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The Caregiving Continuum: Meeting the Needs of a Multigenerational Workforce

BY JESSICA SWENSON | SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

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Nearly one in four adults provides ongoing care for someone they love, says Lisa Leighton, chief commercial officer at [Carlioop](#), making caregiving an increasingly important workforce issue. "Caregiving touches every generation in the workforce," she said.

And because it affects "how employees show up, how they stay at work, how they use their benefits," she believes this type of support should be more than a niche offering. She sees it as "a fundamental workforce and benefits priority" that cannot be addressed by supporting only one population or need at a time.

During a thought leadership spotlight at [From Day One's September virtual conference](#), she emphasized that caregiving is a human experience that doesn't happen in a tidy, predictable pattern; rather, these needs often overlap and can arrive unexpectedly. Leighton embraces Carlioop's core philosophy that caregiving is continuous and concurrent, with needs ranging across people's careers from pre-childbirth to caring for aging parents, and everything in between.

Employees are trying to balance these demands with their workloads on a daily basis, she says, creating hidden costs that companies may not even realize they are incurring. Citing research showing that "more than 80% of employees with caregiving responsibilities say that caregiving affects their productivity" she acknowledged that employers are already paying for the impacts of caregiving roles among their employee populations through absenteeism, presenteeism, burnout, reduced hours, and turnover.

"Supporting caregivers isn't just a nice to have or a feel-good benefit," Leighton said. "It's removing a very real barrier between employees and their ability to be present and productive at work."

However, she cautions against simply expanding your company's benefits portfolio with more vendors and services without including tactical support to help navigate what is available. "We have made the benefits ecosystem and the employee experience so sophisticated at the exact same time where employees' lives have become more complicated, so too often employees are trying to connect dots themselves," she said.



Lisa Leighton, Chief Commercial Officer at Carlioop, led the session (company photo)

Employers may offer robust benefits, but employees are trying to solve a problem, and "that distinction really matters when you think about how we are evolving and communicating our benefits to our people," she said. It's important to improve employee access to existing benefits when they actually need them, not just add more layers.

Caregiving situations are rarely introduced with a clear statement of benefits needs. Rather, they arrive with an open-ended, multi-pronged problem to solve. Carlioop's model uses a four-step approach to support employees through the process. Personal care coaches work one-on-one with employees to help assess the situation, navigate available benefits, and build a plan. "Sometimes the most valuable thing you can give somebody isn't just another website or a link to another solution. It's a knowledgeable person in your corner," she said.

They also help users move from the research phase to locate and secure the care needed, and can initiate flexible backup care to address immediate disruptions. The personal care coaches connect members to the existing benefits that can fulfill their needs, rather than replacing them with something more complex. "Our goal isn't to replace every single benefit that you're offering. It's actually to help your people understand where those resources fit into their caregiving journeys and how we can help them navigate."

This type of model drives value not just for the employee but also for employers, says Leighton. The value to employees is of course personal: less time spent searching, less ambiguity, and a knowledgeable guide. "It's helping them make what feels like a very impossible situation feel more manageable."

Employer value includes less distraction, improved productivity, and a strong culture of care that helps employees maximize their use of available benefits.

She encourages the use of broader questions, rather than a single metric, to evaluate the value of caregiving support. "I like to ask our clients 'How much employee time did we get back? How many complex situations did we help resolve? How did your people feel using the benefit?'"

To help organizations evaluate their own approach, Leighton suggested asking whether they understand the caregiving needs across their workforce, what unsupported caregiving is already costing them, and whether an employee who suddenly becomes a caregiver would know where to turn for help.

She encourages leaders to design this programming around how people experience life, rather than focusing exclusively on the benefits. Think about what happens at transition points like starting a new job, having a baby, supporting aging parents, or retiring, and "weave caregiving into all of those moments across the employee lifecycle."

"Your people don't wake up every single day thinking about benefit strategy. They wake up thinking about their lives. When they've got somebody in their corner to help them, they have more capacity for everything else, including their work and especially their families," said Leighton.

Editor's note: From Day One thanks our partner, [Carlioop](#), for sponsoring this thought leadership spotlight.

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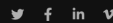
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