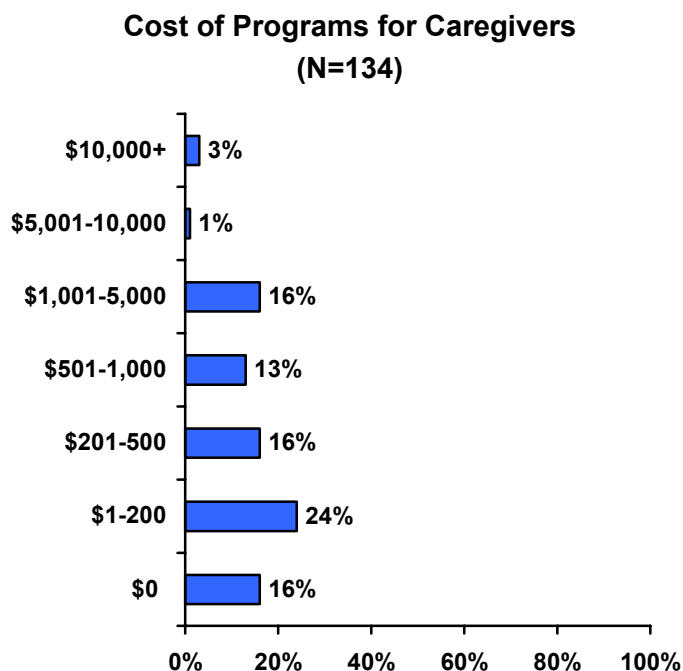
Covering employee's time is the main barrier to programs for caregivers.

Four in ten employers say that covering the employee's time is the main barrier to getting programs and benefits for caregivers implemented. A quarter says that cost is a barrier. Over a third did not list a barrier for implementing such programs.



The cost of programs for caregivers varies.

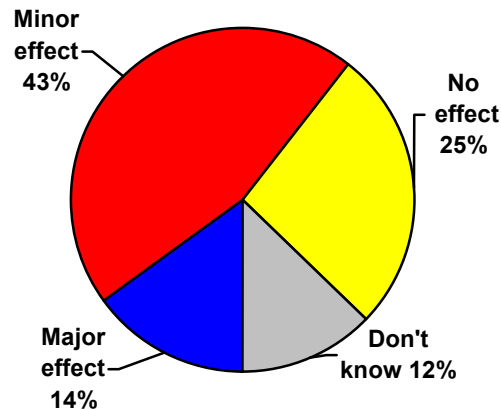
Employers give widely different responses to how much money it costs per year to provide the programs or benefits for caregivers. The cost per person for these benefits is not affected by the size of the company or whether it is non-profit, for-profit, or a government agency. Rather, the cost is determined by the types of programs or benefits offered by the company and their choice of provider.



Many employers recognize that caregiving affects employee performance.

Employers were asked how much providing caregiving to an older person affects employee performance. One in seven said it had a major effect, while 43 percent said it had a minor effect. A quarter said they did not think caregiving affected employee performance.

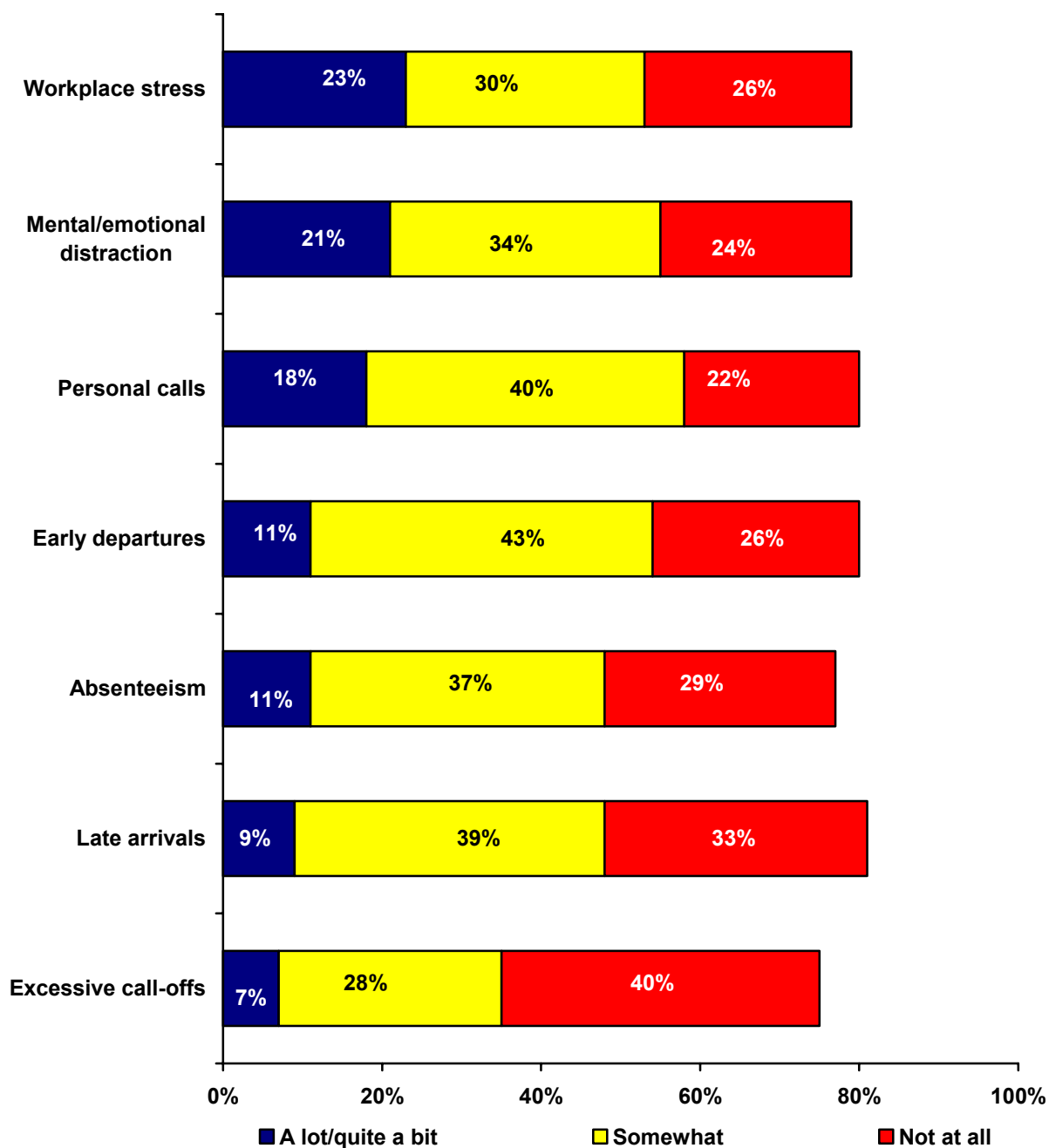
**Whether Employees are Caregivers
(N=134)**



Employers are aware that caregiving responsibilities influence employee performance factors.

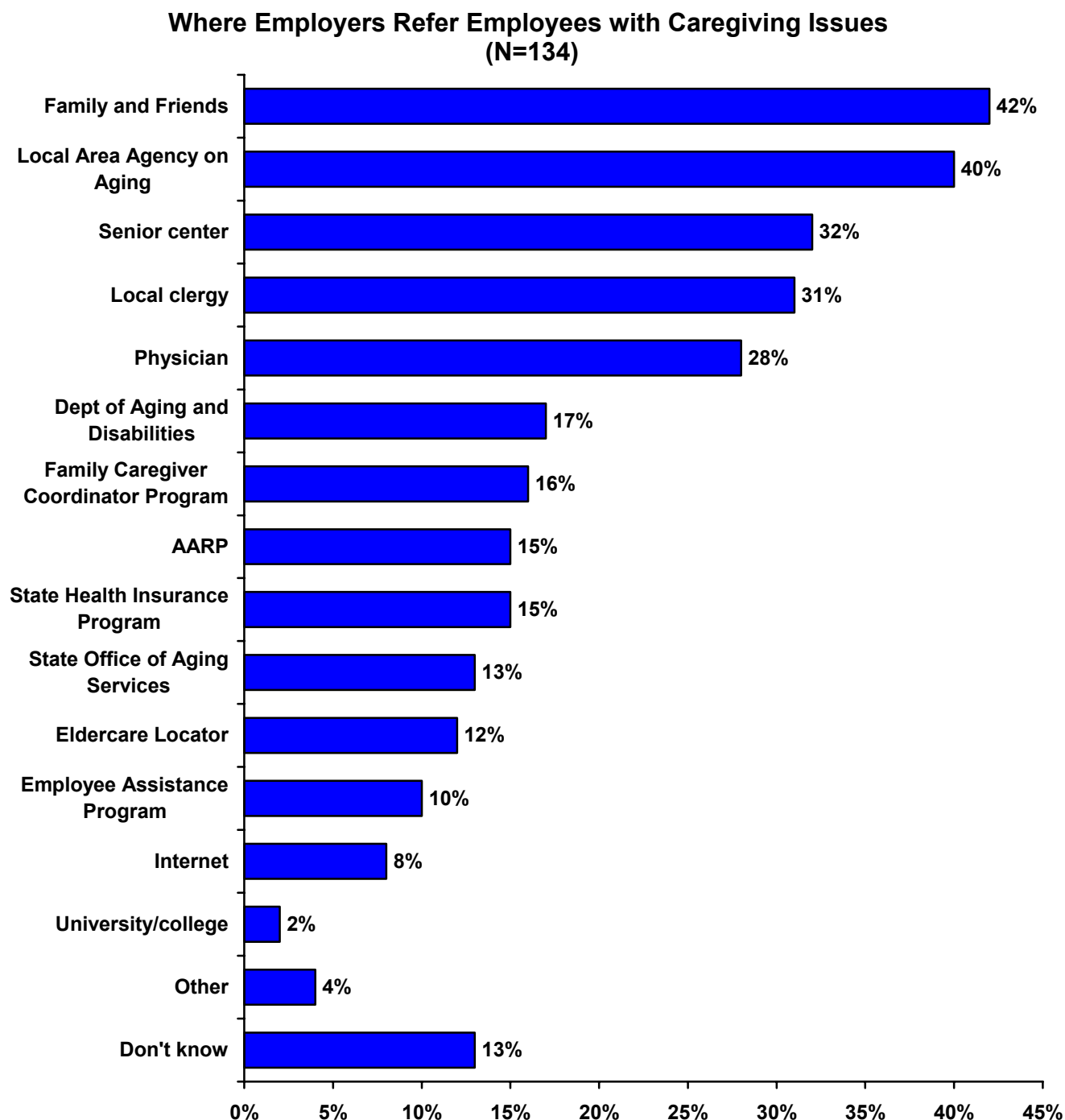
Employers show an awareness of how caregiving responsibilities can influence performance factors such as workplace stress, personal calls, and mental or emotional distraction. In addition, it should be noted that about a quarter of respondents were either not sure or gave no response to each of the factors listed (see Appendix A).

**Extent That Employers Think Elder Care Responsibilities
Influence Workplace Performance Factors
(N=134)**



Employers would refer employees to family and friends and the Local Area Agency on Aging if they need help with caregiving issues.

Employers say they are most likely to refer employees with caregiving needs to family and friends or to the Local Area Agency on Aging. Three in ten would refer an employee to a senior center or local clergy. One in seven would refer employees to AARP.

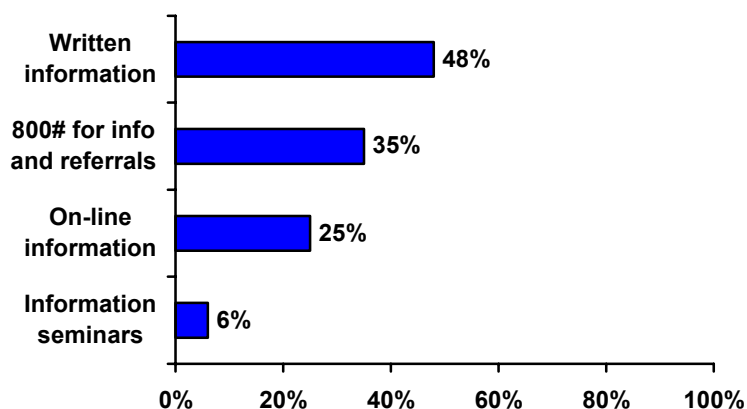


Employers want information on caregiving and would prefer that information to be written.

Over half (55%) of employers want information on low- or no-cost resources available for caregivers.

In addition, they want this information to be written or available through an 800 number or on-line.

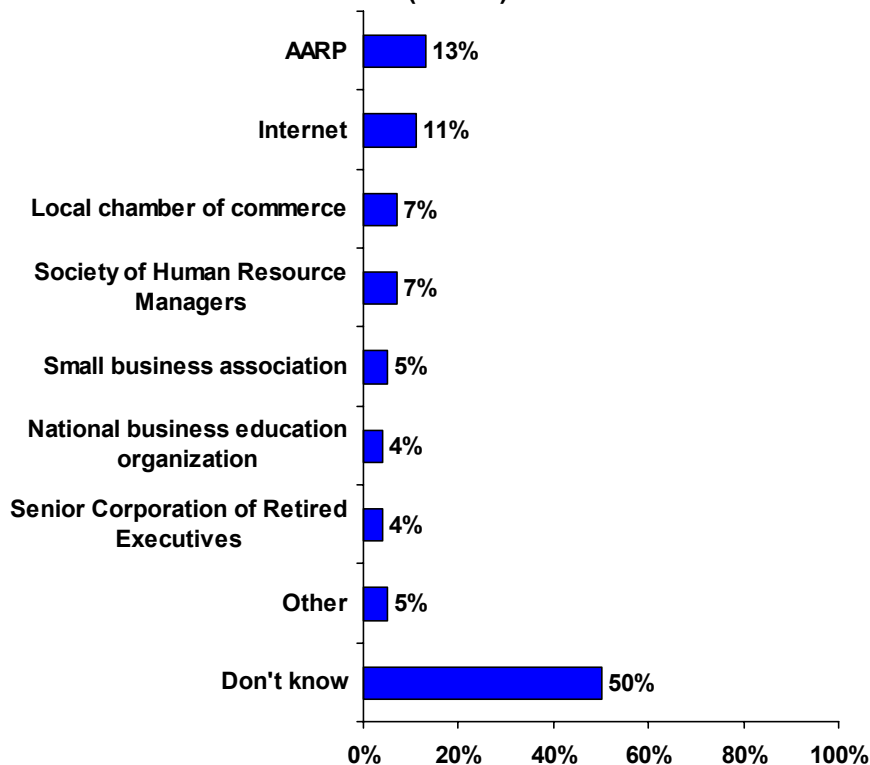
**Percent of Employers Interested in Resources
(n=296)**



Employers say they would look to AARP for help in developing an elder care program.

One in seven employers say that they would go to AARP for help in developing an eldercare program to aid caregivers. One in ten say they would turn to the Internet. However, fully half say they don't know who they would turn to for help in developing an eldercare program.

**Where Employers Would Go for Resources
(n=296)**

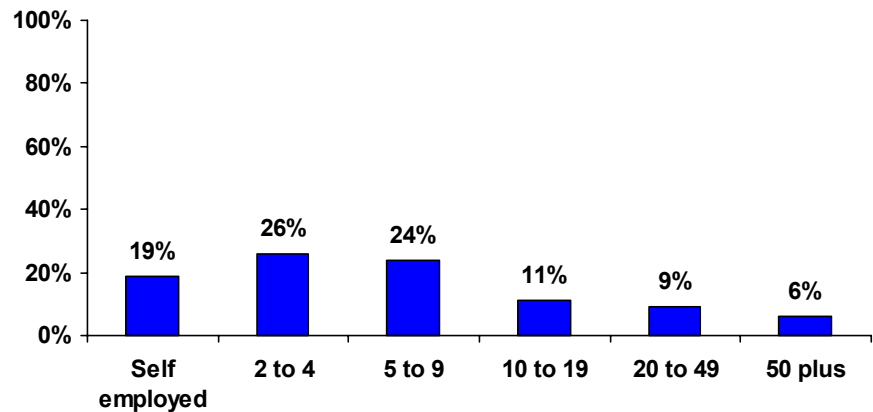


Company Characteristics

Most Kentucky companies that responded have between one and nine employees and are for-profit businesses.

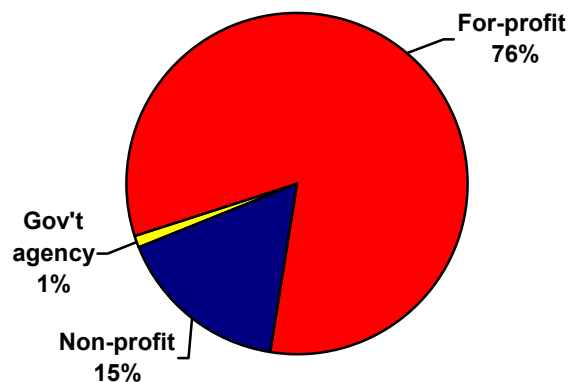
The majority (69%) of Kentucky companies that responded to the survey have between one and nine employees. Only fourteen percent report having over 20 employees, while four percent gave no response.

Number of Employees in Kentucky Companies (N=296)



The majority of businesses in Kentucky are for-profit and are not part of a larger company (83%). Moreover, nearly all companies in the state (76%) say benefit decisions are made locally and not somewhere else.

Type of Companies in Kentucky (N=296)



Conclusions

Employers in Kentucky are aware that their employees are engaged in caregiving activities for family members and loved ones. In addition, employers recognize that caregiving activities affect their employees' work performance, including things like early departures from work, late arrivals, and personal telephone calls during working hours.

Nearly all employers offer some employee benefits, and many offer funeral or bereavement leave, flexible work schedules, and job security to aid those employees who are also caregiving. However, employers recognize that more could be done and want information on no-cost or low-cost resources for caregiving employees.

AARP Kentucky has the opportunity to take the lead in educating employers on the issues of caregiving in the workplace. When an employee needs information about caregiving, some employers know to refer them to AARP. However, about half do not know where to turn for help. AARP Kentucky is thus poised to help employers across Kentucky as they develop programs for employees who are facing the difficult task of balancing their duties as employees with their duties as caregivers.

Methodology

Survey Sampling, Inc. provided a sample of employers with at least one employee for the state of Kentucky. A pre-notification letter was then sent to the human resources department of 2,000 businesses in the state of Kentucky with one employee or more. This was followed by the survey itself, a reminder postcard, and a second copy of the survey. Two hundred ninety-six (15%) of the businesses contacted responded to the survey. This survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 5.3 percent.

2003 Employers and Eldercare Survey

WEIGHTED N = 296, RESPONSE RATE = 15%, SAMPLING ERROR = +/-5.3%

(Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. A “*” means less than 1%.)

1. How many people work either full or part time in your company in the state of Kentucky?

<u>%</u>	
19	Only one (self-employed)
26	2-4
24	5-9
11	10-19
9	20-49
2	50-99
3	100 or more
1	Don't know
4	No Response

2. Are any of your employees offered any benefits, such as health insurance or paid time off?

<u>%</u>	
62	Yes
31	No
*	Don't know
6	No Response

A caregiver can be anyone who provides unpaid help to a relative or friend who is ill, disabled, or elderly. This kind of help includes assistance with bathing, dressing, preparing meals, taking medications, doing household chores, taking care of finances, arranging for outside services, or regularly visiting the person needing care. The relative or friend you are helping may be someone who lives with you or somewhere else.

3. In the past two years, have any of your employees provided care or assistance to an older person (including a spouse, parent, other relative, or friend)?

<u>%</u>	
43	Yes
43	No [SKIP TO Q5]
9	Don't know [SKIP TO Q5]
5	No Response

4. **Approximately what percentage of your employees do you think are providing care or assistance to an older person? (n=127)**

<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>	
35	0-5%	7	50-69%
18	6-10%	9	70% or more
6	11-19%	0	Other:
6	20-29%	5	Not sure
6	30-39%	5	No Response
3	40-49%		

5. **Have any of your employees asked for time off to assist an older person?**

<u>%</u>	
26	Yes
61	No
5	Not sure
8	No Response

6. **Have any of your employees requested time off under the Family Medical Leave Act to assist an older person?**

<u>%</u>	
4	Yes
85	No
4	Not sure
8	No Response

7. **Do you believe your employees would be *comfortable* asking for time off to take care of or assist an older person?**

<u>%</u>	
69	Yes
7	No
14	Not sure
10	No Response

8. **If an employee took time off to take care of or assist an older person, what kind of leave would they use? Would they use....**

<u>%</u>	
7	Paid vacation leave
16	Paid sick leave
39	Unpaid leave
28	All of the above (vacation, sick, and unpaid leave)
6	Other (Please Specify _____)
14	Don't know
11	No Response

9. Does your company have an Employee Assistance Program?

<u>%</u>	
5	Yes
81	No
5	Not sure
8	No Response

10. Does your company offer any of the following services or programs for employees who are caring for an older person? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

<u>%</u>	
2	Financial help through a special fund that employees contribute to voluntarily
5	Additional personal leave to be used for eldercare
6	Allow employees the opportunity to donate their sick time to another employee who is caring for an older relative
26	Flexible work schedule to accommodate time needed to provide eldercare
3	Support groups
5	Information and referral assistance to help find eldercare providers and resources
24	Job security for employee who need to take time off to provide eldercare
4	Telecommuting or allowing employees to work from home
5	Job sharing
3	Information about eldercare through seminars or written materials
6	Referrals to individual counseling
6	Compressed workweek that allows employees to work longer but fewer days
33	Funeral/bereavement leave
0	Subsidized care or care vouchers
1	Other (Please specify): _____
39	No services are offered [SKIP TO Q19]
16	No Response

11. On average, how well would you say the above program(s)/benefit(s) that are offered to caregivers are utilized? (n=134)

<u>%</u>	
25	Very well utilized
40	Somewhat utilized
10	Not well utilized
8	Not at all utilized
14	Don't know
4	No Response

12. On average, how long has the above program(s)/benefit(s) been in place? (n=134)

%

- 1 Less than 6 months
- 3 Between 6-12 months
- 4 Between 1-2 years
- 14 Between 2-5 years
- 58 5 years or more
- 16 Don't know
- 5 No Response

13. What were the circumstances that led to the above programs(s)/benefit(s) being offered? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY) (n=134)

%

- 28 Employees asked for it
- 57 Management saw a need
- 2 Another company implemented program successfully
- 2 Insurance offering
- 2 Union/labor negotiation
- 12 Law/FMLA
- 17 Other:
- 6 No Response

14. Were there any barriers to getting the program(s)/benefit(s) mentioned in question 10 implemented? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY) (n=134)

%

- 25 Cost issues
- 12 Increased paperwork/administrative issues
- 40 Covering the employee's time
- 4 Technology issues
- 8 Other: (Please Specify _____)
- 34 No Response

15. About how much do you think it costs a year to provide the programs/benefits listed in Question 10 per employee? (n=134)

<u>%</u>	
16	\$0
24	\$1-200
16	\$201-500
13	\$501-1,000
16	\$1,001-5,000
1	\$5,001-10,000
3	\$10,001 plus
11	No Response

16. To what extent do you think eldercare responsibilities influence the following performance factors in your company? (n=134)

	A lot	Quite a bit	Somewhat	Not at all	Not Sure	No Response
a. Workplace stress	11%	12%	30%	26%	13%	8%
b. Absenteeism	5%	6%	37%	29%	13%	9%
c. Late arrivals to work	3%	6%	39%	33%	12%	8%
d. Early departures from work	3%	8%	43%	26%	13%	8%
e. Mental/emotional distraction	6%	15%	34%	24%	13%	9%
f. The amount of personal calls made at work	10%	8%	40%	22%	12%	8%
g. Excessive sick days/call-offs	2%	5%	28%	40%	17%	8%

17. How much do you think providing care or assistance to an older person affects employee performance in your company or business? (n=134)

<u>%</u>	
14	Major effect
43	Minor effect
25	No effect
12	Don't know
6	No Response

18. If an employee was having difficulty caring for an older person and came to you for assistance, where would you refer the employee for help? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY) (n=134)

<u>%</u>	
40	Local Area Agency on Aging/Area Development District
17	Department on Aging and Disabilities
15	State Health Insurance Program (SHIP)
12	Eldercare Locator
16	Family Caregiver Coordinator Program
2	Nearby university or college
13	State Office of Aging Services in Frankfort
42	Family/friends
31	Local clergy
28	Physician
32	Senior center
10	Employee assistance program
15	AARP
8	Internet
4	Other:_____
13	Don't know
6	No Response

19. If there were low- or no-cost resources available for employees caring for older persons, would you be interested in having or knowing about these resources?

<u>%</u>	
55	Yes
13	No
19	Don't know
14	No Response

20. What kind of resources do you think would be useful?

<u>%</u>	
48	Written information
25	On-line information
6	Information seminars
35	An 800 number for information and referrals
2	Other:_____
20	Don't know
14	No Response

21. If you wanted to establish an eldercare program that provided assistance to those caring for an older spouse, parent, relative, or friend at your company, where would you go for assistance?

<u>%</u>	
7	Local chamber of commerce
13	AARP
4	A national business education organization (NIBM, AMA)
5	Small business association
7	Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM)
4	Senior Corporation of Retired Executives (SCORE)
11	Internet
5	Other: _____
50	Don't know
15	No Response

Demographic Information

The following questions are for classification purposes only.

22. What best describes your company?

<u>%</u>	
15	Non-profit
76	For-profit
1	Government agency
8	No Response

23. Are you part of a larger company or organization?

<u>%</u>	
11	Yes
83	No [SKIP TO Q25]
1	Don't know [SKIP TO Q25]
5	No Response

24. Approximately how many employees does your company or organization have nationwide? _____ (n=31)

<u>%</u>	
10	1-25
3	26-50
3	51-100
3	101-200
3	201-500
10	501-1000
10	1000 and up
58	No Response

25. Are employee benefit decisions made locally, at your location, or are they made somewhere else, such as company headquarters?

<u>%</u>	
76	On location
7	Somewhere else
5	Don't know
12	No Response

26. Approximately what percentage of your employees in Kentucky are female?

<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>	
30	0-10%	6	41-50%
6	11-20%	5	51-60%
4	21-30%	5	61-70%
5	31-40%	28	71% or more
		13	No Response

27. What would you say the average age for employees is at your company?

<u>%</u>	
7	18-29
55	30-45
26	45+
13	No Response

28. Approximately what percentage of your employees in Kentucky work less than 20 hours a week?

<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>	
67	0-10%	2	41-50%
4	11-20%	2	51-60%
3	21-30%	2	61-70%
2	31-40%	3	71% or more
		15	No Response

29. What area of Kentucky is your company located in?

<u>%</u>	
17	West
19	East
55	Central
10	No Response

Thank you for completing this survey. Please use the postage-paid envelope and return it to State Member Research, AARP, 601 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20049, by **September 10, 2003**.

AARP

Knowledge Management

For more information please contact Erica Dinger (202) 434-6176.