New Hampshire Lifespan Respite Caregiver Needs Assessment 2011

Special Medical Services
Division of Community Based Care Services
NH Department of Health and Human Services
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- **Purpose** - Gain better insight into the distribution of caregivers across the state, the demographics of these caregivers and the individuals they care for, their experiences associated with caregiving, and what role respite services may play in their lives.

- Respite literally means a time of rest or relief.

- Respite care provides a primary caregiver a temporary, short-term break from the constant responsibilities of caring for a dependent child or adult.

- Nearly 100 different organizations and their liaisons were contacted and asked to make their caregiver constituents aware of the Caregiver Needs Assessment. These organizations consisted of government agencies, non-profits, Adult Day Care centers, and more.

- Through these efforts, the NH Caregiver Needs Assessment captures the responses of 407 caregivers within NH, with a 77.6% completion rate.

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<tr>
<th>Caregiver Gender n=407</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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- The survey results reveal that the majority of NH’s caregivers are female (84.3%, n=343) and nearly a third of caregivers (n=127) are between 45-54 years old.
- The majority caregivers who participated in this survey reported to be the "Son/daughter", "Parent", or "Spouse/partner" of the individual they provide care for.

- Caregivers living in every NH county
- The two most populated counties (Hillsborough and Rockingham) represent the greatest number of caregivers.
- The unexpected larger response rates from Grafton and Strafford counties demonstrate potential areas within NH that may need more resources allocated to caregivers.

- Caregivers oftentimes provide care for more than one individual. Because of this, caregivers could pick more than one response.
- 55.4% (n=255) of the care recipients are children and youth with special health care needs 18 years old and younger.
- "Developmental Disability" is the most represented primary condition amongst care recipients. The reason for this may be due to the larger number of care recipients 18 years old and younger.

- Caregivers reported on the several ways in which caregivers provide assistance with daily living activities. "Transportation" and "Preparing Meals" ranked the highest.

- Nearly 60% (n=197) of the caregivers who participated in this survey provided care for over 71 hours per week.
These constant responsibilities can unfortunately lead to both physical and emotional strains on caregivers.

- increased social isolation, depression, and financial hardships
- decreased physical health and quality of life.
- In this survey, “Loss of free time” and “Feeling overwhelmed” was experienced most consistently amongst caregivers.

When asked, “how long have you been receiving respite care?”, the majority of the respondents had either never used services (34.6%, n=117) or had been using services for over a year (44.1%, n=149).

When asked, “What is your relationship to your primary respite provider?”, most caregivers selected either “Family”, “Friend/neighbor”, or “Hired in home service provider”.
- Of the 212 caregivers who have used respite services, most paid for these services with financial assistance from area agencies (60.8%, n=129) and/or paid out of pocket (54.2%, n=115).

- Only a handful of respite providers were paid for by insurance companies (2.8%, n=6) or were free of charge (3.3%, n=7).

- Caregivers were asked about the barriers they have encountered when considering respite care.

- Nearly half of the caregivers identified a lack of funds as a barrier in utilizing respite services. The next greatest barrier identified was the respite providers’ lack of training/knowledge about the special health care needs of the care recipients.