

Caregiving in Garnet Families

Caregiving is complex, and caregivers are diverse. Garnet families face unique experiences in caregiving related to mobility, logistics, and identity. Here's what we learned about the diverse realities of caregiving in military, veteran, and public safety families from those who study, serve, and support them.



Complex realities within Garnet families

- Families vary widely in structure and definition, extending beyond traditional nuclear families to include peers and extended networks
- Shift work adds a layer of difficulty in accessing and coordinating care services
- Frequent relocations complicate access to consistent care
- Self-care is critical but may be difficult due to occupational cultures emphasizing resilience and putting others first



Policy and support gaps

- Existing caregiver benefits and programs are a positive step but often lack a comprehensive family lens, leading to eligibility and access gaps
- Understanding and supporting caregiving in Garnet families requires an inclusive, culturally sensitive, and holistic approach addressing their unique lifestyles and caregiving challenges
- There is a critical need to develop **family-centered** approaches to caregiving that are not solely focused on the individual receiving care



Watch the discussion



Caregiving roles shift notably when a loved one enters inpatient mental health or substance use treatment

- The absence affects the household emotionally and practically, increasing responsibilities for the remaining family members
- Caregivers may feel relief but also anxiety, loss of control, guilt, and stress over the loved one's return; children may struggle to understand the situation
- Distance from treatment centres exacerbates isolation and complicates access to support

