

**Proposals for Creating Social Systems that Prevent "Job-quitting for Care"**  
**-Final Proposals-**  
**Findings from a Survey of Employers**

**Chapter 6: Conclusions of the Study Group**

**1. Three Recommendations Based on Previous Reports**

For about three years, the Study Group has investigated ways to prevent employees from giving up their jobs to provide nursing care for their elderly family members. Special focus has been placed on the analysis and review of factors and issues behind the problem of job loss for caregiving based on questionnaire surveys of care managers and employers. The Study Group has divided job-loss-for-caregiving into four types and defined them. Based on all these activities, the Study Group has come up with three recommendations as shown below (see Figure 6-1):

**(1) Recommendation 1: Increase the percentages of employees taking short- and long-term nursing care leave**

It has been nearly five years since the government set out a major policy goal of “eliminating cases in which people have no choices but to leave their jobs to provide nursing care” in its November 2015 policy document titled “Urgent Policies to Realize a Society in Which All Citizens Are Dynamically Engaged.” In the document, the government identifies, as one of the measures to achieve this goal, the development of nursing resources such as nursing facilities and elderly housing with supportive services. The development of nursing resources is clearly an essential issue in preventing job loss for caregiving. However, the Study Group focuses on increasing the percentages of employees who take short- and long-term nursing care leave.

A questionnaire survey of care managers in the interim report suggests that the more readily employees can take short- and long-term nursing care leave, the more likely they do not have to give up their jobs to care for their elderly family members. A separate survey of employers suggests that companies with higher percentages of employees who take short- and long-term nursing care leave tend to have heightened awareness of the problem of job loss for caregiving. The Study Group believes that these percentages provide a useful yardstick in an attempt to avoid this problem.

Accordingly, the Study Group recommends that the government include the percentages of employees taking short- and long-term nursing care leave as numerical targets to be increased year on year in its Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform

("Basic Policy"). The Study Group believes that a yearly increase in these percentages will raise employers' awareness of this problem and help build a social consensus on the need to address the problem. It also considers it necessary to provide budgetary provisions such as grants for employers that have successfully increased the percentages of employees who take short- and long-term nursing care leave from a year earlier.

## **(2) Recommendation 2: Encourage employers to make awareness-building efforts**

The surveys conducted by the Study Group suggest that there still is a deep-rooted corporate and social culture and atmosphere that may discourage employees to take short- and long-term nursing care leave. Employees around age 55 are more likely to face the prospect that they might have to give up their jobs to care for their elder family members. Since they are more likely in managerial positions, regardless of their gender, they tend to think that taking a short- or long-term nursing care leave will cause trouble to their subordinates and colleagues. Also, many employees believe that elderly family members should be cared for by other family members, suggesting that they tend to shy away from receiving social support.

In that sense, awareness building efforts aimed at changing such a corporate culture and atmosphere is essential for employers working to avoid job loss for caregiving. The government may be advised to give incentives in the form of budgetary provisions such as grants to employers who are eagerly making such efforts.

As it stands, such awareness-building efforts largely depend on the voluntary initiative of employers. Once government schemes or policies are in place to offer substantial incentives, more and more employers will be eager to make such efforts.

For example, such government incentives can be given to employers who hire industrial care managers or similar specialists, who in turn refer employees facing the prospect of job loss for caregiving to community-based care managers. This may help these employees to take a second look at their work styles.

## **(3) Recommendation 3: Scale up care support to avoid the "isolation" of family caregivers**

The Study Group has identified four types of job loss for caregiving. Among them, Type 3 (isolation type) refers to job loss for caregiving in which family caregivers and people in need of care are "isolated." For this type, care support may be more effective than the engagement of employers. In the particular case of people in need of care or caregivers refusing nursing care services, increasing their readiness to accept support holds a key to avoid job loss for caregiving. This highlights the essential need for social recognition that family caregivers

should also be the recipient of support.

Nevertheless, the “isolation” of family caregivers in their workplaces also plays no small role in two other types: Type 1 (work-caregiving imbalance) and Type 2 (workplace-attributable). In other words, as long as family caregivers (employees) do not become “isolated” in their workplaces at the prospect of job loss for caregiving, some kind of action can be taken before the problem becomes serious. In that sense, it is important for society as a whole to prevent family caregivers (employees) from being “isolated,” not least in order to postpone Point X, the point in time when they decide to give up their jobs for caregiving (see page 6 of this report), to the extent possible.

In sum, caregiving is a social issue that should never be addressed within families alone; therefore, it is important for the government to clearly state, in its associated schemes and policies, that support should be given to family caregivers as well, if it wants to address the problem of job loss for caregiving.

**(1) Policy aspect**

Set numerical targets, in the Basic Policy, for the percentages of employees taking short- and long-term nursing care leave.

**(2) In-house institutionalization of awareness building**

Raise the awareness of job loss for caregiving among employees, including those in managerial positions.

**(3) Institutionalization to ensure that family caregivers are given support**

Work to prevent family caregivers from “isolated.”

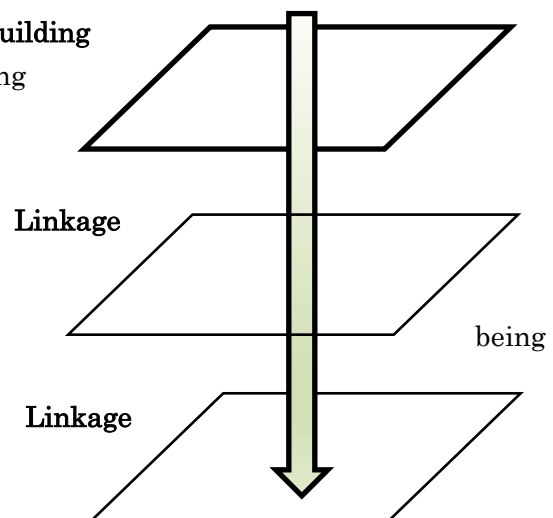


Figure 6-1: Gist of the Study Group’s Recommendations for Avoiding Job Loss for Caregiving