A caregiver is someone who assists a family member or friend with challenges resulting from illness, disability or aging. Nearly 1 in 3 Nova Scotians (32%) age 15+ is a caregiver.

Assuming that the same proportion of Nova Scotians provided care in 2019 as did in 2012, that’s about 267,120 caregivers in Nova Scotia based on growth in the population since the 2012 national survey.

### Caregivers in Nova Scotia spend considerable time providing care

- 72% spend < 9 hr/wk
- 10% spend 10-19 hr/wk
- 18% spend 20+ hr/wk

### Caregivers’ labour is valuable and contributes to the economy

- Caregivers in Nova Scotia spend 12 hrs/wk on average providing care to others. That’s about 149 million hr of unpaid care in Nova Scotia each year.
- Caregivers’ time saves the Nova Scotia health care system a conservatively estimated $1.64 billion each year based on hiring replacement workers at Nova Scotia’s minimum wage of $11.05/hr.

### Nova Scotia caregivers surveyed said

“The expectations of our role are very, very high. I have worn many hats from hands on personal care to all aspects of daily needs, medical assistance, household chores, finances and recreation. It is a very restrictive way of living. Life simply becomes about the disabled person as their needs are so tremendous. What about my needs?”

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Co-created by Jacquie Eales, Choong Kim, Angus Campbell, and Janet Fast based on analyses of Statistics Canada’s 2012 General Social Survey on Caregiving and Care Receiving. Quote is from Caregivers Nova Scotia annual program surveys. Funding for this infographic was provided by AGE-WELL NCE Inc. (WP2.4 CRP Plus program).
### Caregiving Impacts Nova Scotia Caregivers’ Lives

**IMPACT ON PAID JOBS**

- **2 in 5** caregivers miss 40% of their paid work days due to their caregiving responsibilities, with many missing 7 days on average.
- **1 in 11** of caregivers reduce paid work hours by an average of 9.2 hours per week due to their caregiving.
- **1 in 20** caregivers exit the paid labor force due to their caregiving, often not by choice.

**IMPACT ON NOVA SCOTIA’S**

- That’s 11M fewer hours of paid work per year, which impacts employers and governments.
- 6,547 caregivers in Nova Scotia left the labor force due to their caring.

**IMPACT ON FINANCES**

- **3 in 5** caregivers incur extra expenses averaging $570 per year, often on transportation, prescription, OTC drugs, and home modifications.
- **1 in 6** caregivers report financial hardship, putting their current and future financial security at risk.
- **2 in 3** caregivers use or defer savings to pay for extra care-related expenses, limiting their ability to save for retirement.

Nearly 1 in 6 caregivers have annual household incomes of less than $30,000 (16%) while most have household incomes between $30,000 to $79,999 (43%) or $80,000 or more (41%). Care-related extra expenses add financial stress to making ends meet and jeopardize caregivers’ financial security, especially for low-income Nova Scotians, now and in later life. The NS Caregiver Benefit may help offset some of the financial costs of caregiving for those caregivers who provide 20 or more hours of care per week to someone with high needs and low income.

1Consequences questions are asked only of caregivers who provide 2 or more hours per week.