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Powering Absolute Potential

**CHILD CARE ISSUES ARE DRIVING
WOMEN OUT OF HEALTHCARE.
BENEFITS CAN BRING THEM BACK.**



By now, we know how devastating the COVID19 pandemic has been to the healthcare system, but also those working within it. Not only have healthcare workers been in crisis trying to care for patients, but they're also continuing to struggle with massive amounts of stress in trying to also care for themselves and their families. This collective pressure has led many to flee the field – more than 20% of healthcare professionals have exited the workforce since the pandemic began... and almost all of them are women.

Child Care Issues Are Significantly Impacting Women

While so many other industries are now striving to achieve more equitable gender representation in their respective fields, healthcare has sustained a high number of women for over a hundred years. The American Medical Association states, "Ever since Elizabeth Blackwell (the first female MD in America) earned her medical degree in 1849, women have been making their mark in the field of medicine."



In fact, 76% of healthcare workers are women.

And there's a reason why so many women are attracted to careers in healthcare. A study from the University of Michigan found that young women with academic backgrounds in science tend to favor healthcare careers because the work is primarily people-facing and offers an essential value to the public. So why are so many women departing a field they've historically loved so much? A key reason is the culmination of two pandemics: one is the virus and the other is Child Care.

While healthcare workers have been on the front lines helping COVID patients, those with families have also had to deal with the absence of reliable and affordable Child Care. As schools and Child Care centers closed, healthcare workers didn't have the option to stop their careers to be at home with their children. Their professional responsibilities

could not be ignored as they had to be on the front lines to care for the sick during one of the most tumultuous times in medical history. While some were able to make arrangements for the care of their children, many others had to scramble on a daily basis – not just to take care of their children but keep their jobs.

But this situation isn't entirely new. For decades, accessibility to Child Care has limited the ability for many healthcare workers (mostly women) to not only do their best work, but also climb the ladder into leadership roles. And while there are a significantly high number of women in the field, there's also a considerably low percentage of them in leadership positions. According to Chloe Mumford of Talent 4 Health,



Only 25% of women in healthcare are in leadership-level jobs.

Further, she states that the women in these roles are slowly starting to drop off: "This means that the candle is being burnt at both ends, proving to shift the balance into further disproportion. One of the reasons for this is the disproportionate amount of time women spend on Child Care, leading them to a dissatisfying work-life balance. This results in women being at a disadvantage to attain and maintain a time-consuming role."



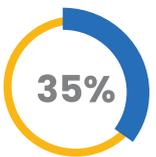
This disadvantage is backed up by [recent studies](#) showing a lack of Child Care options for healthcare workers results in employees who are 80% more likely to experience burnout, reduce their hours, or simply leave their jobs entirely.

Much of this has to do with Child Care accessibility. Traditional Child Care centers operate during standard weekday business hours, meaning most aren't available for the many healthcare workers who have on-call hours, long shifts, or non-traditional schedules. Plus, for many women healthcare workers, the issues of Child Care coincide with another chief issue: benefits and pay.

According to [Forbes](#), more than one-third of American nurses (the majority of whom are female) currently want to leave the healthcare field altogether. Of that fraction, nearly 30% cite insignificant wages and comprehensive benefits as main factors for departing. For many, this has to do with the overwhelming costs of Child Care. [Recent studies](#) show that the average annual cost of Child Care in America is over \$10,000;



This is over 10% of the median income for a married couple



Over 35% percent of the median income for a single parent.

With so much of a family's budget needing to be dedicated to Child Care, it's no wonder so many women are looking to leave the industry due to stress, the need for more work-life balance, or the need for higher pay.

These dynamics lead to startling consequences. As healthcare workers depart, patients needing care suffer – as do entire care facilities, doctor's offices, hospitals, and other in-patient establishments. Organizations in need of healthcare workers must increase wages and/or bring in substitute shift-workers to cover ever-emerging staffing needs. This is significant because findings from [a recent McKinsey report](#) show a 10-20% gap in staffing for direct patient care is projected to occur by 2025. If trends continue, it means units of care will close in many hospitals, services provided by healthcare systems will be cut back, and – the bottom line – people won't get the healthcare services they need.

But there is a resolution that can drastically help limit the severity of these consequences. When healthcare organizations understand this, they can put plans into motion that will drastically help keep workers in place AND provide more options for upward mobility for women in the field. What is it? **Child Care benefits.**



How Child Care Benefits Can Help the Healthcare Industry

Child Care benefits can make a significant impact to healthcare workers who enjoy their work (and don't want to leave the field), but need some relief in caring for their families AND doing their best in their careers. While employer-sponsored Child Care programs may not be priorities for all organizations, they provide positive impacts on multiple levels, specifically for healthcare organizations:



Child Care benefits can **alleviate some of the cost responsibility** placed on healthcare workers by making high-quality care more affordable. By assisting with the cost of care, healthcare workers get some relief on two major fronts that impact their working lives: Child Care affordability and pay.



In all industries, Child Care benefits have been shown to **increase productivity, decrease absenteeism** (such as when parents have to stay home with their children for a day or two due to a lack of Child Care), **reduce turnover**, and **improve organizational morale**. These benefits are huge for the current state of burnout within the healthcare industry and its frequent staffing challenges.



Child Care benefits **can help lead more women to career advancement** – which would be a huge step in the healthcare industry. Since women represent the majority of healthcare workers, but only hold a fraction of leadership positions, Child Care benefits can be a turning point in helping more them advance in their careers without discarding their family responsibilities.



Child Care benefits also **send a signal to potential job candidates** as well. They demonstrate that the organization values and supports working parents – especially women – making it attractive to a wide range of job candidates. This is also important for candidates and current employees who are not yet parents, but may become parents one day. Plus, when Child Care benefits are in place, employees are much more likely to come back to work after the birth of a child.



TOOTRIS has become a key player in providing these benefits for all kinds of industries, including healthcare, by offering a tech-platform that connects employees to high-quality Child Care providers in their area in real-time. TOOTRIS offers employers a turn-key solution for easily implementing a complete Child Care benefit that:



Seamless integration with existing HR management systems with minimal staff time required.



Partnering with nearly 200,000 licensed Child Care providers in every state that offer care for a wide-range of family needs (including non-traditional working hours and shifts).



Providing easy-to-use technology (available on a mobile device or PC) for parents to easily compare, vet, and enroll in care with a new provider – even for backup or emergencies situations.



Helping employers combine employer-sponsored benefits with other Child Care support such as drawing directly from FSA set aside funds to improve utilization.



Providing complete reporting to assist with leveraging Child Care tax credits.



Offering employees with dedicated concierge support to ensure the best outcomes for the care of their children.



Overall, Child Care benefits allow employees to feel as though they are valued and supported as they strive for a positive work-life balance. This is especially important for the healthcare industry and its stressed, over-worked, and predominantly female workforce. As Charles Bonello states of pandemic-era healthcare workers, "They answered the call to serve with a full heart because that's who healthcare workers are deep down inside. They are caregivers. But even caregivers need care sometimes."



Schedule a demo to discover more on how turn-key TOOTRIS Child Care Benefits can benefit the Healthcare Industry.