



Caregiver Retention

Retaining Caregivers through Recognition



Content for this tool was taken from "Seven Key Strategies Leaders Use to Decrease Caregiver Turnover and Fuel Growth" by Aaron Marcum.



“ Research indicated that employees have three prime needs: Interesting work, **recognition for doing a good job**, and being let in on things that are going on in the company.

~Zig Zigler ”

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Top 5 Ways Caregivers Prefer to be Recognized

How Important is Recognition?

As part of the monthly Home Care Pulse Satisfaction Management Program, we asked tens of thousands of professional caregivers how they prefer to be recognized for a job well done. The top five responses are shown below.



1 | **Verbal Recognition by Supervisor**

This has been the number one response for nearly eight years. Caregivers feed off of this kind of recognition. They love to receive specific and timely recognition from their supervisor.



2 | **Vacation Time, Bonuses, Perks, Gift Cards**

This ties into recognition by supervisor because this is often how supervisors can emphasize their appreciation.



3 | **Pay Raise**

The majority of caregivers who are requesting a pay raise are craving appreciation. A pay raise is a common way to show this appreciation. Most are happy with a modest pay increase, just so they know you are paying attention to the good work they are doing!



4 | **Recognition by Client**

When possible, encourage your clients to share their appreciation directly with their caregivers. You can also take client feedback you've gathered, and pass it on to your caregivers to make sure their great work is recognized. This can go a long way to making your caregivers feel appreciated.



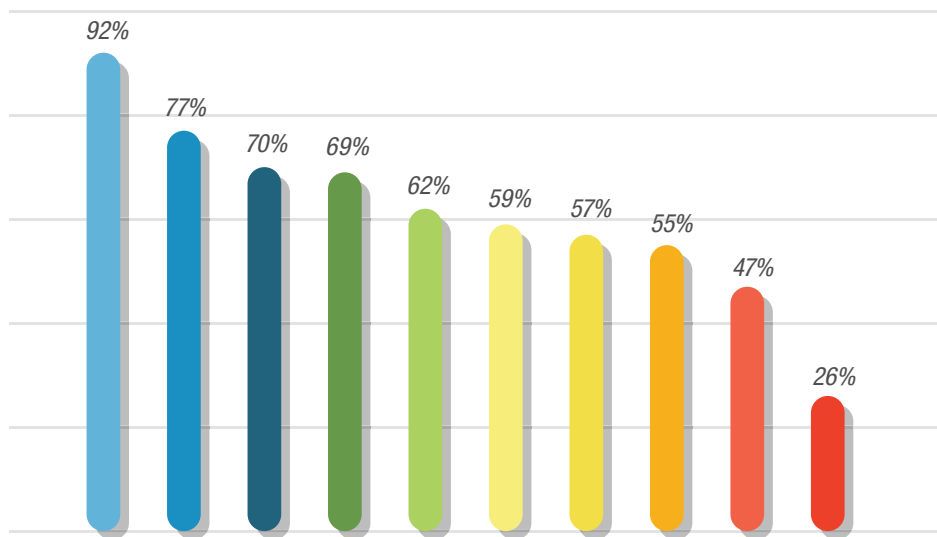
5 | **Company Wide Recognition**

Take time to create a formal caregiver recognition strategy that is companywide. This helps create a culture of recognition that will ensure your caregivers feel valued.

The top five ways caregivers prefer to be recognized are gathered by Home Care Pulse via live telephone interviews with thousands of employed caregivers each month from over 1,700 home care providers enrolled in Home Care Pulse's Satisfaction Management Program.

Top Ways Agencies Show Recognition for Caregivers

There are many ways home care providers recognize their caregivers. According to data taken from the 2016 Home Care Benchmarking Study, the 10 most common ways are shown below.



- Gift cards
- Hand Written Thank-You Cards
- Pay Raises
- Bonuses
- Telephone Calls
- Employee of The Month or Similar Program
- Group Events (Training)
- Text Messages
- Newsletter
- Paid Vacation

Survey participants were asked, "How do you recognize and reward your caregivers?"

Brainstorming Guide

Caregiver Recognition & Awards

The purpose of this brainstorming guide is to give you and your team a starting point for generating ideas on how to best recognize your caregivers for the great things they are doing as they represent your company.

The ideas laid out in this brainstorming guide have largely come from thousands of employed caregivers through the Home Care Pulse Satisfaction Management Program. During our interviews, we ask the question, “How do you like to be recognized when you do a good job?” The most popular responses are contained herein, as well as input from our internal Home Care Pulse team.

Company Events That Recognize Your Caregivers as a Whole

- Involve your admin team in creating a “thank you” video you can share on social media and during a company gathering.
- Monthly potlucks during in-services.
- Annual Recognition Luncheon
- Special food days (pizza, donut, pie, breakfast etc).
- Celebrate silly holidays, like Pi Day.
- Outdoor movies with their families.
- Rent out a local discount theater or drive-in.
- Monthly birthday celebrations.
- Free car wash day, where the admin staff washes the caregivers’ cars.
- Free Thanksgiving turkey.
- Rent out a bowling alley for the afternoon.
- Contest for concert tickets.
- Family picnic.
- Christmas cards mailed out.
- Free candy bars and goodies available for when they visit the office.
- Raffles – Every time a caregiver is recognized for something, they receive a raffle ticket that goes into a drawing for your monthly grand prize.

Reward & Promotional Systems

- Home Care Pulse Reports – Recognize and reward caregivers when their clients are satisfied and credit their caregivers for it.
- Specific award programs that reward positive behavior.
- Promotions, such as Caregiver Mentors.
- Title upgrade once a caregiver completes certain requirements/ achievements (Caregiver becomes Care Specialist).
- Points program – They can earn points, based on overachievement, that go towards paid days off, electronics, etc.
- Perfect Attendance Awards
- Referral Bonus Programs

Recognition by Supervisor/Company

- Collect personal messages and feedback (Home Care Pulse reports, etc.) from a caregiver’s clients and share these with them.
- Recognition board in the office.
- Handwritten note, possible gift card included.
- Recognition budget – give your supervisors a budget (gift cards, concert tickets, spa packages, etc.) they are required to use and be accountable for every month. Forces them to look for opportunities to recognize.
- Send a personal letter of gratitude to a caregiver’s family, spouse, or significant other for supporting them in their job, etc.
- Birthday cards
- Unexpected pay raise given.

- Make gift cards personal to their various likes, hobbies, etc.
- Have other caregivers recognize their peers in team meetings or trainings.
- Leave positive notes on their paystub.
- If they lose a client to death, send them a condolence card, flowers, etc.
- Gift baskets sent to their home.
- Join reward sites, such as anyperk.com, which allows employees to utilize discounts, etc.
- Take them to lunch, one on one.
- Donate to a charitable organization in the caregiver's name.

Compensation

- Reward performance by giving an unexpected pay raise.
- Monthly incentives for going the extra mile. Ex: If caught doing a good deed, 4 hours of paid vacation provided.
- Additional hours rewarded to consistent overachievers.
- Additional benefits, such as vacation/sick, and insurance benefits for tenured team members.
- Gas cards, movie tickets, spa packages, salon packages, discounted gym memberships, etc.
- Give out branded/swag items such as polo shirts, lanyards, water bottles, hats, sweaters, etc.
- Paid night in a hotel.

Recognition from Client & Family

- Communicate caregiver birthdays, anniversaries, employment anniversaries, and other special events to the client and family.
- When clients tell you how grateful they are to their caregiver, empower them to tell the caregiver directly.
- Gather feedback, notes, and expressions of gratitude from a caregiver's clients and share it with them.

Peer Recognition

- Caregiver of the Month Program – These caregivers get special treatment, such as a parking spot, first rights on holiday time off, etc.
- Caregiver of the Year Program – Consider having the mayor, or some other dignitary award your caregiver. Special treatment, such as free Costco and Netflix membership for a year. Publish a press release and post on social media, place a banner outside with the caregiver's picture, etc.
- "Lifetime Achievement Award" for caregivers who have worked for you over 3 years.
- Have your top caregivers share positive client experiences during events and monthly trainings.
- Reward them for their ideas by creating a reward for the "Idea of the Month."
- Hall of Fame in the office.
- Email everyone spotlights and recognition of caregivers every month.
- "Caught You in the Act" Award.
- Social media posts that recognize specific caregivers.
- Have your caregivers of the month/year involved in recording your hold music saying why they do what they do.
- Special name tags for top performers.

Formal Recognition

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges to implementing a caregiver recognition program is the lack of consistency or being too random in your recognition efforts. A solid recognition program is documented and formalized. For example, if you want your field supervisors to recognize performance when they see positive behavior during their visits, you need to formalize how, when, and who they recognize. Teach them what to look for and give them a set budget that they are required to use each month. Have them document each caregiver they give a gift card to and why. Make it a focus in their supervisory role.

There are many ways to develop a formal caregiver recognition program; however, in order to be effective the program must contain each of the following:

1. **Specific** - Telling a caregiver that he or she is doing a good job is one thing. Providing them with specific examples of

their behavior and actions are even better. It tells them you are paying attention.

2. **Timely** - Recognition based upon specific behavior within the last seven days sends a strong message that you truly care.
3. **Meaningful** - Make sure the method you use to recognize the caregiver is meaningful to them. Giving a caregiver, who doesn't have a car, a gas card tells them that you truly don't understand or appreciate them.
4. **Consistent** - Recognition programs that happen every few months are not nearly as effective as consistent programs each and every week. Schedule time every week with the sole purpose of recognizing caregivers for a job well done. Your return on investment for the time spent will be one of your greatest rewards.

“*Employees who report receiving recognition and praise within the last seven days show increased productivity, get higher scores from customers, and have better safety records. They're just more engaged at work.*”

~Tom Rath
(Best Selling Author)

