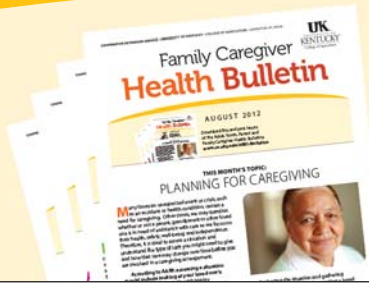


# Family Caregiver Health Bulletin



FEBRUARY 2015

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: WORKING WHILE CAREGIVING



**T**he typical caregiver is a middle-aged female who is working full time while taking care of her children and aging parents or relatives. In such situations, caregiving can feel like a full-time job — and balancing the job that pays you with the one that does not, can be exhausting. Sometimes caregivers know that something has to give, but they are too spent to even look into options. According to the American Association of Retired People family and caregiving expert Amy Goyer, caregivers also get overwhelmed with the idea of leaving a job because that means the loss of income, benefits, personal identity, fulfillment, socialization and intellectual stimulation.

Caregivers need to remember, that they have to take care of themselves

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# *Rest is one of the best medicines a caregiver can be prescribed because it helps to reduce stress and can revive you.*

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in order to take care of others — and according to Goyer, that includes financially. If the demands of caregiving and work are becoming too great, AARP recommends talking with employers to discuss various options, including:

- Changing positions within the company
- Cutting back on hours while maintaining benefits and building your pension
- Asking for more flexible hours, split shifts or job sharing
- Telecommuting so that you can work from home
- Changing locations so that you have less travel time or can stop in at home over a lunch hour
- Taking advantage of sick, vacation and personal leave time
- Checking into the Family and Medical Leave Act
- Meeting with a financial planner to forecast how you can continue to be a caregiver while also securing your own financial future
- Keeping your employer aware of your situation and challenges

*Caregivers should consider meeting with a financial planner to forecast how to continue to be a caregiver while also securing their own financial future.*

At times, you may feel as if you are the only one balancing work and caregiving, but you are not alone. According to AARP, of the 42 million caregivers, approximately 75 percent juggle their caregiving duties with work. Goyer reports that sleep deprivation can become problematic as it causes exhaustion, trouble with focusing and it clouds a person's ability to cope. Rest is one of the best medicines a caregiver can be prescribed because it helps to reduce stress and can revive you.

To best take care of you, Goyer stresses the importance of recognizing the rollercoaster of emotions common to caregivers. From stress and



frustration to joy and elation, the range of emotions can be physically and mentally draining. To maintain your health:

- Know what makes you happy and do it
- Maintain your identity
- Be aware of your health in terms of sleep, nutrition and exercise
- Set realistic goals and boundaries regarding what you can and cannot do
- Ask for help

#### REFERENCE:

Goyer, A. (2013). AARP. Chat transcript: Juggling work and caregiving. Retrieved December 17, 2014 from <http://www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving/info-11-2013/chat-work-caregiving-job-goyer.html>

Family Caregiver  
**Health Bulletin**

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