

COMPASSIONATE COMPANIES RESEARCH UPDATE

This report was created following a news article that appeared in the Globe and Mail in October 2012 titled “List of Canada’s top 100 Employers of 2013.” This article can be found at: <http://bit.ly/1a7GREH>

April 2014

Summary

The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association compiled a list of the 2013 recipients of the Canada's 100 Top Employers award and contacted each company with the goal of learning whether they offer any kind of compassionate care leave to their employees.

To gauge how many companies offered some form of compassionate care leave policy, the CHPCA developed a survey of 6 questions about their current and future human resources policies. We then had a summer student phone each of the companies on the list, and follow up via email where appropriate.

Of these companies, 25 agreed to participate and completed the questionnaire; 25 refused to transfer calls to the Human Resource departments; 18 declined to participate and 32 companies have indicated they may participate but have yet to complete the survey.

From this project we have learned that most employers are not offering compassionate care programs beyond the six week Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefits. Although some offered top-up and others dealt with employee issues on a case by case basis, none of them offered programs similar to those of Rx&D or GlaxoSmithKline. Please see the analysis of results section for further details.

About the Top 100 Employers Project

Now entering its 14th year, the Canada's Top 100 Employers project is a national competition to determine which employers lead their industries in offering exceptional workplaces for their employees. Any employer with its head office or principal place of business in Canada may apply for our national competition. Employers of any size may apply, whether private or public sector.

Employers are evaluated by the editors of Canada's Top 100 Employers using eight criteria, which have remained consistent since the project's inception: Physical Workplace; Work Atmosphere & Social; Health, Financial & Family Benefits; Vacation & Time Off; Employee Communications; Performance Management; Training & Skills Development; and Community Involvement. Employers are compared to other organizations in their field to determine which offers the most progressive and forward-thinking programs.

Methodology

A script was created to ensure that interaction with each company was consistent. We had originally planned to complete the surveys over the phone however early on in the calling process it became clear that most sites preferred to be emailed the survey to complete at their discretion. The primary objective of each call was to reach the Human Resources department of each company. Some sites were more willing to transfer our calls to the correct department than others. Out of the 100 companies, 25 refused to transfer us to Human Resources nor would they provide us with any other contact alternatives.

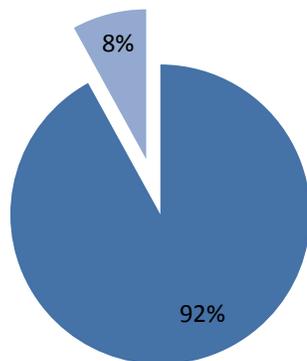
These companies were deemed unreachable after three call attempts. Out of the remaining companies we could reach, 18 declined to answer questions via telephone or email. The 32 companies we are waiting to hear from have been contacted at least three times since the beginning of this research project, with the last attempt on September 4, 2013. Out of these 32 we have had direct contact with nine Human Resources executives. These individuals have been sent the survey and have advised us that they will complete the survey within the next few months, schedule permitting.

The remaining 23 companies have been contacted three to four times each, again with the last calls occurring on September 4, 2013. A detailed voicemail was left after each attempt directing these individuals to call us at their convenience. Two companies have responded, leaving us voicemails. Two companies have left us voicemails, however we have been unable to reach them as of yet.

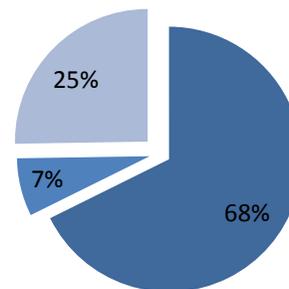
Analysis of Results

Out of the 25 companies that answered the survey, the following was noted:

Formal vs. Informal Policies



Compassionate care benefit top-up policies



■ Formal Leave Policies ■ Informal Leave Policies ■ Top-up ■ Case by case ■ No top-up

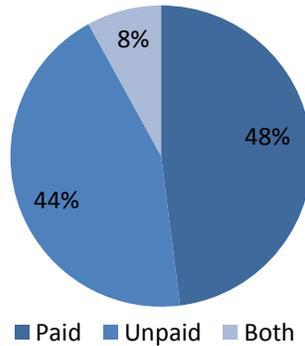
92% of companies had formal leave policies versus 8% who stated that their leave benefits were informal. 57% of the companies stated that they would be willing to share their leave policies, under the understanding that we would not share these publicly. Upon review, we learned that many of the formal leave policies already existed within Collective agreements, or that companies were simply respecting the Canadian Employment Standards Act.

20% of respondents stated that they would provide salary top up during the 6 week period of compassionate care benefit government coverage. 8% replied that they would be willing to cover up to 100% on a case by case basis. 74% stated that they actively educated employees on the compassionate care benefits available to them. 12% of the respondents also shared that they provided an additional top of salaries to employers who are claiming employment insurance benefits for parents of critically ill children.

Companies were asked to specify whether they would provide any additional unpaid leave of absence for an employee. Nearly all employers answered that this would be approached on a case by case basis, but that provisions did exist in these cases and was decided by the employee's manager.

When asked the question: Some Canadian companies/organizations offer up to 13 weeks of leave with full salary over a period of 2 years for employees who are acting as caregivers. Do you see your company's policies evolving towards this in the near future? Most companies stated that they saw themselves reviewing their policies over the next few years but felt it likely that they would end up somewhere in the middle of the proposed coverage.

Is this leave paid or unpaid?



Companies with Similar Compassionate Care Benefits

There were 25 respondents from the survey regarding compassionate care benefits. Two respondents (8%) stated that they offer both paid and unpaid leave. Twelve respondents (48%) stated they offered paid leave. Eleven respondents (44%) stated they offered leave but it was unpaid. The majority of respondents who do not offer paid leave were in municipal and city services. The respondents who did offer paid leave were a mix of private and public corporations. The two respondents that offered both paid and unpaid leave were split between private and public corporations.

Appendix A: List of Companies that Responded

25 Employers have responded to the survey to date:

- Thirteen employers are private
- Six employers are non-profit
- Four employers are public
- Two employers are crown corporations
- Twelve employers are regional
- Ten employers are national
- Three employers are multi-national corporations
- The number of employees for these companies range from under 100 to over 25,000

The following companies have provided consent to give their names in this report:

- Agriculture Financial Services Corporation
- Aboriginal Peoples Television Network
- Bank of Canada
- BC Public Service
- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- Deeley Harley Davidson Canada
- Desjardins Group / Mouvement des caisses Desjardins
- HP Advanced Solutions Inc.
- KPMG LLP
- Manitoba Hydro
- McCarthy Tétrault LLP
- Northwest Territories, Government of the
- Union Gas Limited
- Vancouver Island Health Authority
- World Vision Canada

Appendix B: Original Questionnaire

1. What is your company/organization's policy for providing leave for employees who are acting as the primary caregiver for a dying loved one?

Please keep in mind that caregiving at the end of life is defined as: an individual who needs to devote substantial time and effort to caring for a loved one near death. These tasks may include cooking/cleaning, bathing the individual, feeding, and general accompaniment. This commitment can be anywhere from 3-4 hours a day to full time 24 hour care.



- B) Is this a formal or informal policy?
 - a. Are you willing to provide us with a copy of your policy?
- C) Is this leave paid or unpaid?

D) If employees receive a percentage of their salary, how much?

E) In cases where employees request/require additional leave than stipulated in the policy, what is the protocol?

2. A) Do you offer any of the following?

Please note that the federal government's Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefits are benefits paid to people who have to be away from work temporarily to provide care or support to a family member who is gravely ill and who has a significant risk of death within 26 weeks (six months). A maximum of six weeks of compassionate care benefits may be paid to eligible people at 55% of their current salary.

Full paid leave in addition to the Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefit (in addition to the 6 weeks offered)

Top up from 55% of salary to 100% of salary for the 6 week coverage of Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefit

Educate employees on compassionate care benefits available to them either through the Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefit or through your company/organization

Other (please specify)

2. B) If you provide top up for the Compassionate Care Benefit program of 6 weeks, do you also provide top up for the Employment Insurance special benefits for Parents of Critically Ill Children which is 35 weeks?

3. Some Canadian companies/organizations offer up to 13 weeks of leave with full salary over a period of 2 years for employees who are acting as caregivers. Do you see your company's policies evolving towards this in the near future?

4. Would you be interested in receiving our research findings about other companies' caregiving policies?

5. May we include your responses to this questionnaire, and any additional information you send us, in our final report?

6. Additional Comments