

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Developing Matching Service and Respite Registries

This guide offers seven evidence-informed considerations for building or enhancing matching service and respite registries for the benefit of consumers, families, and independent providers (i.e., paid caregivers). For each of these considerations, the guide provides a brief explanation and several specific strategies, each illustrated by real-world examples.

WHAT IS A MATCHING SERVICE REGISTRY?

Matching service registries are online resources that connect independent providers with consumers and family caregivers. Most registries enable independent providers to create profiles that are searchable on the basis of geography, skills, experience, availability, and other factors, and some registries also allow consumers/family caregivers to post specific jobs. Some matching service registries cover a range of home care service types, while some are specific to respite care.

1 Aims and Objectives

Setting clear aims and objectives ensures that a registry meets the needs of consumers/family caregivers and independent providers, while also meeting other organizational or system goals. All subsequent development and design considerations tie back to these aims.

- ESTABLISH A REGISTRY TO SUPPORT A BROADER PUBLIC INITIATIVE
  - *Example in action:* Wisconsin's WisCaregiver Connections registry was established to boost Certified Direct Care Professional (CDCP) training and certification and match newly certified workers with paid care jobs.
- ESTABLISH A REGISTRY TO FULFILL AN UNMET NEED
  - *Example in action:* Carina, a matching service registry that operates in Washington State and Oregon, was created through a union bargaining agreement to help workers find additional hours and increase their earnings and improve consumers' access to care.

2 User Eligibility

Registry leaders can make different decisions about user eligibility depending on their goals, policy environment, and program rules. These decisions can affect the size of the registry and the range of worker/employer matches, as well as impacting cost and financing.

- EXPLORE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR BOTH INDEPENDENT PROVIDERS AND AGENCY PROVIDERS
  - *Examples in action:* Five respite registries (in Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, New York, and Wisconsin) profiled by PHI require independent respite providers to complete the National Respite Care Provider Training before joining the registry.
- CONSIDER EMPLOYER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
  - *Example in action:* QuickMatch, a matching service registry that serves Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in a number of states, allows both Medicaid and private-paying consumers—but not agency employers—to use the registry to find and hire workers, in line with CILs' emphasis on consumer choice and autonomy.

3 Costs and Financing

Registries need consistent funding to launch and operate. Keeping the registry current (i.e., communicating regularly with users; deleting users and posts that are no longer active) has been identified as a particularly important cost consideration. Registry leaders can ensure financial viability in various ways, including by sharing costs with other registry subscribers, creating cost efficiencies in design and operation, and braiding together different funding sources, including state funds that are earmarked to cover subscription costs for certain users.

- ASSESS THE COSTS OF DIFFERENT REGISTRY DESIGNS
  - *Examples in action:* Existing subscription-based registries such as Direct Care Careers, QuickMatch, and Rewarding Work can be launched in new markets with lower upfront investment than custom-built registries.
- HARNESS DIVERSE FUNDING SOURCES
  - *Example in action:* This Informational Bulletin from the Center for Medicaid & CHIP Services (CMCS) describes how states can leverage enhanced federal financial participation funds to finance registry development and maintenance; registries may also draw on Lifespan Respite grant funds, workforce development dollars, and other sources of funding.

HOW MUCH DOES A REGISTRY COST?

The costs for building and maintaining a matching service or respite-specific registry vary widely according to the different considerations and decisions outlined in this brief—including with regards to designing a new registry versus subscribing to an existing platform, staffing and user support, marketing strategies, data analysis and evaluation, the size and scope of the registry, and much more. Here are the estimated start-up and maintenance costs of two respite registries, as just two examples:

- Costs for other states to host a registry on the platform used by the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin are estimated to start at $15,000, with variation based on the extent of automation, languages used, and other decisions. Beyond this one-time fee, the monthly subscription costs would be $450 a month.
- The New Mexico Respite Provider Registry cost an estimated $10,000 to build and is maintained at $450 per year.

4 Partnerships

Partnerships—including with providers, consumers, workforce development programs, community colleges and universities, technology vendors, state agencies, managed care organizations, unions, elected officials, and others—are critical to registry success.

- LEARN FROM EXISTING REGISTRIES
  - *Example in action:* The New York State Caregiving and Respite Coalition contracted with the University of Nebraska to build a respite registry from the digital platform used by the Nebraska Resource and Referral System.
- ENGAGE LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT WORKERS AND CONSUMERS
  - *Example in action:* SEIU 775, which represents direct care workers in Washington State, bargained for the development of a matching service registry (Carina) as a member benefit, alongside health insurance, retirement, and training.

5 Design

Safe, user-friendly registry design features help workers and consumers make successful matches and build lasting relationships. Key design considerations include search and filter options, communication tools, and accessibility features, as well as mechanisms to keep registry information current.

- BUILD FEATURES THAT SECURE LASTING MATCHES
  - *Examples in action:* All registries allow independent providers to create profiles and allow consumers to review them, but some registries also allow consumers to post jobs that workers can search and apply for. Worker profiles and job postings are often set to expire (or are deleted) after a set period of time unless they are manually renewed.
- PROTECT WORKER AND CONSUMER PRIVACY AND SAFETY, INCLUDING POTENTIALLY THROUGH BACKGROUND AND CERTIFICATION CHECKS
  - *Examples in action:* Carina, Direct Care Careers, the Mass PCA Directory, and Rewarding Work all allow users to message each other internally without having to exchange personal contact information before a match is made.
  - *Examples in action:* Carina, Nebraska Resource and Referral System, and the State of Montana Aging and Disability Resource Center require background checks for individuals posted on their registry.

- PRIORITIZE ACCESSIBILITY
  - *Examples in action:* The Illinois Respite Coalition, New Mexico Respite Provider Registry, and the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin make their registries available in English and Spanish.

- ADD LIABILITY AND DISCLAIMER LANGUAGE (IF APPROPRIATE)
  - *Example in action:* The Respite Care Association of Wisconsin outlines legal liability language and terms and conditions of use for its registry.

6 Marketing and Promotion

Even with limited budgets, marketing and promotion are essential to registry uptake and success. Growing the user base and balancing the number of workers and consumers to ensure a critical mass of users makes a registry more effective.

- DISSEMINATE REGISTRY INFORMATION THROUGH RELEVANT PROGRAMS
  - *Examples in action:* Some registries market themselves to consumers through Medicaid case managers and/or Aging and Disability Resource Centers.

- PURSUE VARIED MARKETING STRATEGIES
  - *Example in action:* Staff from WisCaregiver Connections attend job fairs to connect face-to-face with prospective workers, as well as advertise their registry in newspapers in more rural areas.

7 Evaluation

Data collection and evaluation are important for assessing a registry's progress toward its goals and identifying areas for improvement. Evaluation efforts may include capturing and monitoring key data metrics, obtaining qualitative user feedback, and/or engaging external evaluators.

- TRACK AND EVALUATE DATA THROUGH THE REGISTRY
  - *Example in action:* Nebraska's Department of Human Services created a data dashboard that tracks registry users by type and region, which allows assessment of progress toward annual growth goals and monitoring of geographic spread to inform outreach efforts.

- IMPLEMENT USER SURVEYS AND OTHER FEEDBACK CHANNELS
  - *Example in action:* Carina regularly surveys registry users and conducts in-depth interviews with consumers to gather their feedback.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- For more information, guidance, and specific examples, please see the full report: Matching Up: Seven Considerations for Impactful Matching Service and Respite Registries.
- For summaries of all the matching service and respite registries profiled in this research, please see PHI's online Matching Service Registries resource.
- For more information on the National Respite Care Provider Training (NRCPT), please see the replication toolkit here.

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NASHP | NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR STATE HEALTH POLICY

261 Madison Avenue, Suite 913, New York, NY 10016
Phone: 718.402.7766 · Email: info@PHInational.org · PHInational.org