Tip Sheet
Getting Started
Your organization is just getting started with caregiving efforts. How should you begin?

MAKE THE BUSINESS CASE: Whenever you start a new initiative, it's important to document how it will support business goals and benefit the organization. In addition, you want to demonstrate how the effort will help your employees to be more productive, engaged and less stressed. Gather this information and identify some champions who can help you to articulate the business case for providing caregiver supports at your organization. Focus on the metrics that will motivate your organization to take action, keeping in mind that not all metrics will be financial. Share the data with invested stakeholders to get the support that you need to move forward.

- Develop a data driven business plan that will "sell" caregiving policies and programs as an important business strategy for your organization.
- Consider how the effort could boost business goals that are not directly financial, such as recruitment and retention efforts, or brand recognition.
- Ask manager/supervisors if they have had situations where caregiving issues have interfered with job performance and affected retention. What supports could have improved the outcomes of these situations?

CUSTOMIZE FOR VARIOUS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS: You want to make sure that you design an effort to support employee caregivers that meets the needs of employees at all levels of the organization. Employees will have various caregiving needs depending on their situation, so consider a wide-range of caregiver supports.

- Gather data from a diverse group of employees on both current and anticipated needs. Ask employees "what could our organization do to help you with your caregiving responsibilities?"
- Form a diverse employee planning group to help shape the program elements and focus. Diverse teams tend to represent a breadth of perspective that can spark innovative ideas.
- Be inspired by – but don't copy – what your competitor is doing! Implement supports that best meet the needs of your unique employee population and your business goals.

CAPITALIZE ON EXISTING EFFORTS: You may be able to expand your existing programs to include resources such as adding back-up eldercare to your existing back-up childcare program. You might want to inform employees that they can use flextime to take aging parents to medical appointments or to visit nursing homes.

- Assess how existing initiatives or programs could be expanded. Look at what you are already doing to enhance employee productivity and engagement with an eye towards how these resources/services could be enhanced for caregiving employees.
- Determine whether current staff is knowledgeable about caregiving issues. For example, does your EAP staff have expertise about eldercare concerns?

EDUCATE: It's important that employees are knowledgeable about caregiving and eldercare issues and their impact on individuals at the workplace, now and in the future. In addition, supervisors can play a critical role in informing employees about resources as well as sending the crucial message that employees will not be penalized if they access these resources or support.

- Educate employees on eldercare issues, in general and at your organization – what can they expect as caregivers? What resources does your organization provide to help? Emphasize the importance of self-care for effective caregiving and specify where they can get support if they are overwhelmed.
- Educate supervisors/managers on how supports can help their employees and the organization. Garner supervisor/manager support for these efforts to ensure that they will be utilized, and to create a supportive environment for employee caregivers.