

**ciena**<sup>®</sup>

**“** It wasn't just a personal issue  
—it was a business challenge we couldn't  
ignore. We wanted a solution that combined  
compassion with smart business outcomes.

Steve Shillitoe,  
Ciena Senior Director of Benefits



## About Ciena

Ciena is a global leader in networking systems, services, and software with more than 8,000 employees worldwide and ~2000 in the U.S. As the world's largest optical networking provider, Ciena is known for its culture of innovation, collaboration, and care.

Within its U.S. workforce, **more than half are over age 50** - a factor that significantly increases the likelihood of caregiving responsibilities. These are highly skilled professionals whose roles often demand deep expertise, collaboration, and focus.

Estimates suggest that **15–25% of Ciena's U.S. employees are family caregivers**, balancing work with the care of aging parents, spouses, or children with special needs.

In 2023, Ciena began to notice a rise in leaves of absence and attrition.

## The Challenge: Caregiving in the Workforce

The company wanted to better understand the underlying causes. Analysis revealed that **caregiving responsibilities were a key driver - impacting productivity, engagement, and retention.**

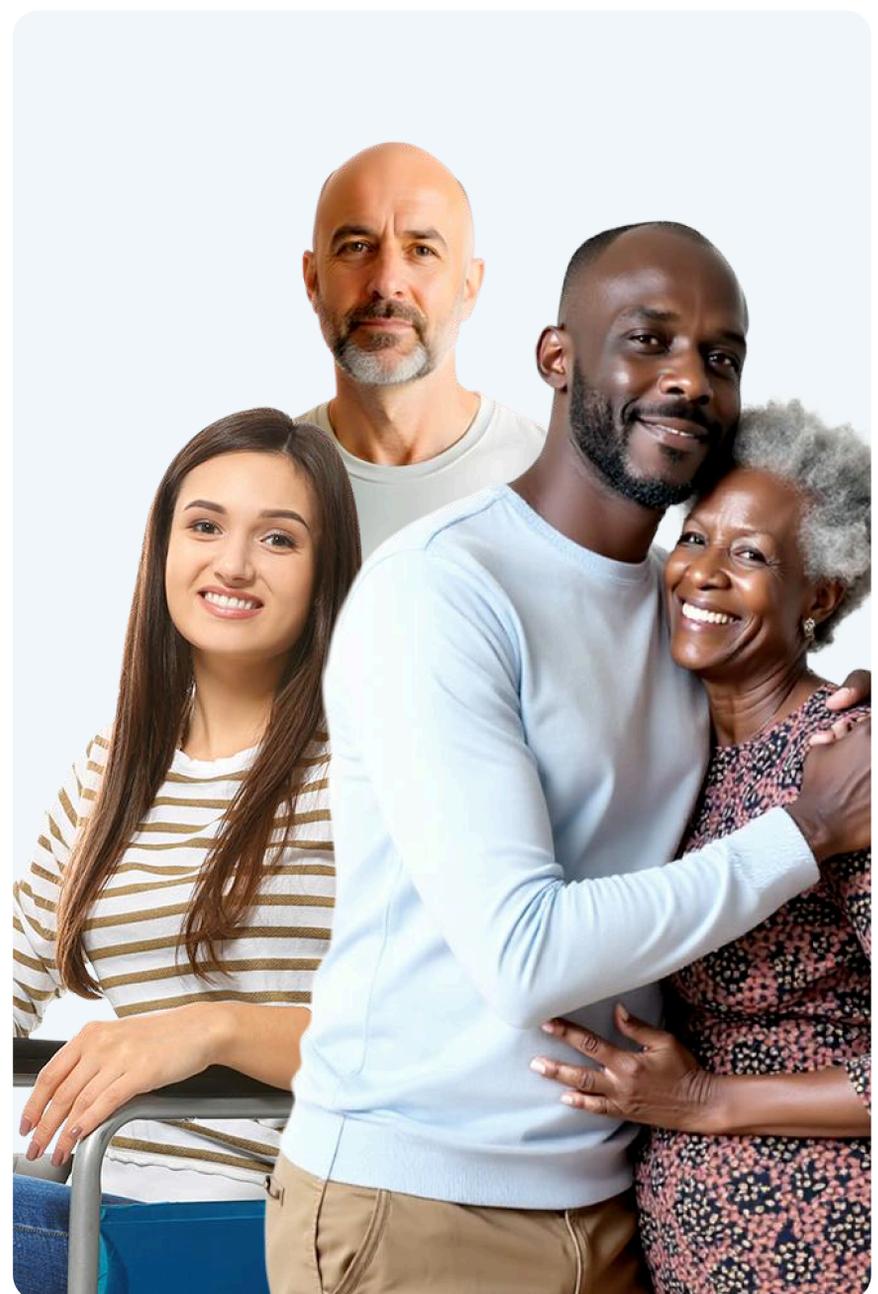
While traditional programs like the EAP offered general resources, employees needed more specialized, proactive, and personalized support, particularly for chronic or complex family situations like dementia, Parkinson's, or ADHD.

## Ciena's Response: Leading with Compassion and Innovation

After evaluating several options, Ciena selected **Mellie for its human-centered, technology-enabled model**, combining dedicated 1:1 care coordinators with an intuitive mobile platform that keeps employees and families connected.

The program launched on January 1, 2025, supported by a multi-channel communication plan designed to reach employees where they are:

- Mellie caregiving benefit webinar reached 10% of U.S. workforce
- Regular internal communications and HR portal features
- Integration into Open Enrollment materials
- Direct mail to employees' homes, encouraging family participation



## In the first 6 months:

 **3 Days**

average of increased productivity per engaged employee

 **20%**

of identified caregivers used Mellie

 **10%**

engaged on an ongoing basis

## Engagement & Impact

Employee Savings

From several hundred dollars to over a **thousand dollars per employee**

Benefits  
Cross-Utilization

Employees were guided into EAP and health resources, increasing utilization and value of current programs

ROI (6 months)

Estimated **>240%**

Employee Satisfaction  
(NPS)

**78**



Employees report lower stress, improved focus, and greater peace of mind—directly translating into measurable business value for Ciena.

## From U.S. Success to North American Impact

Following strong early results in the U.S., **Ciena is expanding Mellie's services to Canada** on January 1, 2026 ensuring equitable caregiver support across its North American workforce. Mellie's bilingual platform and care coordination in English and Canadian French makes it possible to seamlessly serve Ciena's diverse Canadian employee population.

With over 2,500 employees in Canada and similar caregiving demographics, the program is expected to deliver comparable utilization, ROI, and cultural impact—strengthening Ciena's commitment to inclusivity and care across all regions.

“

When employees feel supported in their caregiving role, they can stay engaged, present, and productive at work. That's the kind of care culture we're proud to build at Ciena.

Shannon McCarthy-Bennett,  
Senior Benefits Analyst

## Why It Matters?

### Balancing Critical Family Duties

Nearly one in three employees is a caregiver — often balancing critical family duties alongside demanding professional roles

### Caregiving Stress Costs Billions

Caregiving stress costs employers billions annually in lost productivity, absenteeism, leave, and turnover

### Ciena Strengthens its Workforce

By meeting this need head-on, Ciena not only supports employees' families - it strengthens its workforce, culture, and brand

# Key Takeaways

## 1 Caregiving is a Workforce Issue

Addressing it drives retention, engagement, and productivity

## 2 Early, Proactive Support Prevents Burnout

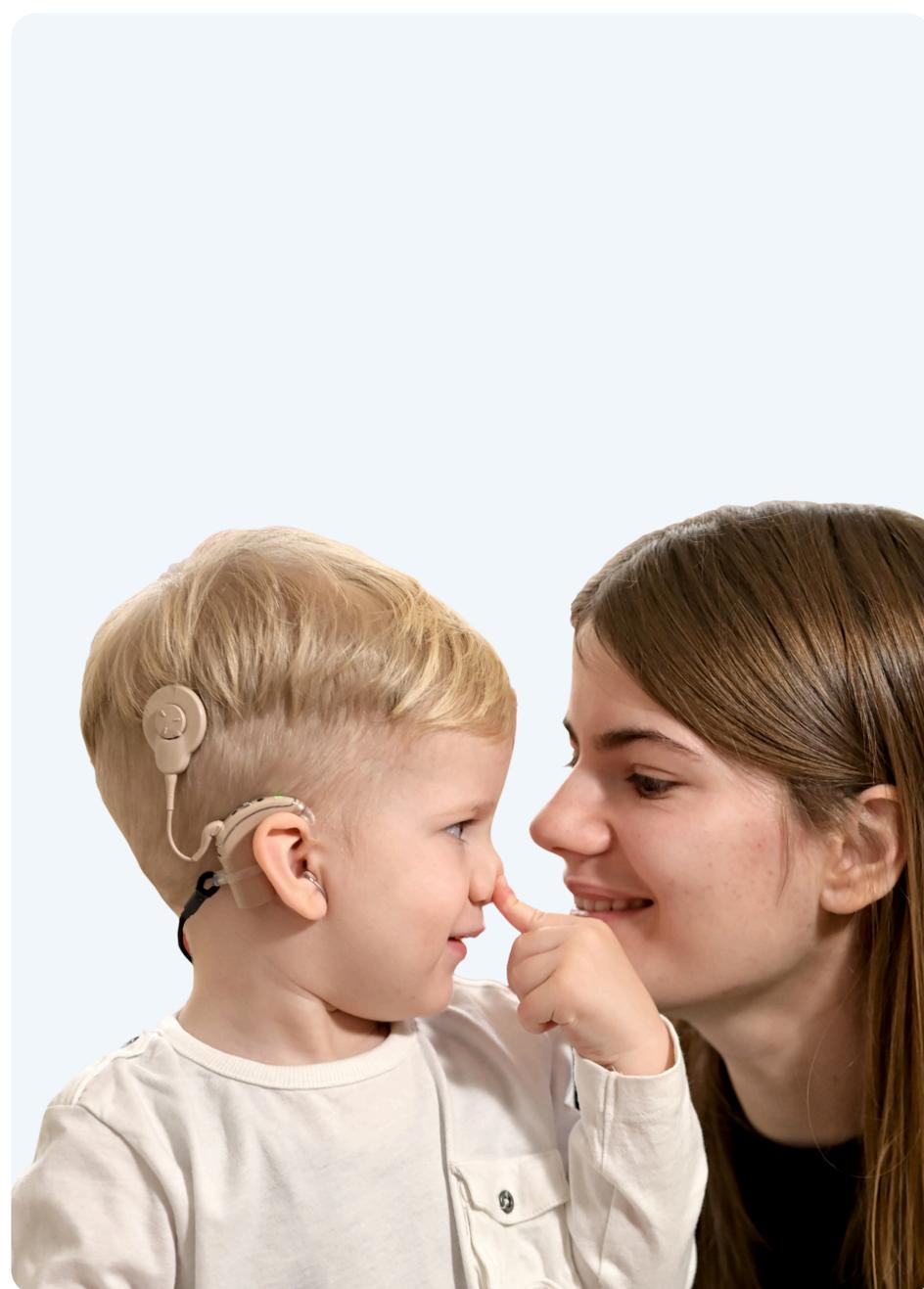
Expert guidance helps employees avoid crisis-driven leave

## 3 Integrated Care Coordination Strengthens Benefits

Mellie complements existing resources, improving utilization and ROI

## 4 Caring Scales Globally

Ciena's expansion into Canada demonstrates how caregiver benefits can unite a company's culture and purpose



**mellie**

415-839-9139 | [www.mellie.com](http://www.mellie.com)



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