



New app helps older adults access critical home care services

ADDNAIDE CONNECTS OLDER ADULTS WHO NEED CARE WITH THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO PROVIDE IT

Donna had recently retired when a friend encouraged her to reach out to the Elderly Services Program (ESP) for help. She was dealing with balance issues related to diabetes and neuropathy. Through ESP, she was eligible for an emergency response system and home-delivered meals. She was also eligible for the program's home care assistance service, which includes help with housekeeping, personal care and other household tasks.

However, Donna enrolled in ESP at a difficult time. Because of a national shortage of homecare workers, Donna and other clients often have to wait to be matched with an aide from a homecare agency.

Council on Aging (COA), ESP's administrator, has been working to find solutions to this problem. One area where COA saw success was in providing opportunities for clients to hire their own aides. Called consumer-directed care, this care model allows clients to hire someone they know - usually a friend, neighbor or someone in their social circle - to provide their care. The client acts as the employer and the individual they hire is their employee. ESP pays for services approved in the client's care plan.

But, many ESP clients who could benefit from consumer-directed care do not know anyone they could hire to provide the care they need. These individuals have been left to wait until an aide can be identified through a local service provider.

Enter AddnAide. AddnAide is an app created by Council on Aging subsidiary home52 to help ESP clients match with people in the community who are available to provide home care services. It's an expansion of consumer-directed care in that it gives clients with limited social circles an opportunity to find and hire an aide.



That's how Donna connected with her aide.

Donna was one of the first ESP clients to use AddnAide. Her care manager set up her account in AddnAide, including details about her care plan. Donna then completed her profile by adding details about the days and hours she preferred to receive care, as well as the type of help she needed (all within the scope of her ESP care plan). She was particularly interested in finding someone to help her with cleaning and organizing. The combination of neuropathy and poor eyesight often left Donna unsteady on her feet. The thought of bending down to scrub her shower floor frightened her. "It's hard for me to do everything I'd like to do on my own," Donna said.

With her profile complete, Donna was able to find aides who matched her service needs. She exchanged messages with a few, and then connected with her current aide, Lorinda.

After they texted and spoke on the phone about her care needs, Donna said she knew Lorinda would be a good fit. The variety of services Lorinda was available to help with was appealing, especially cleaning and organizing.

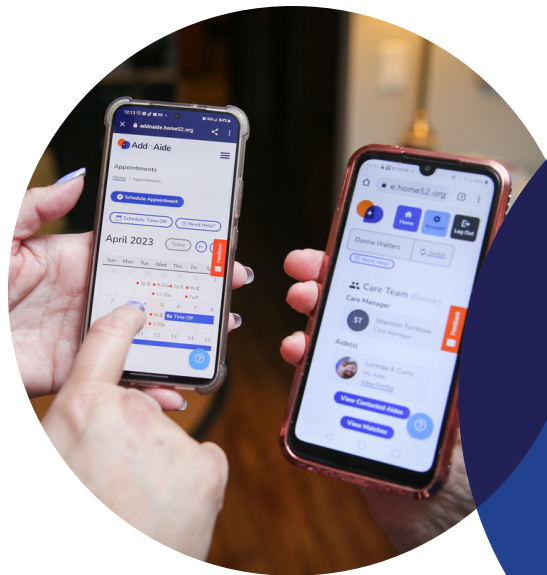
One of the goals of AddnAide is to expand the pool of individuals available to serve older adults who need in-home care. By having more caregivers available to help, fewer older adults have to wait to receive the care they need. Targeted marketing has been helping to achieve this goal, attracting people like Lorinda to AddnAide. Based on successful gig economy models used by companies like Uber, AddnAide is ideal for individuals who want flexibility in their work schedule, including stay-at-home parents, retirees, those with other employment and students. It's also ideal for community-minded individuals who want to give back while supplementing their income.

Lorinda joined AddnAide in August 2022 after seeing an ad on Facebook. She'd been doing gig work since leaving a full-time retail position. AddnAide appealed to her because it's like gig work, but the financial details, including taxes, are all managed in the app. She even clocks in and out within the app as she comes and goes from clients' homes.

Lorinda also appreciated that AddnAide was easy to fit into her schedule along with work she was already doing with Instacart and Amazon Flex. "You're your own boss, set your hours, choose who you want to work for," Lorinda said. "It's freedom from the 9 to 5."

Lorinda provides care for several ESP clients via AddnAide. When choosing who to work for, she looks at the type of care they need and always meets them before accepting the job. "It's important for me to have a good relationship with my clients," Lorinda said.

For example, while Lorinda does not want to provide personal care, she is more than willing to help with cleaning, organizing, running errands, prepping meals and cooking, or just providing companionship - all services most ESP clients need.



During their first meeting, Donna and Lorinda walked through the house and discussed Donna's needs. Lorinda helps Donna with a variety of tasks, including heavy cleaning, changing bed linens and organizing.

Donna still likes to do some things on her own, but acknowledges that having Lorinda available means she doesn't need to take unnecessary risks. "It's all the little things she does," Donna said. "It's nice to have the help."

For Lorinda's part, she enjoys working with older adults and making connections. She recognizes that her clients don't have much support in their lives. "Some weeks, it's just me and the meals on wheels driver my clients see," she said, adding, "This job feeds my soul, my spirit. Not just my wallet."

Donna was a caregiver for her own mother before dementia made it necessary to move her into a care facility. She understands how hard it can be to take care of someone else, and she also knows many older adults have no one to take care of them.

"There is such a need," Donna said. "Not everyone has family - or family who wants to help."

To learn more about AddnAide, visit
home52.org/addnaide

