



# **The Silent Weight: How ALBERTai is Giving Female Caregivers Back Their Peace of Mind, And Why Employers Must Act Now**

By Dr. Thomas M. Gill, Yale School of Medicine & David S. DuPlay, Co-Founder & CEO Unity Global Care Inc.

For millions of women across America, the alarm clock is not the only thing that wakes them in the middle of the night. It is the worry. The quiet, persistent, bone-deep worry about whether their aging mother made it to the bathroom safely, whether their father remembered to take his medications, whether the person they love most in the world is still okay on the other side of town or across the country. This is the reality of female caregiving in America, and it is a reality that has gone largely unaddressed by the healthcare system, and increasingly, by the employers who depend on these women every single day. The numbers tell a story that is as urgent as it is heartbreaking, and they demand that we pay attention.

## **The Scale of the Crisis**

According to AARP and the National Alliance for Caregiving, more than 53 million Americans provide unpaid care to an adult or child with special needs, and women make up approximately 61 percent of that caregiving workforce. But that single statistic does not begin to capture the full picture. Female caregivers provide significantly more hours of care per week than male caregivers, are more likely to provide high-intensity personal care such as bathing, dressing, and managing medications, and are far more likely to have reduced their work hours, turned down promotions, or left the workforce entirely as a direct result of their caregiving responsibilities. AARP estimates that the economic value of unpaid caregiving in the United States exceeds \$600 billion annually, a staggering contribution that is invisible in the national economy and uncompensated in the lives of the women providing it. They are the daughters, wives, sisters, and daughters-in-law who step in when the healthcare system steps back, and they are doing it at an extraordinary personal cost.

## **The Physical and Emotional Toll Is Measurable and Alarming**

The physical and emotional toll of this unpaid labor is not abstract. It is measurable, it is documented, and it is alarming. The National Alliance for Caregiving reports that more than 40 percent of caregivers describe their caregiving situation as highly stressful, and female caregivers consistently report higher stress levels than their male counterparts. According to the Family Caregiver Alliance, women who are caregivers are twice as likely to suffer from depression and anxiety than non-caregiving women, and research

published in peer-reviewed medical journals has found that the chronic stress associated with caregiving triggers measurable biological changes in the body that accelerate aging at the cellular level. A landmark study found that female caregivers had significantly shorter telomeres, the protective caps on chromosomes that are considered a key biological marker of aging than non-caregiving women of the same age, suggesting that sustained caregiving stress can literally age women faster at the cellular level.

The cardiovascular consequences alone are staggering. The Family Caregiver Alliance has reported that female caregivers have a higher risk of hypertension, coronary heart disease, and stroke compared to non-caregivers. A study published in the journal *Circulation* found that women who spent nine or more hours per week caring for an ill or disabled spouse had a risk of coronary heart disease that was more than double that of women who did not provide that level of care. Research from the American Heart Association has similarly linked the sustained stress of caregiving to elevated inflammatory markers, disrupted cortisol regulation, and compromised immune function, all of which are precursors to serious and potentially life-threatening chronic illness. The women keeping their families healthy are quietly becoming sick themselves, and the healthcare system, and corporate America, have been startlingly slow to recognize this as the public health and workforce emergency it truly is.

The immune system consequences extend well beyond heart disease. According to the Family Caregiver Alliance, caregivers report that their own health has declined as a result of caregiving, with studies showing that caregivers experience higher rates of diabetes, arthritis, and compromised immune response compared to non-caregivers. Research from Ohio State University found that caregivers' wounds healed 24 percent more slowly than those of non-caregivers, a direct physiological indicator of how profoundly chronic caregiving stress suppresses immune function. Approximately 17 percent of female caregivers report that their health has gotten worse as a result of caregiving, and the Family Caregiver Alliance notes that caregivers who are most vulnerable are those providing the highest levels of care with the least amount of support. In fact, these unsupported caregivers are also the most likely to predecease the very person they are caring for. This is not a metaphor. The stress of caregiving is a mortality risk for the women providing it.

## **Uncertainty Is the Real Enemy**

What makes this health crisis even more acute is that much of the stress female caregivers experience is not caused by the act of caregiving itself, it is caused by uncertainty. The fear that something is changing with their loved one and they cannot see it. The dread of receiving a phone call that there has been a fall, a hospitalization, or a sudden cognitive decline that has in fact been building quietly for months. AARP research has found that nearly 70 percent of caregivers report feeling unprepared for the challenges they face, and that the unpredictability of a loved one's condition is one of the most consistently cited sources of caregiver distress. Caregiving under these conditions becomes crisis management rather than thoughtful, sustainable support. And

crisis management, sustained over months and years, is the precise mechanism through which caregiving stress becomes chronic illness in the women who absorb it.

## **Enter ALBERTai: A Transformative Solution for Caregivers**

This is precisely where ALBERTai enters the conversation, and why it represents something genuinely transformative for female caregivers. ALBERTai is an artificial intelligence-powered platform designed to monitor the well-being of aging individuals living in their own homes and to provide caregivers with a continuous, data-informed picture of their loved one's health and daily function. At the heart of the platform is a powerful and elegantly simple concept called the Aging-In-Place Score<sup>®</sup>, a real-time assessment tool that gives caregivers a measurable, trackable indicator of how safely and successfully their loved one is aging in their home environment, *before* a situation deteriorates into the kind of crisis that sends both the aging individual and the caregiver into a devastating spiral.

The multi-patent pending ALBERTai Aging-In-Place Score<sup>®</sup> works by analyzing behavioral patterns, activity levels, sleep quality, mobility, and other key health indicators over time. Rather than waiting for something to go wrong, the system watches for the subtle changes that precede a crisis, the gradual decline in activity that might signal depression or physical deterioration, the changes in sleep patterns that can indicate an emerging health issue, the shifts in daily routine that might suggest cognitive changes are beginning to develop. These are the warning signs that a caregiver living miles away has no way of detecting without a tool like ALBERTai, and they are the warning signs that, when caught early, give families the opportunity to intervene before a situation becomes dangerous, and before the caregiver is pulled into the acute, emergency-level stress that research has shown to be most damaging to long-term female health.

For female caregivers, this means something profound and deeply personal. It means that the middle-of-the-night worry has an answer. It means that instead of operating in a constant state of anxious uncertainty, the state that AARP researchers have identified as one of the primary drivers of caregiver burnout, a daughter caring for her aging mother can open the ALBERTai platform and see, in clear and accessible terms, whether her mother's patterns are stable, whether anything has shifted, and whether there is reason for concern. It transforms caregiving from a reactive, crisis-driven experience into a proactive, informed partnership between the caregiver and the technology working alongside her. It replaces the chronic, low-grade dread that accumulates into measurable biological harm with something far more sustainable: informed awareness.

The significance of this shift cannot be overstated when viewed through the lens of caregiver health. According to AARP's most recent caregiving report, approximately 23 percent of caregivers say that caregiving has made their own health worse. The Caregiver Action Network reports that 72 percent of caregivers say they do not go to the doctor as often as they should, and more than half report skipping their own medical appointments because they feel they cannot take the time away from their caregiving

responsibilities. This pattern of self-neglect is directly fueled by the crisis-driven nature of caregiving, when a caregiver is always responding to the last emergency or bracing for the next one, her own healthcare becomes a perpetual lower priority. ALBERTai's Aging-In-Place Score helps break that cycle by shifting caregiving from reactive crisis management to proactive monitoring, which research suggests is the single most effective way to reduce the intensity and chronicity of caregiver stress.

## **The Business Case: Why Employers Must Include ALBERTai in Their Benefits Package**

The financial dimension of this problem is equally serious and disproportionately falls on women, but make no mistake: it also falls heavily on employers. AARP has estimated that the average female caregiver loses approximately \$324,000 in wages, pension benefits, and Social Security benefits over her lifetime as a direct result of caregiving-related workforce interruptions. But the cost to employers is equally staggering and far too often overlooked.

According to the MetLife Study of Caregiving Costs to U.S. Employers, caregiving costs American businesses an estimated \$33 billion per year in lost productivity, absenteeism, workday interruptions, and employee turnover. Employees with caregiving responsibilities are more likely to arrive late, leave early, miss days entirely, and ultimately leave their positions, taking with them years of institutional knowledge, training investment, and team continuity that cannot easily be replaced. And because women represent such a disproportionate share of the caregiving workforce, these losses fall unevenly on female employees, precisely the demographic that decades of corporate diversity, equity, and inclusion investment has worked so hard to retain and advance.

This is not a women's issue that sits outside the boundaries of business strategy. It is a talent retention issue, a productivity issue, a healthcare cost issue, and a competitive advantage issue, all wrapped into one. Employers who fail to address the caregiving crisis within their workforce are not simply failing their employees as human beings; they are leaving billions of dollars in preventable losses on the table.

The solution is both practical and immediate: employers should offer a subscription to Unity Global Care's ALBERTai Aging-In-Place Score<sup>®</sup> platform as a standard employee benefit for any employee with an aging parent or loved one. This is not a luxury or a wellness perk, it is a strategic investment in workforce stability and employee well-being that pays measurable dividends at every level of the organization.

Consider what this benefit actually delivers. When an employee's aging parent is enrolled in the ALBERTai platform, that employee gains real-time, AI-powered visibility into her parent's daily behavioral patterns, mobility, sleep quality, and overall functional health, from anywhere in the world, at any time. The Aging-In-Place Score<sup>®</sup> gives her a clear, data-driven picture of whether her loved one's condition is stable, trending positively, or showing early warning signs that warrant attention. She no longer needs to leave work early to conduct an impromptu wellness check. She no longer needs to

spend her lunch hour on the phone with siblings trying to piece together secondhand observations. She no longer carries into every Monday morning the weight of an anxious, sleepless weekend spent wondering whether everything is okay.

The productivity implications of this shift are direct and quantifiable. The Harvard Business Review has reported that employees with caregiving responsibilities lose an average of five to seven hours of productivity per week due to caregiving-related distraction, worry, and unplanned absences, losses that are dramatically reduced when caregivers have access to reliable, real-time monitoring tools. When employers provide ALBERTai as a benefit, they are not simply helping their employees feel better; they are reclaiming hours of focused, present, high-quality work that would otherwise be lost to the ambient anxiety of uninformed caregiving.

The healthcare cost implications are equally compelling. Because chronic caregiver stress is directly linked to increased rates of depression, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and compromised immune function in female employees, employers who reduce caregiver stress through tools like ALBERTai are simultaneously reducing the long-term healthcare utilization and insurance claims costs associated with those conditions. Every female employee who avoids a stress-related chronic illness diagnosis because she had the peace of mind that ALBERTai provides represents a reduction in employer-sponsored healthcare expenditure, and those savings, compounded across a workforce, are substantial.

There is also the matter of talent retention. Studies consistently show that employees who feel supported by their employers in balancing work and family responsibilities are significantly more likely to remain with their organization, recommend it to others, and bring higher levels of engagement and discretionary effort to their roles. In a competitive talent market where attracting and retaining skilled female employees requires more than salary and title, offering a benefit like ALBERTai sends an unmistakable message: *this organization sees you as a whole person, understands the full complexity of your life, and is committed to supporting you in all of it.* That message builds loyalty that no compensation package alone can buy.

The subscription cost of Unity Global Care's ALBERTai platform is modest relative to the scale of the problem it addresses. When measured against the cost of replacing a single experienced employee who leaves the workforce due to caregiver burnout, a cost that SHRM estimates at between 50 and 200 percent of that employee's annual salary, the return on investment of an ALBERTai subscription is not difficult to calculate. Employers who offer this benefit are making a financially sound, strategically intelligent decision that protects their workforce, their culture, and their bottom line simultaneously.

## **A Call to Action for Employers**

The women in your workforce are not just employees. They are daughters who wake up in the middle of the night worrying about parents they cannot see. They are carrying a weight that is invisible on any org chart but that shows up every day in the quality of their concentration, the reliability of their attendance, and the sustainability of their engagement. They are doing something extraordinary, holding together aging families while simultaneously trying to hold together professional lives and ambitions, and they are doing it largely without support.

ALBERTai's Aging-In-Place Score<sup>®</sup> platform, offered through a Unity Global Care employer subscription, is the support they deserve and the investment their employers can no longer afford to delay. It transforms caregiving from a silent crisis carried alone into a manageable, technology-supported responsibility that allows working caregivers to remain present, productive, and healthy, in their families and in your organization.

The alarm clock does not have to be the only answer to the worry in the middle of the night. With ALBERTai, there is another answer. And it is time for employers to make sure their people have access to it.

About the Authors:

### **Dr. Thomas Gill, Yale School of Medicine**

Dr. Thomas Gill is a physician at Yale who specializes in caring for older adults and studying how to help people stay healthy and independent as they age. For more than 30 years, his research has focused on understanding why older individuals develop difficulties with everyday activities and, importantly, how to prevent or delay those changes.

He leads major research programs at Yale that follow people over time and test new approaches to maintain strength, mobility, and quality of life. His work has helped shape how doctors and scientists think about aging, disability, and independence.

Dr. Gill has published extensively and received many honors for his contributions. At Yale, he also directs key programs devoted to aging research and the health of older adults. Dr. Gill has led and contributed to groundbreaking epidemiologic research, clinical trials and other aging initiatives. His work has been widely recognized with prestigious awards and leadership roles across Yale and the broader aging research community.

### **David S. DuPlay, Co-Founder & CEO Unity Global Care Inc.**

Dave brings a uniquely informed perspective to the conversation around aging, technology, and compassionate care. A patient advocate, entrepreneur, and seasoned healthcare strategist with more than 30 years of experience working alongside medical professionals, research organizations, and patient communities across virtually every disease area, Dave has dedicated his career to aligning the goals of all healthcare stakeholders in service of better patient outcomes. As Chairman of Vital Options International, a global health foundation founded in 1983 and committed to health education, advocacy, and financial assistance for patients in minority and underserved communities worldwide, Dave understands firsthand the human stakes embedded in every healthcare decision.

A recognized author and speaker on the challenges facing vulnerable populations, Dave is a passionate believer that technology, when thoughtfully applied, has the power to close gaps in care, amplify the voices of those too often left behind, and preserve the dignity of aging individuals and the families who love them. It is through this lens that Dave Co-Founded Unity Global Care Inc., to bring the ALBERTai eco-system to families and providers, not merely as tools of convenience, but as meaningful instruments of empowerment for some of the most emotionally complex moments families will ever face.