

MAKING THE RIGHT MATCH:

Evaluation of the Carina Matching Service
Registry in Washington State's Self-
Directed Home Care Program



Table of Contents

<u>Table of Figures and Tables</u>	3
<u>Glossary of Terms</u>	4
<u>Executive Summary</u>	5
<u>Introduction</u>	6
<u>The Role of Matching Service Registries</u>	7
<u>Introducing Carina</u>	7
<u>Overview of this Evaluation</u>	8
<u>Methods</u>	9
<u>Data Sources</u>	10
<u>Data Analysis</u>	12
<u>Findings</u>	13
<u>Theme 1: Carina attracts users for a range of reasons, including choice, control, and convenience.</u>	14
<u>Theme 2: Carina generates strong endorsement from individual providers and consumers.</u>	16
<u>Theme 3: Carina promotes independent living and workforce retention.</u>	18
<u>Theme 4: Carina facilitates a good “fit” between consumers and individual providers.</u>	20
<u>Theme 5: Carina supports lasting caregiving relationships.</u>	24
<u>Theme 6: Carina enhances job quality for individual providers.</u>	26
<u>Discussion and Conclusion</u>	28
<u>Appendix I: Profile of Carina Users</u>	31
<u>Appendix II: Survey Domains and Sample Questions</u>	33
<u>Appendix III: Characteristics of Interview and Survey Respondents</u>	34
<u>Notes</u>	37

Table of Figures & Tables

<u>Figure 1: Individual Provider Survey Respondents’ Reasons for Using Carina</u>	14
<u>Figure 2: Consumer Survey Respondents’ Reasons for Using Carina</u>	15
<u>Figure 3: Would You Recommend Carina to Other Individual Providers/Clients?</u>	16
<u>Figure 4: Survey Respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed That Carina Has Helped...</u>	18
<u>Figure 5: Survey Respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed That Carina Has Helped...</u>	18
<u>Figure 6: Survey Respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed That Carina Has Helped...</u>	20
<u>Figure 7: Percent of Carina Interactions Resulting in a Successful Match by Year, January 2018 to March 2024</u>	24
<u>Figure 8: Reasons That Longest Match Ended, According to Individual Providers</u>	25
<u>Figure 9: Reasons That Longest Match Ended, According to Clients</u>	25
<u>Figure 10: Individual Provider Survey Respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed That Carina Has Helped...</u>	26
<u>Table 1: Carina Data Set Individual Provider Descriptive Statistics</u>	31
<u>Table 2: Carina Data Set Client Job Posts Descriptive Statistics</u>	32
<u>Table 3: Survey Domains and Sample Questions</u>	33
<u>Table 4: Individual Provider Survey Demographics</u>	34
<u>Table 5: Consumer Survey Demographics</u>	35
<u>Table 6: Interview Respondent Demographics</u>	36

Glossary of Terms

ASSISTIVE COORDINATORS

Assistive Coordinators post jobs and manage communication with individual providers on behalf of some consumers on Carina. These coordinators are employed by Consumer Direct Care Network Washington (CDWA).

CONSUMERS/CLIENTS

These terms are used interchangeably throughout this report to refer to individuals who are using the Carina platform to find caregivers to fulfill their authorized personal care hours.

CONSUMER DIRECT CARE NETWORK WASHINGTON (CDWA)

This organization is the consumer directed employer (CDE) for all individual providers in Washington State. CDWA oversees or manages a range of administrative tasks on behalf of the Department of Social and Health Services, such as background checks and payroll, among others.

CONSUMER-DIRECTION/SELF-DIRECTION

These terms are used interchangeably throughout this report to refer to the model of home care service delivery whereby consumers are directly responsible for recruiting and managing their own workers (rather than being supported by workers through a home care agency).

HOME CARE WORKER

This broad term encompasses paid caregivers who are employed by home care agencies and/or directly by consumers and family members.

INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER

This term is used in Washington State to describe home care workers who provide home care services to self-directing consumers (rather than being employed by a home care agency). Outside of Washington State, these workers are often described as “independent providers.” This report uses the terms “individual provider” and “worker” interchangeably.

MATCH

This term refers to a successful connection between a consumer and a worker facilitated by the Carina platform, whereby both parties have communicated and also, importantly, agreed to work together. The “match rate” is the percentage of successful matches confirmed by Carina users, relative to the total number of responses collected during attempts to match via job posts or direct messaging on the platform.

Executive Summary

Washington State is a national leader in self-direction, which is a model of home care delivery that promotes choice, control, and flexibility for home care consumers and the paid caregiving workforce. In Washington, as in many states, family members and friends provide the majority of paid supports through self-direction programs—but a substantial number of self-directing consumers must recruit caregivers from their broader communities. Matching service registries are an important resource for connecting these consumers with potential workers (known in Washington as “individual providers”)—and thus supporting quality matches, quality jobs, and quality care. Yet more evidence about the uptake and effectiveness of matching service registries is needed to inform their replication across states.

Carina aims to fill this knowledge gap. Carina is a nonprofit, web-based matching service platform guided by a vision of a care economy that strengthens communities by respecting and supporting workers, families, and people who need care and support. Carina has been operating statewide in Washington since 2018, thanks to partnerships with SEIU 775, the SEIU 775 Benefits Group, the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, and Consumer Direct Care Network Washington, and has since expanded into other states. In 2023, Carina contracted with PHI, a national organization dedicated to promoting quality jobs as the foundation of quality care, to conduct an independent evaluation of the platform in Washington State.

To conduct the evaluation, PHI used a mixed-methods approach that integrated statistical analyses of administrative and survey data with qualitative analyses of in-depth interviews. Through this analysis of Carina’s value and impact, we distilled six key themes pertaining to how Carina:

- 1. Attracts users for a range of reasons including choice, control, and convenience.**
- 2. Generates strong endorsement from individual providers and consumers.**
- 3. Promotes independent living and workforce retention.**
- 4. Facilitates a good “fit” between consumers and individual providers.**
- 5. Supports lasting caregiving relationships.**
- 6. Enhances job quality for individual providers.**

This report provides background information on self-direction and the role of matching service registries, describes the design and methods of the Carina evaluation study, and presents in detail the synthesized findings. The report ends by discussing five key takeaways for other states and localities that are considering matching service registries as a strategy for strengthening their self-direction programs and truly meeting the needs of those who direct their own services and the essential workforce that provides those services.

Introduction

Nationwide, more than 1.5 million individuals and families self-direct their own home care services through Medicaid waiver programs or state plans, the Veteran's Health Administration, and other publicly funded programs.¹ Premised on principles of choice, control, and flexibility, self-direction (also known as consumer-direction) supports individuals' overwhelming preference to age and receive services in place.² A key feature of self-direction programs, albeit with variation in the details across states and programs, is that consumers are able to select, manage, and dismiss their own home care workers, rather than relying on home care agencies.

Washington State is a national leader in self-direction. Nearly 61,000 individuals are enrolled in self-direction across the state, and a single "consumer directed employer" (namely, Consumer Direct Care Network Washington, or CDWA) manages key employment functions for approximately 46,000 paid caregivers who support them.³ As in many other states, family members and friends provide the majority of paid supports for self-directing consumers—indeed, an estimated 72 percent of Washington's "individual providers" (meaning individuals that are paid through self-direction) are family members.⁴ Conversely, 3 in 10 self-directing consumers in Washington State—and countless more individuals in self-direction programs around the country—carry the responsibility of recruiting individual providers from their broader communities.

Making the right match can be a daunting prospect for both self-directing consumers and individual providers, with critical implications for consumers' health and wellbeing and individual providers' economic stability and job quality. How do self-directing consumers find the individual providers that they need? And how do individual providers—non-family members seeking employment through the self-direction model—find clients?



INTRODUCTION

The Role of Matching Service Registries

Matching service registries are an important mechanism for connecting consumers and individual providers, and thereby potentially improving job quality as well as care access and quality. These online platforms vary in structure, but in all cases, they are designed to enable consumers to identify and contact nearby workers who offer the right mix of skills, experience, and availability—in turn enabling workers to find clients and build sustainable work schedules.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recognized the value of matching service registries in a 2023 bulletin that promoted promising practices and encouraged states to leverage enhanced federal funding to support their development and maintenance.⁵ Yet, there are currently only 11 statewide and nine regional matching service registries in operation across just 12 states⁶—and there is very little information available about their uptake and effectiveness. More evidence is needed to make the case for and guide the development of matching service registries in other states as well. To bridge this knowledge gap, the Carina matching service provider sought an independent evaluation of its impact in Washington State.

Introducing Carina

Carina is a non-profit, web-based platform that aims to enable home care workers to find good jobs providing the best possible care for Medicaid-funded, self-directing home care clients. Carina is guided by a vision of a care economy that strengthens communities by respecting and supporting workers, families, and people who need care.

Carina was first initiated in 2015 after the caregivers’ union, SEIU 775, had secured the

creation of a matching service platform benefit in their collective bargaining agreement in Washington State. The platform was launched in 2016 as a regional pilot and has been available statewide since mid-2018.

While this report focuses specifically on Carina’s matching service registry for individual providers and home care consumers in Washington State, Carina has also expanded in recent years into Oregon (for Medicaid consumers and individual providers) and New York State and King County, Washington (for non-Medicaid consumers).



EVALUATION AT A GLANCE

In 2023, Carina reach a milestone: five years of statewide operation in Washington State.

To assess their performance...

Carina contracted with PHI, a national organization dedicated to promoting quality jobs as the foundation of quality care, to conduct an independent evaluation of the platform’s value and impact for users.

Our mixed-methods evaluation found that...

individual providers and consumers choose to use Carina for a range of reasons and overwhelmingly recommend the platform; appreciate the quality of matches facilitated by Carina; and experience better job security and the ability to live independently (respectively) as a result.

INTRODUCTION

Partnership has been a guiding principle in Carina’s emergence and growth. In Washington State, Carina is managed in partnership with SEIU 775, the SEIU 775 Benefits Group, the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services, and Consumer Direct Care Network Washington, and is funded through a collective bargaining agreement between CDWA and SEIU 775. Union partnership ensures that individual providers using the Carina platform have access to union-rate wages and benefits. All partners help market Carina directly to workers, consumers, and families and raise awareness of the platform among community and advocacy organizations—and all partners are dedicated to ensuring quality jobs for workers and improving outcomes for home care clients.

Overview of This Evaluation

In 2023, after five years of statewide operation, Carina recognized a critical opportunity to evaluate the platform’s performance and thereby contribute to building the evidence base on the importance of matching service registries. To realize this opportunity, Carina contracted with PHI, a national organization dedicated to promoting quality jobs as the foundation of quality care, to conduct an independent evaluation of the platform in Washington State. The overall aim of the evaluation, which was conducted from February through August 2024, was to assess the value and impact of Carina for individual providers and self-directing consumers using the platform—looking beyond the number of matches made to the quality and longevity of those matches.

Among other findings, PHI found that individual providers and consumers choose to use Carina for a range of reasons and overwhelmingly recommend the platform; appreciate the quality of matches facilitated by Carina; and experience better job security and the ability to live independently (respectively) as a result. This report describes the evaluation methods and results, drawing out the significance and lessons learned for Carina and for states around the country that are struggling to support effective matches between consumers and individual providers in their growing self-direction programs.



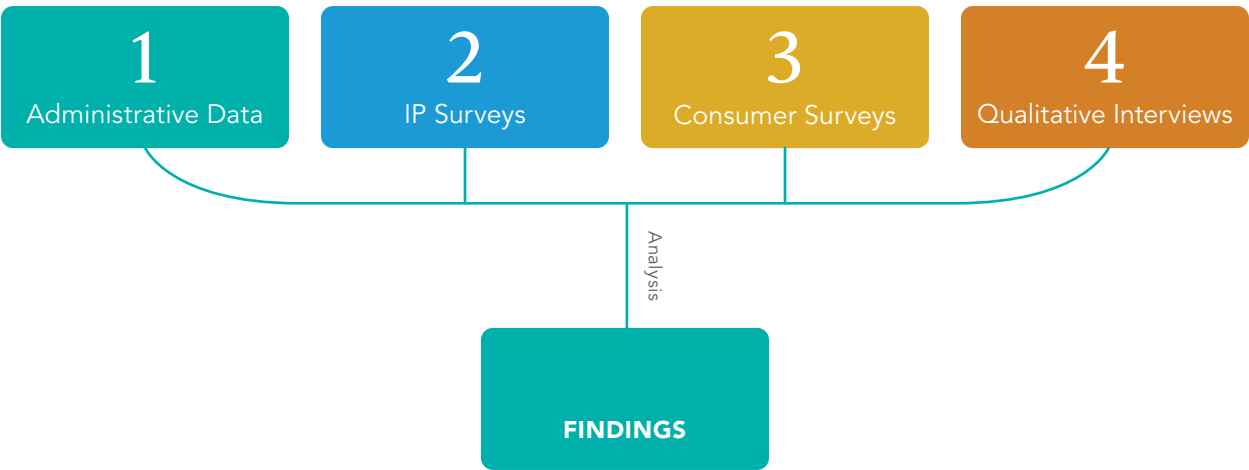


Methods

To conduct this study, we used a mixed-methods approach that integrated statistical analyses of administrative and survey data with thematic analyses of in-depth interviews. Through these methods, we focused on developing a nuanced understanding of the value and impact of the Carina platform for users. We did not aim to evaluate the specific technical features of the platform or users’ experiences thereof, nor the broader impact of Carina on workers’ economic status, overall workforce recruitment and retention outcomes, or care quality and access. While those are all valuable topics for exploration, they were outside the scope of this specific project.

DATA SOURCES

PHI drew on four data sources for this evaluation.



1. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

The first source was administrative data provided by Carina comprising: new user registration numbers; data on select worker demographics, location, and job preferences (including type of care, hours available, population served, and other preferences); data on job postings that included key client demographics, care needs, and worker preferences (such as gender and languages spoken); and data on the hiring outcome of each job posting and other interactions as reported by Carina users (via a “hiring survey”). Spanning Carina’s full history from 2016 (when it was first pilot-tested) through March 2024, these data reveal big-picture patterns in Carina users’ characteristics, preferences, and hiring outcomes. See Appendix I for details on Carina users and job postings from these data sets.

2. INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER SURVEYS

The second data source was survey data collected by PHI from individual providers from April through mid-May 2024. The survey was built by PHI in SurveyMonkey and distributed by Carina via text message and email to all individual providers who had ever successfully matched with a consumer on Carina. The survey asked respondents about their Carina matches, assessment of the value and impact of using the platform, reasons for using it, employment status overall, knowledge of Carina as a union benefit, and demographics.

3. CONSUMER SURVEYS

The third data source was a parallel survey sent to all consumers who had successfully matched with an individual provider through Carina; this link also reached their proxies in some cases (meaning family members or other individuals facilitating clients' use of Carina). The consumer survey covered many of the same topics as the worker survey, not including the employment-specific items. See Appendix II for survey domains and sample questions.

Individual providers and consumers who participated in a survey were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses and their freedom to opt out. All survey participants were offered a \$25 gift card for participating. The surveys were completed by 393 individual providers and 188 consumers in April through May 2024. See Appendix III for details on the sample for each survey.

4. QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

The final data source was a set of transcripts from 10 in-depth qualitative interviews that PHI conducted via video conferencing with individual providers who were recruited by Carina from across the state. Interview topics included respondents' caregiving history, how they found out about Carina, the quality of their matches through the platform, hours and wages, other employment experiences, perspectives on the union, and ideas for improving Carina, among other topics.

Data Analysis

First, PHI merged the Carina administrative data sets as needed and produced descriptive statistics on the number of registered users, the number and profile of individual providers using Carina, and the number and characteristics of job postings on the platform. We also examined the match rate overall and by year.

The Carina data included optional open-text responses (“hiring notes”) from both individual providers and clients in the hiring survey. We reviewed a random sample of 200 of these notes, which—due to randomization—included 84 responses about successful matches (i.e., interactions that resulted in an agreement to work together) and 114 responses about unsuccessful ones. These qualitative findings are incorporated into the thematic findings presented below.

For the survey data, we produced descriptive statistics using the R statistical software program.⁷ In parallel, we transcribed the in-depth interviews using Otter.ai transcription software⁸ and used a priori codes based on the interview questions to analyze the data and identify initial themes. Through an iterative process, the PHI research team then synthesized these quantitative and qualitative findings into a set of thematic findings about the value and impact of Carina.

Findings

This section presents the study results in detail, synthesizing the findings from all four data sources. Specifically, we show how the Carina platform:

- 1 **Attracts users for a range of reasons including choice, control, and convenience.**
- 2 **Generates strong endorsement from individual providers and consumers.**
- 3 **Promotes independent living and workforce retention.**
- 4 **Facilitates a good “fit” between consumers and individual providers.**
- 5 **Supports lasting caregiving relationships.**
- 6 **Enhances job quality for individual providers.**

FINDINGS

THEME 1

CARINA ATTRACTS USERS FOR A RANGE OF REASONS INCLUDING CHOICE, CONTROL, AND CONVENIENCE

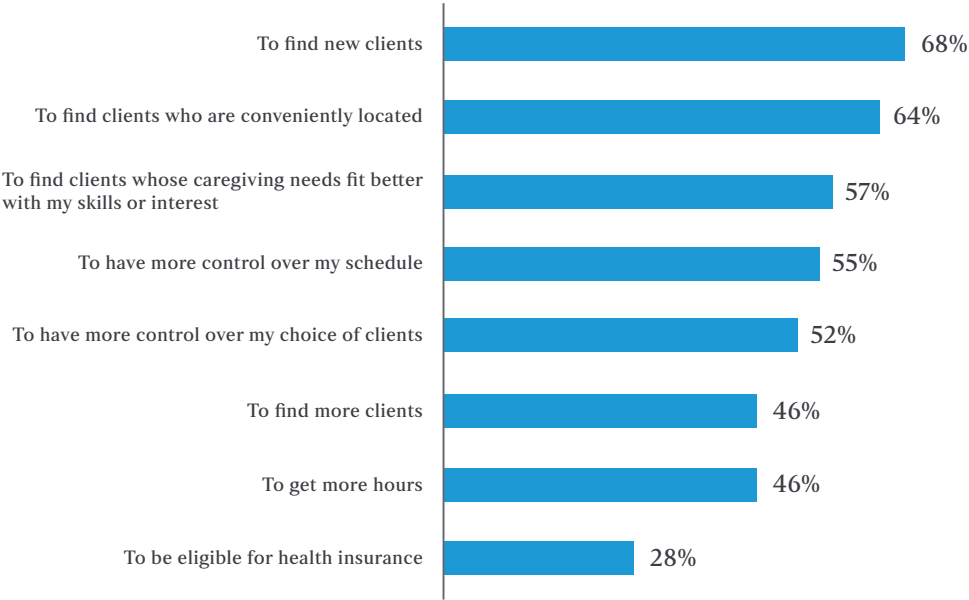
Individual providers decide to use Carina to find new or more clients, make better matches (especially in terms of location or schedule), and exercise more choice and control.

The top five reasons for choosing to use Carina, according to individual provider survey respondents, were to find new clients (68 percent), to find clients that are conveniently located (64 percent), to find clients that are a better fit with their interests and skills (57 percent), to have more control over their work schedules (55 percent), and to have more control over their choice of clients (52 percent). (See Figure 1.)

Notably, more than one-quarter of individual provider respondents (28 percent) reported that they choose to use Carina to be eligible for health insurance.

All individual providers in Washington State are eligible for medical and dental insurance for themselves (for \$25 per month) and their dependents (for \$100 more per month) as long as they work at least 80 hours each month. This finding indicates that arranging work through Carina helps these individual providers maintain essential health care coverage.

FIGURE 1: INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER SURVEY RESPONDENTS' REASONS FOR USING CARINA



Note: Respondents could select multiple reasons for using Carina.

Consumers report that they use Carina to find caregivers who can meet their specific scheduling and care needs and who are a better fit overall, as well as using the platform for speed and convenience.

The top five reasons for choosing to use Carina, according to consumer survey respondents, were to find a caregiver who can fill the days and hours of care they need (59 percent), to find a caregiver who can fill their specific care needs (52 percent), to find the best fit using the search and filter options (52 percent), to find a caregiver as quickly as possible (44 percent), and to be able to search for caregivers anytime (40 percent). (See Figure 2.)

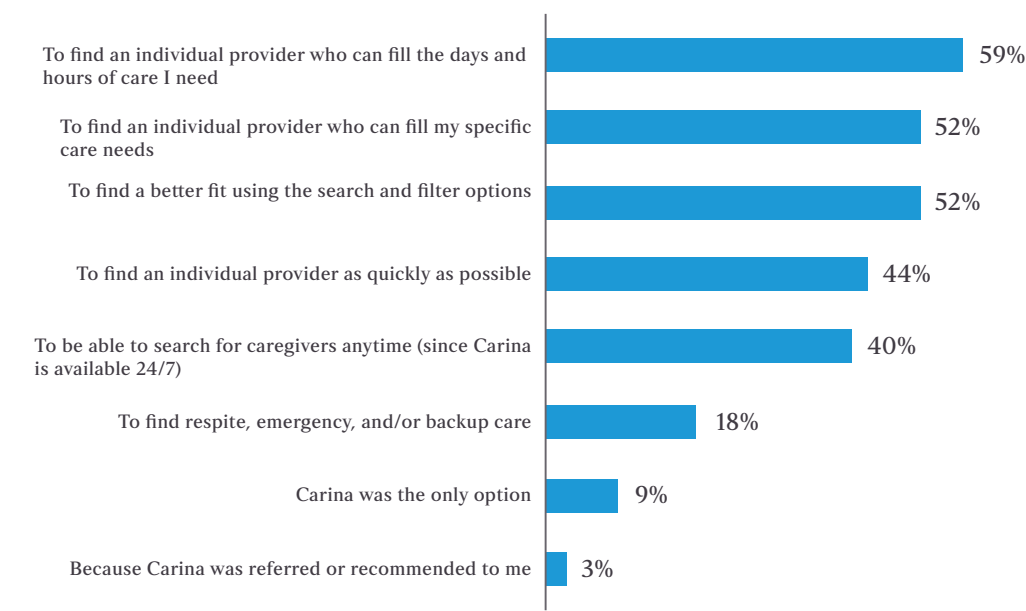
FINDINGS

Individual providers and consumers alike are primarily looking for routine work or care on Carina, underscoring the shared importance of finding quality, long-term matches.

Nearly two in three individual provider survey respondents (64 percent) reported looking for full-time work through Carina, while 57 percent reported seeking part-time work (respondents could choose more than one option, thus the percentages do not equal 100). Fourteen percent said they were looking to provide respite care,

and eleven percent noted that they were looking for one-off/short-term clients. In parallel, when asked specifically about what type of care they sought on Carina, the majority of clients (93 percent) reported using Carina to find ongoing care, while 25 percent noted a need for respite care and 12 percent sought emergency or back-up care. (These data are not presented in a figure.)

FIGURE 2: CONSUMER RESPONDENTS’ REASON FOR USING CARINA



Note: Respondents could select multiple reasons for using Carina.

SPOTLIGHT ON CARINA CAREGIVERS

Like many paid caregivers, individual providers using Carina are motivated to do this work by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

The majority of survey respondents (82 percent) reported that they chose to work as individual providers because they like caring for others—but the same proportions (82 percent in each case) indicated being able to both choose their own clients and set their own schedule as additional motivators. Two other most-frequently highlighted reasons were to be able to receive employment benefits (40 percent) and the favorability of the work location (40 percent).

The majority of individual providers responding to the survey indicated that caregiving is their primary job—but many identified working additional jobs to make ends meet.

In total, 87 percent of respondents reported that working as an individual provider was their main job, and 75 percent reported that it was their only job. Of the quarter of respondents who reported holding one or more additional jobs, the median hours worked in other jobs was 25 hours per week.



FINDINGS

THEME 2

CARINA GENERATES STRONG ENDORSEMENT FROM INDIVIDUAL PROVIDERS AND CONSUMERS

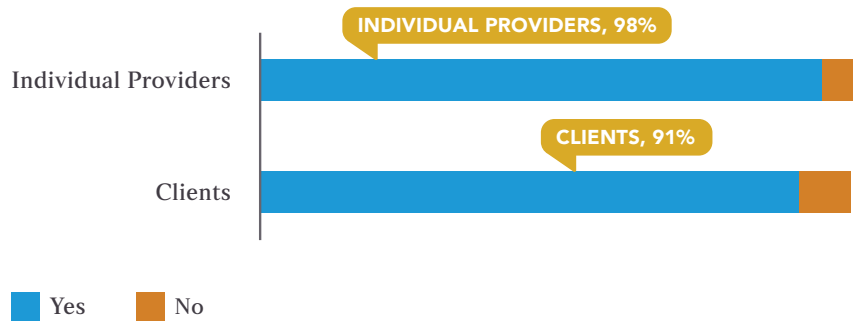
The vast majority of survey respondents said they would recommend using Carina overall, including 98 percent of individual providers and 91 percent of clients. (See Figure 3.)

As another indicator of endorsement, users also reported using Carina more than once: individual providers reported that they had worked with a median of three clients through Carina in total, though were working with a median of one Carina client currently; and clients reported working with a median of two individual providers in total and working with a median of one individual provider currently. A notable minority of clients (36 percent) reported that they had hired multiple caregivers for a single job posted on Carina.

IN THEIR WORDS

“It is a great service and has helped me. I have recommended to several people to sign up for Carina.”
- Individual provider survey respondent

FIGURE 3: WOULD YOU RECOMMEND CARINA?



IN THEIR WORDS

“I think Carina is the best option for finding a caregiver that is actually a good fit. It can take time, but it’s the best way I’ve found and I’ve tried a lot of different places.”
- Client survey respondent



IN THEIR WORDS

"My caregivers have truly allowed me to stay in my home and allow me to stay healthier and avoid hospital stays."

- Client survey respondent



In open-text survey responses, individual providers and clients elaborated many reasons for recommending Carina.

One individual provider summarized their recommendation as follows: *"I would recommend the Carina app if you want to find clients that best suit the type of care you desire to work in. It allows you to create your own schedule while also allowing you to choose what age group and service you feel most comfortable in."* Another said simply, *"Carina has helped me find many clients who best fit my schedule and interests!"*

In a comment on another part of the survey, an individual provider wrote the following summary of their experience with Carina, culminating in a positive recommendation: *"Carina has helped me gain two very good clients. Carina was able to tell me what kind of assistance was needed, where they are located, the hours that are available, and if they have a flexible schedule. I love the help that Carina has given me. Now I have a schedule that is perfect for my needs as well as the clients' needs. It lets me know if they need transportation and I can choose whether I want to use my vehicle or [the] client's vehicle. I would recommend using Carina to everyone. It has made my work schedule*

perfect to suit my needs."

On the client side, one survey respondent explained that they would recommend the platform because *"Carina makes it so easy to create a profile of specific needs for your loved one or yourself, to access care."* They went on to say, *"I also like knowing that the caregivers either have their [home care] certification or are in the process of getting it, which helps me feel more secure about who we hire."*

Another wrote, *"I'd highly recommend Carina because you can see a potential caregiver's strengths and weaknesses, preferences, and make arrangements that fit your schedule."* Among other positive recommendations, another client appreciated Carina's structure and process: *"You can contact them 24/7. They have a good set up. Email, then phone call, then in-home interview. This works well for me."* To note, many of the specific elements within these overall recommendations are drawn out further in Themes 3 and 4.

FINDINGS

THEME 3

CARINA PROMOTES INDEPENDENT LIVING AND
WORKFORCE RETENTION

The evaluation data confirmed that Carina is achieving its core purpose of connecting individuals who need care with individual workers who can provide it.

When asked about the value of Carina, 98 percent of individual providers and 88 percent of client respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Carina has helped them find new clients or new caregivers more easily (see Figure 4). Furthermore, 91 percent of individual providers agreed or strongly agreed that Carina has helped them keep working as individual providers, and 92 percent of consumers agreed or strongly agreed that Carina has helped them remain living at home, rather than move into a nursing home or other higher-level of care (see Figure 5). Survey and interview respondents echoed these claims in their comments. One individual provider said in their interview, “If I didn’t have [Carina], I don’t have any idea how I would find clients” and another said, “I don’t know how somebody would [work as an individual provider] without Carina.”

FIGURE 4: SURVEY RESPONDENTS
AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED
THAT CARINA HAS HELPED...



FIGURE 5: SURVEY RESPONDENTS
AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED
THAT CARINA HAS HELPED...



Individual providers explained how the ability to find new clients through Carina translates into better job security.

As one individual provider wrote in their survey, “Carina has helped me find a client who is absolutely amazing and has helped me to know I can always find a job.”

Another said, “There’s a certain amount of comfort knowing that I’d have a tool in my back pocket when I need to look for another client. I feel kind of rest assured that I’m not going to have any trouble finding another client if I needed to.”

A third said, “It was easy to narrow down a local area so that I did not have to change my regular commute for my primary client. New clients are always available and updated nearly daily. I can easily pick up new work if one of my clients were to terminate their services.”

Another simply said, “I feel like [Carina] gives me options.”



IN THEIR WORDS

“Without Carina, I honestly don’t know how anyone could find potential new clients... within the area we live.”

- Individual provider
survey respondent

FINDINGS

Individual providers also noted that Carina allows them to discontinue working with clients who are not a good fit, because they know they will be able to find another client. For example, one interview respondent described how they were able to transition easily from one employment situation to another: *"I called my caseworker, told my caseworker that I wasn't going to be with him no more and within three days later, I found another client."*

For clients, being able to find workers through Carina means maintaining independence at home.

In their open-ended comments on the survey, one client wrote, *"Because of the caregivers I get through Carina, I can live in my apartment, and I have help doing the things I can't do myself. It was easy to interview and choose the caregivers."* Another wrote, *"Our caregiver for my special needs daughter has made it possible to continue to have my daughter remain in home. They get along very well... She has been a godsend!"*

Underscoring the importance of independence, one client wrote, *"I also like that I don't have to worry about asking for help from neighbors, friends or relatives"* and another wrote, *"My safety has been more secure since finding a caregiver and my dependence on others has blossomed into semi-independence alongside my caregivers."* Hiring notes from clients echoed these comments; for example, one hiring note indicated that the client quickly found several caregivers through Carina to collectively meet their needs: *"We were able to quickly find caregivers that were willing to help. They met with us at the home and began working on a schedule to share between caregivers and their availabilities."*

Client survey comments also suggested that Carina has helped avoid short-term care gaps. For example, one client survey respondent wrote that *"Being able to filter a pool of caregivers to meet our needs has made it easier to find 3 caregivers within the last 2 years. This has allowed to have a back-up or when a caregiver is no longer available."*

Carina's success in matching clients with potential workers is impacted by the broader workforce shortage.

Several clients/family members commented in their surveys that the workforce shortage limits the number of workers available through Carina. For example, one respondent wrote, *"There needs to be more caretakers and the ability to find diverse caretakers with a wider variety of hours available"* and another said, *"Finding a qualified and dependable caregiver has been a challenge due to the shortage of caregivers in the workforce. Carina has made this process somewhat easier though."*

Individual providers also acknowledged that client need outpaces caregiver availability; for example, one worker wrote in their survey *"There's way more people that need help than there's help available, so I have the ultimate confidence I could sign on and find somebody if I wanted to."* These comments underscore that, although the caregiver shortage is a significant structural challenge, Carina is helping mitigate it by facilitating direct connections between workers and consumers.



IN THEIR WORDS

"I found a perfect fit after interviewing 4 people. Then hired her on the spot. She was perfect for my needs. I had a great experience with Carina."

- Client survey respondent

THEME 4
CARINA FACILITATES A GOOD "FIT" BETWEEN CONSUMERS AND INDIVIDUAL PROVIDERS

Beyond simply connecting clients and workers, Carina facilitates quality caregiving matches, defined in terms of "fit" regarding needs, preferences, skills, and availability.

In the surveys, 92 percent of individual providers and 87 percent of clients agreed or strongly agreed that Carina has helped them find a good match (see Figure 6).

Carina’s role in fostering quality matches was illustrated in many of the quotes included in the overall recommendations theme above (Theme 2). In the hiring notes, open-ended survey responses, and interview responses, Carina users further elaborated on the importance of finding a good "fit" in terms of personality, geography, hours and scheduling, and/or alignment between client needs and worker skills, among other factors.

A good fit relies on interpersonal compatibility, given the deeply personal nature of home care.

Individual providers and clients both underscored the importance of finding a good interpersonal fit. In the hiring notes, for example, one individual provider wrote this about her new client: "We met up [and] walked around. We hit it off and what a sweetheart!! I am so excited to get to work with her." Similarly, a client wrote about their new hire: "She is very friendly, very positive. I think she will be a great fit for me." Elaborating further, workers spoke in their interviews about clients who felt like "friends" or "family members," and used words like "comfortable" and "love" to describe successful matches. Others talked about finding a good fit based on common values or shared faith, and one interview respondent discussed how they built a personal connection with their client on the basis of shared life experiences.

FIGURE 6: SURVEY RESPONDENTS AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THAT CARINA HAS HELPED...



FINDINGS

Clients' survey comments emphasized the interconnectedness of interpersonal and caregiving skills, often linking both in the same response. For example, one survey respondent wrote *"I have found a caregiver that has met all the needs I was looking for time wise and emotional wise. We get along on a very good level. And I am very happy and proud to have her working for me."* Others wrote similar comments such as *"My caregiver's amazing! She takes exceptional care of me. We get along very well"* and *"Because of my caregiver I get help I need along with a great friend,"* and another simply said, *"Good fit, good care, thank you."*

Location is a primary consideration for individual providers.

Of particular benefit for individual providers is the ability to find a good fit based on location, as articulated by both survey and interview respondents. In the words of one survey respondent, *"... I take the bus, and it is so easy for me to get all the logistics done using Carina in my neighborhood and metropolitan area. I am even able to work for clients in Seattle. I love working with Carina and hope to be able to continue accessing them to find clients."* However, the ability to find a good fit geographically appears to vary by region in the state, with some individual providers indicating that they struggled to find clients in their local area. One interview

respondent offered an illustrative example: *"Most of my clients that I have found are in the Olympia area. So there's really not a wide variety of clients who are aware of Carina in places like Pecota."*

Clients also valued the ability to search for potential workers by location, while also recognizing that geography could be a barrier to accessing care. As one client wrote in their survey, *"I like the ability to look up caregivers close to my residence so it minimized the hassle of going thru the process to the point where the [worker] figured out that no way did they want to do the drive to my home. Not a big deal if you live in a major city. It is a big deal if you live in the boontoolies [rurally]."*

Having information in advance and the opportunity to meet for an interview are critical steps in the process of finding a good fit.

Both types of Carina users suggested that finding a good match depends on reviewing profiles *plus* meeting with prospective workers or clients for an interview. The following survey quotes from individual providers reflect this two-step screening and matching process: *"Having profiles to look through helps ensure I am able to message individuals needing the care I feel comfortable providing"; "Having such a variety of clients to choose from and being able to do phone interviews allowed me to get a glimpse*

IN THEIR WORDS

"It has been a lifesaver for me to find clients and get the type of client that works best for me, as well as being able to be a good fit for them."

- Individual provider
survey respondent



FINDINGS

into their life before choosing to work with them or not. Their profile has a big influence on who I even reach out to”; and “I get to meet them in person. We both interview each other to see if we are a good match. On Carina I put the hours and days I am available so they know ahead of time.”

In their in-depth interviews, many individual providers contrasted the Carina screening and interview process with their experiences working for home care agencies, whereby they would meet a client on the same day they started working together. In the words of one respondent: *“One big difference [is] I got to meet the clients before working with them, and with [an] agency, when they send you out you don’t know what to expect, right? ... That’s a big thing to me, because I always feel more comfortable in who I’m going to be working with.”*

Importantly, respondents shared that Carina also allows workers and consumers to avoid matches that may not be successful. As one interview respondent described her experiences: *“I did talk to a couple of women on the phone, and we never met in person because ... I didn’t feel like that was going to be a good fit. I did meet another gal over the phone and just, her attitude and the way she presented herself over the phone, I felt like this wasn’t going to be a good fit to even meet in person... I like being able to screen them over the phone.”*

Carina users have ideas about additional information that could support the screening and matching process.

In survey comments and interviews, respondents offered ideas about new profile filters or fields that could facilitate quicker and more successful matches. These ideas included more information on individual providers’ training and experience; an option for individual providers to indicate whether they have a driver’s license (*“because a lot of clients need transportation and I can’t drive”*); more details on clients’ conditions, particularly their behavioral needs; and a filter for finding hospice and end-of-life clients.

One survey respondent called for more space to communicate personal details in Carina profiles overall, as follows: *“I met my client within 24 hours of creating my profile and I have never been happier with my career. I will say that the limited amount of characters allowed on our profiles, makes it difficult to fully describe ourselves in a warm and personable way. Otherwise, I love your service and how it is allowing the connection of people in a safe and helpful platform.”*

WHAT IS CARINA’S MATCH RATE?

From September 2016 (when Carina was first pilot-tested) through March 2024, a total of 36,753 individuals have used the platform, including 20,779 individual providers; 15,917 consumers; and 57 assistive coordinators. Consumers and coordinators posted a total of 46,705 jobs on Carina during that time period. (See Appendix I for full profile data on individual providers and clients using Carina.)

How many interactions between consumers and potential workers on Carina led to a successful match? To assess this question, we calculated the percentage of successful matches reported by users from August 2018, when Carina launched statewide, through March 2024, the last month of data used in analysis, relative to the total number of responses users provided about the outcomes of their job postings and other interactions. In other words, the match rate reflects the number of user responses confirming a successful match (which was 10,523) divided by the total number of user responses about whether or not a match was made (which was 25,766), multiplied by 100.

The result: 40 percent of job postings and other interactions on Carina have resulted in a successful match—meaning, in each case, that both parties met and agreed to work together.

There is no industry definition or benchmark against which to compare Carina’s match rate. However, there are two reasons to interpret this 40 percent match rate in positive terms. First, Carina sets a high bar by... defining successful matches as employment agreements; the

FINDINGS

Carina shared that they regularly evaluate additions and modifications to the platform, balancing greater opportunities for individual self-expression in user profiles and job postings alongside compliance with minimum necessary standards for protecting individuals' personal health information (according to the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA).

Users' comments emphasized that finding a good fit can take time and perseverance.

Although the majority of comments were positive, it is important to note that survey and interview respondents also shared examples of *not* finding a good fit. Among other barriers to making a good match, respondents noted miscommunication, lack of follow-through, and misalignment in needs/skills, hours, location, role expectations, or other factors. For example, capturing several of these barriers, one worker wrote in their survey, *"I think Carina is wonderful to find clients; the problem for me was we don't have many information about clients and I had 10 interviews and I lost time because many of the clients, they are not familiar with video interview and most of time they don't give us accurate information about them and their needs."*

Another wrote, *"I find that 50 percent of the time that, if they contact me instead of me contacting them, they are at times not a good fit. But if I pick them carefully myself, I have a better chance of getting the right compatibility."* Speaking about mismatched role expectations, one interview respondent said, *"What certain clients expect has become unaligned with my job description."*

Several individual providers and clients referenced both successful and unsuccessful matching experiences; for example, one client respondent wrote, *"We have had mixed experiences. We had one caregiver we hired from Carina who we have had for YEARS and she has become like part of the family and we had another one who didn't last long."* Such examples further underscore the importance of having accurate information upfront and being able to screen prospective clients or workers in advance. However, they also emphasize that a good fit is not a guarantee; client and caregiver compatibility relies on a range of factors that may not all be evident in online profiles and postings. Being able to use Carina to screen for a good fit gives users agency in choosing their matches and provides the tools for making new matches, should existing matches not work out.

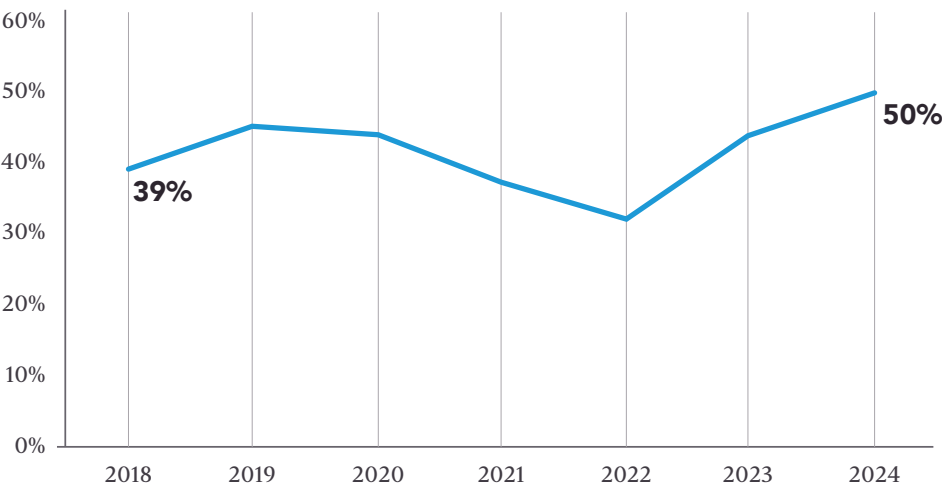
rate might be higher but far less meaningful if defined as the first point of interaction between a potential worker and consumer (i.e., after the first time they engage online, rather than after pre-screening and interviewing). Second, the rate aligns with the findings in Theme 4 above about Carina's role in facilitating quality matches—an outcome that in many cases requires screening several individuals before finding the right fit. If Carina aimed exclusively to connect clients and workers, without any attention to the quality of those connections, the match rate may again be higher—but users' experiences and the longevity of the matches would likely be lower.

We also assessed the match rate by year from August 2018 through March 2024, finding that the percentage of successful matches grew from 2018 to 2019, then decreased slightly from 2020 to 2021 and 2022 before increasing again to 44 percent in 2023 and up to 50 percent in early 2024. The decrease from 2020 to 2021 was likely driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a massive impact on service delivery across every care setting. The dip from 2021 to 2022 reflects a technical issue caused by the transition to CDWA as the consumer-directed employer of record for individual providers in Washington State (whereby a sub-set of job postings were reposted).

THEME 5
CARINA SUPPORTS LASTING CAREGIVING RELATIONSHIPS

A key indicator of the quality of matches is longevity, assuming that longer matches indicate a better fit between clients and individual providers than shorter matches. However, length of match may also be impacted by clients’ evolving health and care needs, individual providers’ scheduling needs and location, and many other factors. Therefore, rather than asking survey respondents to report their average match length (or to report how long every match lasted), we asked them to report their longest and shortest matches and to indicate why their longest matches had ended.

FIGURE 7: PERCENT OF CARINA INTERACTIONS RESULTING IN A SUCCESSFUL MATCH BY YEAR, AUGUST 2018 TO MARCH 2024



For workers, the median longest match was 12 months, but for nearly a quarter (24 percent) of respondents, the longest match lasted two years or more—indicating considerable longevity of matches across the sample.

One-third of individual providers reported that they were still working with their longest match. The median longest match among clients was 15 months, but 43 percent of clients indicated that they were still working with their longest match. Acknowledging that a minority of matches are for shorter-term caregiving needs, we also asked about the shortest match length. The median shortest match length was 61 days for workers and 60 days for clients.

The top reasons that their longest matches ended, according to individual providers, were that the

client passed away or needed a different level of care or different hours or scheduling (see Figure 8 for all reasons for the longest match ending). Among clients, the top reasons for the longest match ending were that their worker moved away or found another job, or they did not get along with their worker (see Figure 9). These responses affirm the range of factors that can impact the longevity of the match between a client and their caregiver, many of which are extrinsic (such as change of location or care needs). The smaller but still notable proportion of those selecting “did not get along” also underscores the importance of finding a good fit, as described in Theme 4—and being able to search for alternative options when a client or caregiver is not a good fit, as described in Theme 3.

FINDINGS

FIGURE 8: REASONS THAT LONGEST MATCH ENDED, ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL PROVIDERS

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.

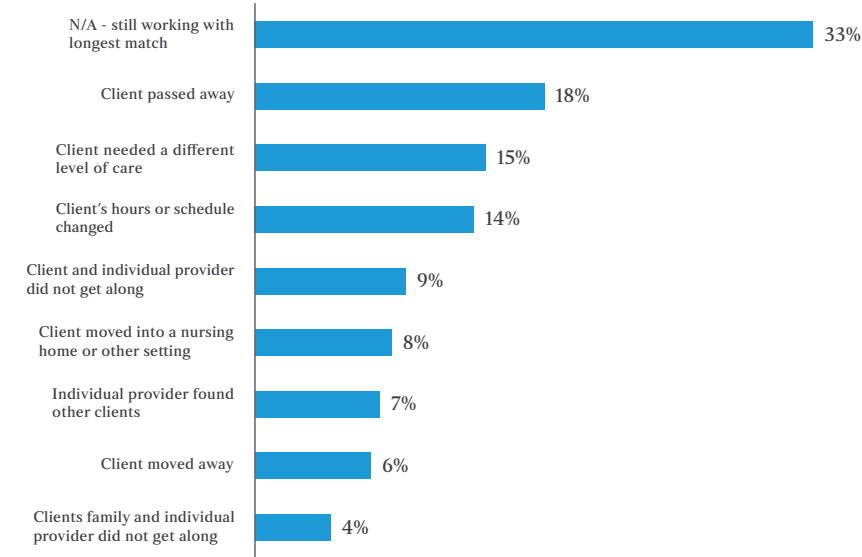
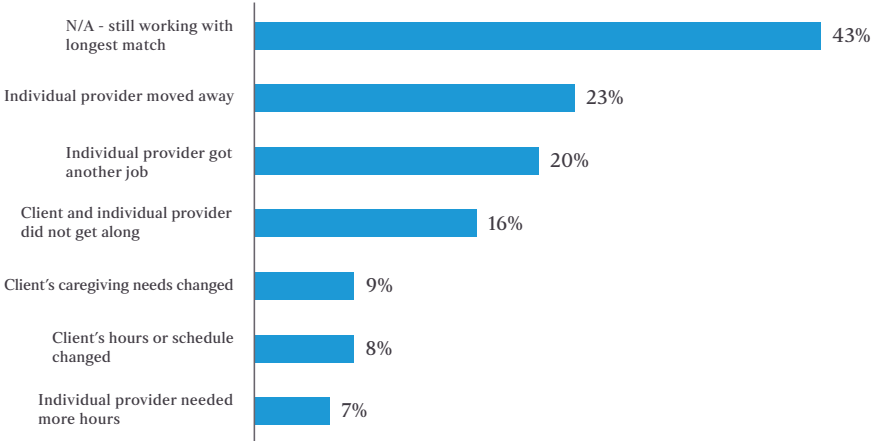


FIGURE 9: REASONS THAT LONGEST MATCH ENDED, ACCORDING TO CLIENTS

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.



IN THEIR WORDS

"I was able to find my caregiver through Carina based on her specific qualifications for my son with Autism. I interviewed her for 5 mins and knew she was perfect. We've had her for 6 years now!!! Thank you!!!"

- Client survey respondent

FINDINGS

THEME 6
CARINA ENHANCES JOB QUALITY FOR INDIVIDUAL PROVIDERS

Carina helps support better job quality for individual providers by enhancing their abilities to achieve sufficient hours and schedules.

A total of 9 in 10 individual provider survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Carina has helped them obtain their “ideal schedule,” while 84 percent agreed that Carina has helped reduce their travel time to or between clients and 82 percent agreed that Carina has helped them fill gaps in their hours or schedules. Moreover, 91 percent agreed or strongly agreed that using Carina has improved their job satisfaction as an individual provider. (See Figure 10.)

FIGURE 10: INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER SURVEY RESPONDENTS AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THAT CARINA HAS HELPED...

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.



IN THEIR WORDS

“Both my clients are perfect fits. They are both active older women with pets. They both are flexible when scheduling hours. I like that they have different total monthly hours because I am able to manage my weekly schedule of 40 hours.”

- Individual provider survey respondent

To note, it was not possible in this evaluation to directly ascertain whether Carina has stabilized or increased users’ incomes, specifically, given that we were not comparing pre-/post-data and because there are many other extraneous factors impacting income, including hours worked and use of public benefits, among others. However, we can infer that these other data points correlate with more stable if not enhanced income levels.

Positive comments about the value of Carina for achieving better schedules were echoed across the individual provider surveys and in-depth interviews. For example, one survey respondent wrote, “I like Carina because I can fill in extra hours or afternoons where needed. Also it allows me to find clients that I’m compatible to work with.” Another wrote, “I have a special needs child, which means I need a very flexible work schedule. Using Carina has allowed me to find one or two clients that fit my needs, working around my complicated life.” An interview respondent combined scheduling with employment benefits, convenience, and intrinsic value in their response: “I like that I’m able to make my own hours basically, and I’ve got two kids and I need to keep them insured. And I can work

IN THEIR WORDS

“It makes it very easy to find a good fit with hours and schedule ... I’m a new mom so I’m currently only working 80hr to make sure I get him insurance and Carina helped me find a client that fits my schedule and skill level.”

- Individual provider survey respondent

FINDINGS

close to home, and I enjoy being able to help people and impact life in a better way.” These findings underscore the value of Carina in helping individual providers maintain their eligibility for essential health coverage, which is a key reason given by more than a quarter of survey respondents for using Carina (as mentioned earlier).

Conversely, it is important to acknowledge that income precarity, which is a defining characteristic of home care jobs more broadly, remains a concern for the individual providers surveyed. Individual providers particularly highlighted the risk and implications of unplanned changes in their hours; for example, one interview respondent stated, *“My client could back away tomorrow and then I’m out of a paycheck for two weeks, if not longer.”* Similarly, an individual provider survey respondent said, *“Occasionally I have been ‘let go’ by the client, with no notice, for no specific reason i.e. ‘incompatible.’ Then it can take 2 weeks plus to find someone else and this can mean you don’t get your 80 hours and lose your health benefits.”* Although the Carina platform helps offset this precarity by helping workers find new clients and better schedules, it cannot avert the immediate impact of lost hours, income, and/or benefits.

Carina plays a key role in enhancing individual providers’ job control and autonomy, as revealed by survey and interview comments.

For example, one survey respondent stated that they *“didn’t feel forced to have [a] caregiver [who was] not compatible since they weren’t sent to me by agency”* and another wrote *“I do like screening my own clients. I have asthma and allergies. I have [to] be mindful of the environment I work in.”*

Another survey respondent underscored that having more control leads to better matches (Theme 4), in contrast to their experience working for a home care agency: *“I get to choose who to work for, and together with the client we come to an agreement on what kind of care should be given. Sometimes working for an agency, I felt pressured ... Being independent, I can tell the client at our meet & greet my concerns & we can come up with a solution or maybe they can look for another caregiver.”* Similarly, another said *“Carina has given me the opportunity to choose who I want to work with as opposed to being assigned a client that may not be a good fit.”*

To note, individual providers using Carina also highlighted the risks associated with job autonomy, echoing the well-documented risks experienced by home care workers overall.⁹ For example, referring to the process of interviewing and working with clients, one interview respondent said, *“You don’t have support. You don’t have anybody that you can talk to; you don’t have anybody but your client.”* Relatedly, interview respondents described concerns about their safety when caring for challenging clients. While suggesting an opportunity to consider what additional information and safeguards Carina may be able to offer, these concerns speak primarily to the broader risks and isolation faced by home care workers that require systemic attention and solutions.



Discussion and Conclusion

The Carina matching service registry is a non-profit, online platform designed to connect self-directing home care consumers with potential home care workers (known as “individual providers”). By facilitating quality, long-lasting matches, Carina aims to support good jobs for individual providers—characterized by sufficient hours, stable incomes, and job control—as well as quality care for consumers. Without a resource like Carina, the challenges of finding care and finding good jobs fall squarely on the shoulders of individuals, at great potential cost to those individuals, their communities, the health and long-term care system, and the economy overall.

Is Carina achieving this aim? To help answer this question, Carina contracted with PHI to conduct an independent mixed-methods evaluation of the value and impact of Carina in Washington State, where the platform has been operational statewide since 2018. The results were strongly positive, as described in this report.

We found that individual providers and consumers are using Carina for a range of reasons and that they overwhelmingly endorse the value of the platform—with more than 9 in 10 survey respondents recommending Carina to others. The survey and interview results also confirmed that Carina is fulfilling its primary goal of connecting individual providers and consumers, such that consumers can remain living independently at home and workers can stay in this workforce.

Going further, the results showed that Carina facilitates quality matches, defined in terms of “fit” and longevity, with many matches lasting two years or more. Finally, we found that Carina is helping to enhance job quality for individual providers, primarily by enabling them to build more stable and sufficient schedules, to access health insurance, and to exercise more control over their jobs.

In summary, the findings from this evaluation indicate that matching service registries like Carina are a valued and valuable mechanism for connecting home care workers and clients and facilitating quality matches. Future research should delve further into the economic impact of Carina for workers themselves, clients and their families, their local communities, and the long-term care system—in other words, to what extent do matching registries measurably increase workers’ wages and spending power and/or save other costs associated with recruitment, turnover, and unmet needs? In addition, more research on the technical specifications of matching service registries and users’ experiences could help inform ongoing improvements and replication efforts.

Extrapolating from the findings of this study, we offer the following five takeaways for other states and localities considering matching service registries as a key strategy for building and strengthening their self-direction programs.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

HONOR THE CAREGIVING RELATIONSHIP

The findings from this study indicate that Carina’s success is anchored in recognition of the importance of the relationship between home care workers and consumers.¹⁰ This complex relationship is deeply personal, relying on intrinsic interpersonal compatibility supported by effective communication and problem-solving skills. The relationship also depends on alignment between consumers’ care needs and preferences and their workers’ technical knowledge and skills, each person’s scheduling requirements, and a range of other extrinsic factors. By providing the opportunity for users to create personalized profiles and job postings and connect with each other online before meeting virtually or in person, Carina creates the conditions for more successful, long-lasting caregiving relationships.

ENGAGE ALL PARTNERS IN THE VISION

The findings in this study indicate the importance of engaging all relevant partners in the caregiving ecosystem when developing a successful matching service registry. As noted in the Introduction, Carina is managed in collaboration with SEIU 775, the SEIU 775 Benefits Group, the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, and Consumer Direct Care Network Washington. In addition, Carina engages individual workers and consumers, workforce development and policy experts, and others to inform and oversee the platform. Through this robust engagement, Carina has developed a network of knowledgeable partners who have helped ensure the relevance, promotion, uptake, and ongoing improvement of the platform.

PROACTIVELY BUILD THE MARKET TO REACH CRITICAL MASS

Matching service registries require sufficient participation to succeed; in other words, the most well-designed platform will not improve jobs or access to care if too few people use it. While further research is needed to better understand the full impact of Carina’s current coverage (as well as expansion opportunities), Carina does appear to have garnered a critical mass of participation in terms of number and geographic reach—through its partnership network and by devoting equal attention to the supply (workforce) and demand (consumer) sides of the caregiving equation. Other states should carefully consider how to get the word out and build the market for participation in their matching service registries—as ways to ensure that these efforts reach the necessary scale to be effective for independent providers and consumers alike.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

GROUND THE MATCHING SERVICE REGISTRY IN BROADER SYSTEMS CHANGE

It is critical to recognize, as highlighted throughout this report, that matching service registries represent just one component of the broader strategy that is needed to support quality home care jobs and ensure a stable, sustainable workforce to meet growing demand. Carina is clearly helping individual providers find clients and build the hours and schedules that they need, with maintaining health insurance eligibility a key priority. But the findings confirmed that workers still face considerable precarity in their jobs, with any unexpected changes in their hours or caseload directly impacting their income and access to benefits. Washington State leads the nation in efforts to address the broader structural conditions that produce and perpetuate these job quality challenges for home care workers. However, there is still much work to be done in this state and every state—including but extending well beyond matching service registries—to ensure that home care workers are sufficiently trained, compensated, supported, and recognized.

EVALUATE, IMPROVE, AND EDUCATE

As indicated by this commissioned evaluation and the multiple existing data sets that informed it, Carina is committed to collecting data, assessing progress, and using evidence to drive improvements and expansion. This commitment appears to reflect a genuine investment in improving the lived experience of users and driving systems-level improvements in Washington State. Other states can follow Carina’s example by putting data collection and monitoring systems in place to assess the success of their platforms and make adjustments as needed—and in turn, help build collective knowledge in the field about how to build and scale matching service registries as an important mechanism for supporting quality home care jobs and quality care.



Appendix I: Profile of Carina Users

TABLE 1: CARINA DATA SET INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

		COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Female	15,737	76%
	Male	2,001	10%
	Prefer not to say	3,017	15%
Monthly work hours available for those reporting "available"	Median	100	
Monthly work hours available for those reporting "available soon"	Median	80	
Preferred client gender	Female	4,979	25%
	Male	454	2%
	No preference	14,727	73%
Language(s), top 10	English	16,946	95.4%
	Spanish	2,123	12.0%
	Russian	739	4.2%
	Ukrainian	362	2.0%
	ASL	242	1.4%
	Tagalog	163	0.9%
	Vietnamese	118	0.7%
	Arabic	106	0.6%
	Hindi	90	0.5%
	Mandarin	87	0.5%
Client age group(s) (select all that apply)	Child	9,728	47%
	Adult	16,631	80%
	Older Adult	15,626	75%
Caregiving type(s) (select all that apply)	Emergency	5,307	26%
	Respite	10,316	50%
	Routine	16,725	80%
Support type(s) (select all that apply)	Addictions and/or mental health	2,424	12%
	Behavioral needs	2,763	13%
	Developmental disability	11,813	57%
	General home care	17,264	83%
	Physical disability	4,068	20%

TABLE 2: CARINA DATA SET CLIENT JOB POSTS DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

		COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Female	28,004	63%
	Male	16,381	37%
	Prefer not to say	364	1%
Monthly work hours needed	Median	68	
Preferred client gender	Female	28,218	61%
	Male	1,780	4%
	No preference	16,568	36%
Preferred worker language, top 10	English	45,314	97%
	Spanish	1,384	3.0%
	ASL	348	0.7%
	Russian	328	0.7%
	Vietnamese	132	0.3%
	Punjabi	116	0.2%
	Hindi	109	0.2%
	Tagalog	97	0.2%
	Arabic	91	0.2%
	Ukrainian	75	0.2%
Age group	Child	5,558	12%
	Adult	29,575	63%
	Older Adult	11,630	25%
Frequence of care	Emergency	574	1%
	Respite	3,795	8%
	Routine	42,352	91%
Support type	Addictions and/or mental health	532	1%
	Behavioral needs	1,328	3%
	Developmental disability	11,570	25%
	General home care	35,486	76%
	Physical disability	4,526	10%

Appendix II: Survey Domains and Sample Questions

TABLE 3: SURVEY DOMAINS AND SAMPLE QUESTIONS

DOMAIN	NUMBER OF ITEMS	SAMPLE ITEM
Number of Clients/Caregivers	2	Individual Provider: "How many different clients have you met and started working with through Carina?" Client: "How many total caregivers have you successfully found through Carina?"
Value and Impact of Using Carina	8 (Individual Provider); 7 (Client)	"Using Carina helps (or helped) me find good matches with clients/caregivers. ('Good matches' means a good fit with my skills and availability)."
Length of Carina Matches	3	"Thinking about all the clients/caregivers you have found through Carina, what is the longest time you have worked with a client/caregiver you found through Carina? (This could be your current client/caregiver or a previous client/caregiver, if applicable.)"
Types of Jobs Posted on Carina (Client Only)	2	"What type of jobs do you usually post on Carina?"
Reasons for Using Carina	2 (Individual Provider); 1 (Client)	"Why did you choose to use Carina?"
Accessing Carina	1	"What kind of device do you use to access Carina?"
Recommend Carina	2	"Would you recommend using Carina to other individual providers/individuals with caregiving needs?"
Union Benefit	1	"Did you know that the Carina platform is a benefit that is provided through the collective bargaining agreement between Consumer Direct of Washington and SEIU 775 (the Washington Home Care Workers' Union)?"
Reasons for Working as an IP (IP Only)	1	"Please tell us the reasons why you work as an individual provider."
Family Caregiver (IP Only)	1	"Have you ever worked as a paid family caregiver (meaning, have you been paid to support a member of your own family)?"
Occupation/ Employment Status (IP Only)	5	"Do you hold any other jobs?"
Demographics	7	"How old are you currently?"

Appendix III: Characteristics of Interview and Survey Respondents

TABLE 4: INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

		COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Female	314	86%
	Male	27	7%
	More than one gender/gender non-conforming	8	2%
	Non-binary	2	1%
	Transgender	2	1%
	Prefer not to say	14	4%
Age	Median	48	
Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply)	Black/African American	18	5%
	Asian/Asian American	13	4%
	White	239	66%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	1%
	American Indian/Indigenous/Alaskan Native	8	2%
	Hispanic or Latinx	26	7%
	Other	24	7%
	Prefer not to say	30	8%
Immigrants	Born in the U.S.	301	82%
	Immigrant worker	48	13%
	Prefer not to say	17	5%
Geography	Large city	84	23%
	Suburb	54	15%
	Small city or town	137	38%
	Rural Area	73	20%
	Other	2	0.01%
	Prefer not to say	12	0.3%
Education	Some high school; no diploma	19	5%
	High school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED, HiSET)	81	22%
	Credential or certification (e.g., CNA)	46	12%
	Some college (incl. vocational/tech/trade school)	113	31%
	Associate’s degree	50	14%
	4-year college degree	35	9%
	Postgraduate degree	11	3%
	Prefer not to say	14	4%

TABLE 5: CONSUMER SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

		COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Female	126	71%
	Male	41	23%
	Non-binary	2	1%
	Transgender	1	1%
	More than one gender/gender non-conforming	2	1%
	Prefer not to say	5	3%
Age	Median	59	
Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply)	Black/African American	5	3%
	Asian/Asian American	3	2%
	White	134	78%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0%
	American Indian/Indigenous/Alaskan Native	8	5%
	Hispanic or Latinx	8	5%
	Other	7	4%
	Prefer not to say	7	4%
Immigrants	Born in the U.S.	162	93%
	Immigrant worker	8	5%
	Prefer not to say	5	3%
Geography	Large city	28	16%
	Suburb	36	20%
	Small city or town	85	48%
	Rural Area	23	13%
	Other	3	2%
	Prefer not to say	3	2%
Education	Some high school; no diploma	9	5%
	High school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED, HISET)	18	10%
	Credential or certification (e.g., CNA)	5	3%
	Some college (incl. vocational/tech/trade school)	66	38%
	Associate's degree	20	12%
	4-year college degree	27	16%
	Postgraduate degree	20	12%
	Prefer not to say	8	5%

TABLE 6: INTERVIEW RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS (N=9)

		COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Age Range	24-58 Years Old (Median = 47 Years)		
Gender	Female	8	89%
Race/Ethnicity	White	8	89%
	Hispanic or Latinx	3	33%
Immigrants	Born in the U.S.	8	89%
Geography	Large city	2	22%
	Suburb	1	11%
	Small city or town	3	33%
	Rural Area	3	33%
Education	Some high school; no diploma	1	11%
	Credential or certification (e.g., CNA)	2	22%
	Some college (incl. vocational/tech/trade school)	2	22%
	Associate’s degree	3	33%
	4-year college degree	1	11%

Note: Of the 10 individual providers who participated in interviews, nine provided their demographic data. Hence the total count for this table is nine rather than 10.

Notes

¹ Murray, Kate, Molly Morris, Merle Edwards-Orr, Mark Sciegaj, and Brendan Flinn. 2024. *National Inventory of Self-Directed Long-Term Services and Supports Programs For the 2023 AARP LTSS State Scorecard*. Washington DC: AARP Public Policy Institute. <https://ltsschoices.aarp.org/resources-and-practices/national-inventory-of-self-directed-long-term-services-and-supports-programs>.

² According to a 2021 AARP report, more than three-quarters of adults age 50 and over want to stay in their homes as they age. Binette, Joanne and Fanni Farago. 2021. *Where We Live, Where We Age: Trends in Home and Community Preferences*. Washington DC: AARP Public Policy Institute. <https://livablecommunities.aarpinternational.org/#:~:text=TREND%3A%20High%20numbers%20of%20Americans,needed%20to%20make%20that%20possible>.

³ Murray et al., 2024; Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Accessed November 15, 2024. "Washington's Consumer Directed Employer." <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/home-and-community-services/consumer-directed-employer-clients>.

⁴ Rector, Bea, Washington State Department of Social & Health Services. 2024. "Evolving Service Population." Webinar presented to SEIU 775 Benefits Group on February 7, 2024. Also note that Washington State uses the term "individual providers," but the term "independent providers" is also used across states.

⁵ Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Center for Medicaid & CHIP Services (CMCS). 2023. "CMCS Informational Bulletin: Development and Maintenance of Direct Support Worker Registries: Benefits of Utilization and Enhanced Federal Funding Availability." https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-12/cib12122023_0.pdf

⁶ PHI. "Matching Services Registries." Accessed October 1, 2024. <https://www.phinational.org/advocacy/matching-service-registries/>

⁷ R. *The R Project for Statistical Computing*. Accessed October 1, 2024. <https://www.r-project.org/>

⁸ Otter.ai. Accessed October 1, 2024. <https://otter.ai/home>

⁹ Quinn, M. M., Markkanen, P. K., Galligan, C. J., Sama, S. R., Lindberg, J. E., and Edwards, M. F. 2021. "Healthy aging requires a healthy home care workforce: the occupational safety and health of home care aides." *Current Environmental Health Reports*, 8(3), 235-244.

¹⁰ Campbell, Stephen, Angelina Del Rio Drake, Robert Espinoza, and Kezia Scales. 2021. *Caring for the Future: The Power and Potential of America's Direct Care Workforce*. New York, NY: PHI. <https://www.phinational.org/caringforthefuture/>

¹¹ PHI. 2020. *The 5 Pillars of Direct Care Job Quality*. New York, NY: PHI. <https://www.phinational.org/resource/the-5-pillars-of-direct-care-job-quality/>; H-CAP. "Good Jobs Measures." Accessed November 7, 2024. <https://www.hcapinc.org/center-for-equity-good-jobs-measures>.

About PHI

PHI is a national organization committed to strengthening the direct care workforce by producing robust research and analysis, leading federal and state advocacy initiatives, and designing groundbreaking workforce interventions and models. For more than 30 years, we have brought a 360-degree perspective on the long-term care sector to our evidenceinformed strategies.

As the nation's leading authority on the direct care workforce, PHI promotes quality direct care jobs as the foundation for quality care.

[Visit PHInational.org](https://PHInational.org)

- Learn about our consulting services, policy research, advocacy, and public education
- Scroll through our library of studies, policy reports, and multimedia resources
- Visit the Direct Care Worker Equity Institute, the Direct Care Worker State Index, and the National Direct Care Workforce Resource Center
- Download national and state-by-state data on the direct care workforce
- Meet the workers in the National Direct Care Worker Story Project
- Bookmark our newsroom for the latest news and opinion: PHInational.org/news
- Read about the latest federal and state policy developments for direct care workers

Acknowledgements: Warm thanks and appreciation to all the home care consumers and individual providers using Carina who shared their experiences and insights through surveys and interviews.

Authors: Kezia Scales, PhD; Lina Stepick, PhD; Jessica King, PhD

Suggested citation: Scales, Kezia, Lina Stepick, and Jessica King. 2025. Making the Right Match: Evaluation of the Carina Matching Service Registry in Washington State's Self-Directed Home Care Program. New York, NY and Seattle, WA: PHI and Carina.



261 Madison Avenue, Suite 913
New York, NY 10016

Phone: 718.402.7766

Email: info@PHInational.org

