

## Creating Workplaces that Support Employees as Caregivers

June 24, 2020 | 10:00 – 11:30 am | Webinar

Question and Answer

**Question:** How do we take caregiving information and turn it into policy and advocacy action? What are the next steps for both family caregivers and leaders of organizations working collaboratively in moving policy forward? We cannot rely on employers doing the right thing, but it requires the force of public policy.

**Connie Roy- Czynowski:** We had a movement to provide paid family and medical leave (FMLA) across states. The challenge is that FMLA is complicated and different because some states do not have it yet. I think the answer is to approach this from a national level and apply it to employers that have 50+ employees. States could also choose to expand to cover smaller employers. Focusing on a national solution rather than the patchwork of policies that confuses employees and organizations would be more appropriate.

**Jennifer Rabalais:** I would add that Dick's slides pointed out a multitude of ways that we can support employees starting out with small steps to create a culture of caring. I think, collectively, the more we share tools, such as those tools from AARP, help employers that may not have HR staff or the familiarity with putting the policies in place, to implement these types of policies. Also, organizations and businesses are focused on the bottom line, this is how they survive. Businesses may want to do the right thing, but they must be focused on the bottom line. We can help them acknowledge and see that there is a clear return on investment in creating these policies.

**Dick Chevrefils:** To use a basketball reference, you must have a full-court press, you must hit the issue from different perspectives. I agree with Connie and Jennifer, a national initiative, I think is critical and there has been some work on the national level. We are fortunate to have one of our team members who is on a national advisory committee on caregiving to help guide the message that way. In our own humble way, the Alliance for Healthy Aging has targeted businesses. We are trying to build stakeholder understanding. The more we engage stakeholders the issue of caregiving becomes more intimate, and we will have a broader constituency that will be able to help move the agenda forward. The work that we have been doing - for example we hosted a forum in December, and we have been working with the Business and Industry Association to reach out to employers, is planting seeds.

Hopefully, these seeds will lead to greater understanding and opportunity. I think all of us have a responsibility to move the agenda along around the issue of caregiving.

**Question:** Given that New Hampshire is a small state, how do you think we are stacking up against other states when it comes to this issue?

**Dick Chevrefils:** I think we are the norm. Probably because we are smaller, we have more communication, and because of the leadership of AHA who is willing to take this initiative on, I think we are fortunate. This is my own editorial, but the issue that I find is we need to look at how we can come together. We have a lot of parallel activity that is going on and we can strengthen our capacity to support caregivers, family, and employers through bringing different components of the system together.

**Jennifer Rabalais:** I agree that we are moving forward. I also agree that we have a long way to go and it really needs to come at a national level.

**Connie Roy-Czyzowski:** When I meet with my fellow HR practitioners I am amazed at how much companies are doing in New Hampshire. I do not know whether we are on par with the rest of the country, I would guess that we are either on par or better. Business New Hampshire Magazine runs the best company to work for and it gives employers guidelines as to what policies or what direction they should be going in to be a great employer. You can learn so much from one another, and I think we do well.

**Question:** If someone needs dental care and they lack the ability to pay and are having trouble finding a dentist who may accept a payment plan, what advice can you give to that person?

**Connie Roy- Czyzowski:** There are clinics and resources in the state on the New Hampshire Dental Association website. There is a list available and we are going to share that list on the AHA website along with this webinar.

### **More Questions? Contact our Presenters!**

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