

Caregiver's experiences in the workplace while caring for people who have suicidal ideation and/or behavior.

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- Background and Objectives:**
- Individuals and family members can be in caregiving roles for people who have suicidal ideation and/or suicidal behavior (SI/SB), while also working full- or part-time.
 - Public health professionals must understand the role that the workplace can play in supporting working suicide caregivers.
- Study Purpose:**
- To assess stigma at work, in addition to managers' and coworkers' reactions and responses to working suicide caregivers.

- Methods:**
- Mixed methods, national, anonymous survey.
 - Descriptive statistics and open coding used for analysis.

Sample (N=83)

Gender:

- 80.3% Women

Race and Ethnicity:

- 77.8% White
- 7.4% Hispanic or Latinx

Relationship of person cared for to the participant:

- 69.7% Child
- 23.7% Partner
- 19.7% Friend
- 9.2% Other

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"Contact me. Treat me like they did anyone else who had a loved one with physical health problems."

Employees want their workplace to be more empathetic and to understand the challenges that suicide caregivers face in the workplace.

"I would have appreciated understanding and a little empathy from my boss"



"I wish I could have felt comfortable telling them without fear of judgment"



Workplace Suicide Prevention website

Employees stated that they wanted their employers to offer flexibility in how and where they can work.

"Less judgement, active listening, better leave options that don't use PTO"



"Have someone cover some of my duties when I've been off instead of leaving it for me to have to catch up on when I returned."

"Flexibility with responsibilities and hours"

Participants reported caring for people who were experiencing suicidal thoughts, suicidal behaviors, and suicidal attempts:

- 96.4% stated that they were caring for people with suicidal thoughts.
- 73.5% stated that they were caring for people with suicidal behaviors.
- 50.6% stated that they were caring for people with suicidal attempts.
- When participants were asked how long they had been providing care, the most common response was 5 years (40% of sample).

How participants were impacted at work:

- 95.1% stated that they were distracted at work.
- 80.2% stated that they experienced a loss of productivity.
- 53.1% stated that they had difficulty making decisions.
- 44.4% stated that they had errors at work due to stress.
- 12.4% listed other factors such as anxiety.

- Results:**
- Participants indicated that suicide caregiving contributed most to workplace distraction and loss in productivity.
 - Participants reported that stigma remains a primary barrier to telling employers about their need for support, as only 54.2% shared their situation with their employer.
 - Some participants praised their employers' and coworkers' empathic response as well as their workplace's willingness to offer flexibility in where and when they work. Other participants reported wanting more empathy and flexibility from managers and coworkers.

- Conclusion:**
- The results of the study suggest that suicide caregiving employees would benefit from work environments that provide more support from managers and coworkers.
 - Future research planned from this study will include interviews with suicide caregivers to better understand their experiences and suggestions to improve workplace environments.