



The Emerging Needs of Gen Z and Millennial Family Caregivers

How providers can more effectively connect with and support newer generations of caregivers



With an aging population, approximately 58 million people in the United States find themselves stepping into caregiving roles for others, especially as healthcare costs rise and facility-based care options become less accessible. Among these caregivers, **Gen Z and Millennial** individuals represent a significant, yet often overlooked, demographic. These younger generations often balance caregiving responsibilities with other life demands, such as starting and developing their careers, completing their education, or raising young children. Understanding the unique challenges they face and the resources they require is crucial for shaping systems that support timely referrals, admissions and care.

While 100% of the Gen Z and Millennials who participated in this Transcend research have personal experience caring for a seriously ill family member or friend, **67% have directly been involved in making healthcare decisions** for an aging adult or someone living with a serious illness in the past five years. This finding clearly demonstrates that the demands of caregivers are not exclusive to any one generation.

To ensure comprehensive support, home-based care organizations must shift their view and hone their **strategies to connect with the distinct needs of caregivers from multiple generations**. By doing so, organizations can offer more effective resources that enhance the overall impact of the care provided while building a strong reputation in the community with current and future healthcare decision-makers.

GEN Z

Born 1997–2012
20.69% (U.S. population)

MILLENNIAL

Born 1981–1996
21.71% (U.S. population)

GENERATION X

Born 1965–1980
19.51% (U.S. population)

BABY BOOMER

Born 1946–1964
20.93% (U.S. population)

THE SILENT GENERATION

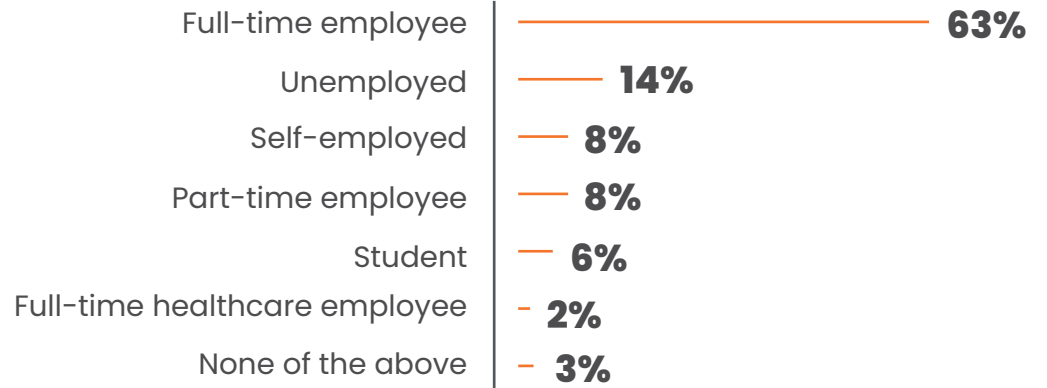
Born 1928–1945
4.92% (U.S. population)

Common Themes:

Feeling validated Collaborative caregiving High-quality options

Transcend recently conducted a quantitative research study of 400 U.S.-based family caregivers aged 22–42 to gain better insights of the day-to-day experiences of those supporting loved ones living with a serious illness. The findings uncovered three essential themes for partnering with Gen Z and Millennial caregivers. These themes provide opportunities for care providers to assess and strengthen care delivery and communications models to meet the requirements of this large and growing cohort of caregivers.

Please select the best description of your employment status:



Source: Korhonen, V. (2024) U.S. population share by generation 2023 | statista, Statista.
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/296974/us-population-share-by-generation/> (Accessed: 19 February 2025).

Feeling Validated

By and large, caregivers in these younger cohorts cannot devote their full time and focus to providing for a seriously ill loved one the way many retired members of the Baby Boomer generation are able to. Gen Z and Millennial caregivers often juggle numerous responsibilities while trying to manage the complex needs of their loved ones.

Leading with empathy in these interactions is critical, as it acknowledges the emotional strain caregivers face. By approaching caregiving education with compassion and understanding, home-based care organizations can create a supportive environment, helping caregivers feel seen, valued and equipped to confidently provide the best possible care for their loved ones.

One prompt included in the research asked participants to complete the following statement:

My greatest fear as a caregiver for someone living with a serious illness is ...

The most consistent responses were:

Experiencing the death of my loved one

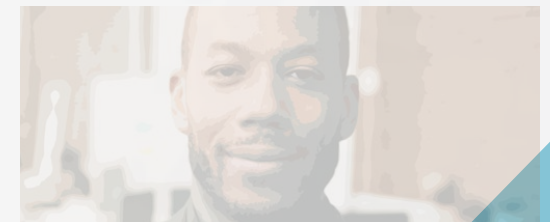
Making the wrong decisions

Not doing enough

These responses align with additional insights gathered via close-ended questions in the survey and are areas to consider while developing outreach plans. These topics should also be addressed with clinical teams providing care at the bedside.

- **90% of respondents agreed** that being a caregiver can be mentally and emotionally draining.
- Of the 400 study participants, **84%** felt that caring for a seriously ill loved one **would create a financial strain**.
- Although respondents were generally confident asking clarifying questions of the clinical team, **70% questioned their ability to be a good caregiver** for someone living with a serious illness.
- When asked specifically about hospice care, the **top three most important benefits** according to participants were:
 1. Being offered wherever the patient lives
 2. Providing support to the family
 3. Helping caregivers to understand what to expect when a person is dying

Those aged 33-42 were more likely to value hospice providing support to the family of the patient.



Collaborative Caregiving

APPROXIMATELY

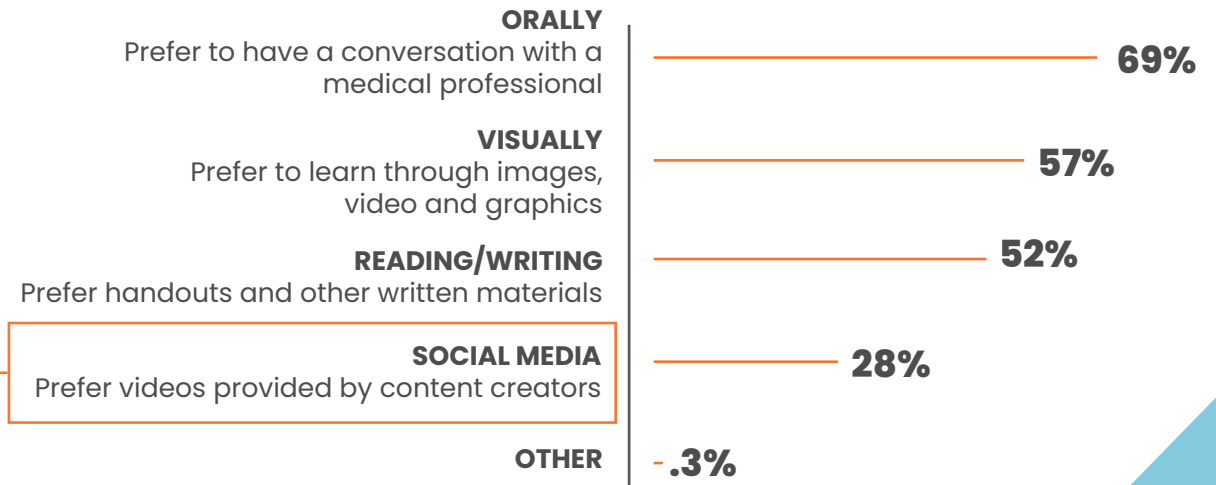
25%

of respondents did not feel that their opinions were respected by the healthcare community as caregivers.

When caregivers and clinicians work together, it fosters a holistic and respectful approach to care that addresses both the physical and psychosocial needs of the patient, as well as the unique challenges faced by the caregiver. In successful examples of this partnership, caregivers value receiving the necessary training, emotional support and guidance that helps them manage the patient’s symptoms and needs in a way that aligns with the clinical team’s expertise and care plan.

To move in this direction, organizations should acknowledge that different caregivers have different learning preferences and levels of access to technology, so offering options for educational resources – such as in-person support, on-demand online materials, video tutorials and written guides – ensures that all caregivers, regardless of their circumstances, can access the help they need.

How do you prefer to receive healthcare related information?



Respondents generally prefer to have a conversation with a medical professional when receiving healthcare information. However, those aged 22-32 were more likely to prefer social media videos provided by content creators compared to those 33-42.

GEN Z

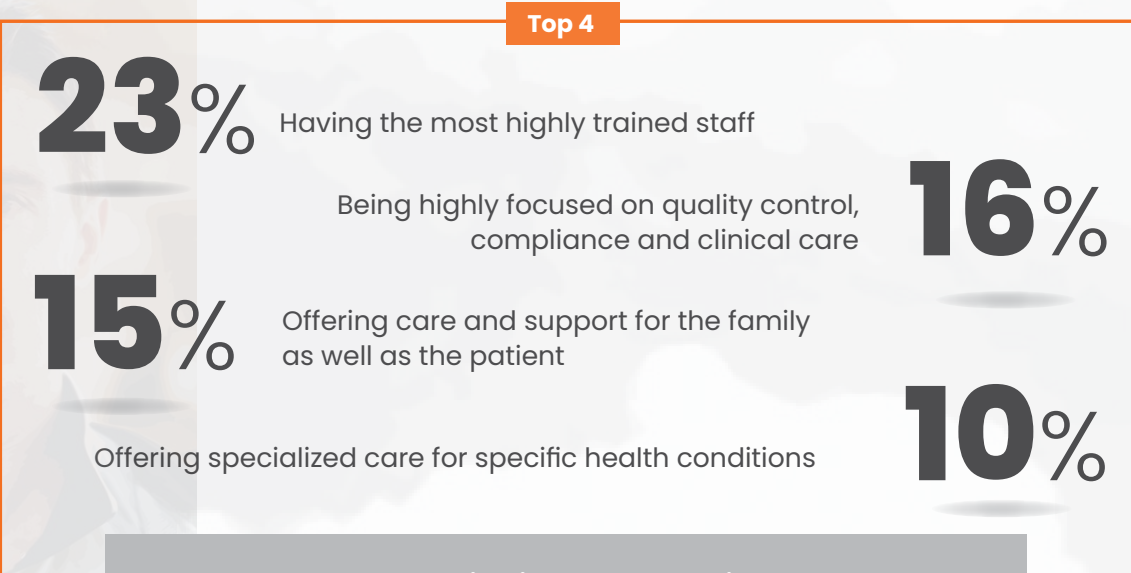
Collaborative Caregiving

Although 65% of respondents believe that hospice is for patients with less than a year to live, those aged 33-42 were more likely to agree with this statement. There are opportunities to meet Gen Z caregivers where they are to educate them about hospice eligibility and palliative care benefits and programs.

Attributes valued most in a provider

Respondents prefer to engage a healthcare provider with the most highly trained staff. However, those aged 22-32 were most likely to value a focus on quality control, compliance and clinical care.

Which of these attributes would you most value in a care provider?



Participating family caregivers are often most concerned with understanding the financial aspects of care, the services provided, and the quality of those services. They seek clear information on how much the care will cost to ensure they can balance their resources effectively. Additionally, caregivers want to know what specific services are offered to ensure that their loved ones receive comprehensive support.

These generations are also interested in understanding the quality control measures in place, as caregivers need reassurance that the care provided will meet the quality standards they want for those they love. Addressing these concerns helps caregivers feel more confident and informed in making decisions about the care they provide.



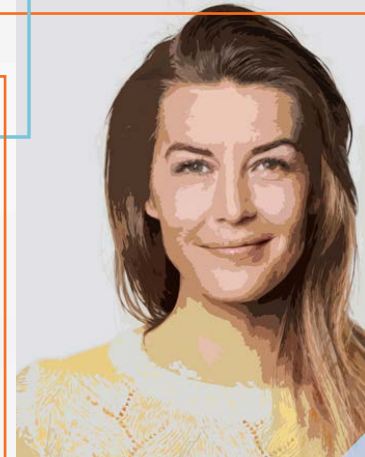
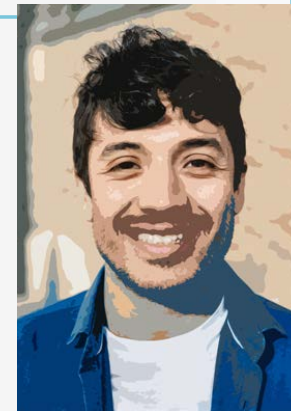
High-Quality Options

Gen Z and Millennial family caregivers want to feel confident not only in themselves as decision-makers and caregivers, but also in the care provided by hospice clinicians. These generations of caregivers are doing their homework to make sure their loved ones have the best care possible.

When considering the different quality measures hospice organizations typically strive for, remember that these are caregivers who may have a greater understanding of what the care experience *should* look like because they've discussed care options with clinicians, asked for input from their social circles, and don't hesitate to use the good old Google.

Why are we discussing quality?

Although these are two generations that don't consistently express concerns and frustrations with the care team, the options for sharing publicly online reviews and via social media are exercised when needed. Ensuring caregivers have appropriate avenues for feedback with a provider is critical, as it allows for service recovery before a provider's online reputation may be tarnished.



High-Quality Options

In addition to clinicians, respondents trust family members; people in their communities who have used hospice; and people of the same ethnicity, sexual orientation or religion to recommend a specific hospice organization.

Over half of respondents believe it's important that hospice care is provided by someone of a **similar cultural background as the patient**.

88% of Gen Z and Millennial respondents believe that although the patient should have some control, **important healthcare decisions should be made as a family**.

33% of respondents believe that hospice care hastens death. Dispelling myths will help them to feel more confident in considering hospice care as a viable option for their loved ones.

Approximately 33% of respondents believe that if a patient chooses to stop hospice care, they cannot receive it again in the future. Understanding the flexibility that is offered when deciding if hospice is the right option will help ease concerns about potentially committing to a choice they're not fully confident in.

Just over **75%** believe that patients and family caregivers can suggest hospice as an option to the doctor. There is room to further educate communities on their ability to self-initiate a referral to hospice.

Please respond to the following statements based on your level of agreement

Strongly Agree Slightly Agree Not Sure Slightly Disagree Strongly Disagree

It is important that hospice care is provided by people of a similar cultural background as the patient

25% 30% 23% 15% 7%

I believe that important healthcare decisions should be a family decision

53% 35% 9% 3% 1%

Hospice care causes the patient to die faster

13% 20% 18% 23% 26%

If a patient chooses to stop using hospice services, they cannot receive them in the future

16% 15% 32% 15% 23%

The patient or family caregiver can suggest hospice care as an option to their doctor

37% 41% 17% 4% 1%



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