

DHS Integrated Service Portal & Link App

Helping housing insecure individuals access services through ease of access, standardization, and real-time capacity measurements

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Challenges: Navigating the Network

Roger is our “disheveled man” from the DHS family



Facing eviction, Roger is trying to find immediate housing.

but the search on brings up more questions

“When do Section-8 waiting lists open again?”

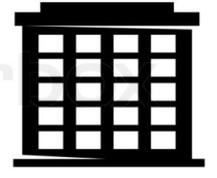
“PSH, RRH, Safe haven, drop-in centers, Housing Choice voucher. What are these?”

“Do I apply for affordable housing through Allegheny County Housing Authority or the Housing Authority of Pittsburgh? What’s the difference?”

“Is there availability? Am I eligible?”



Housing Authority of Pittsburgh



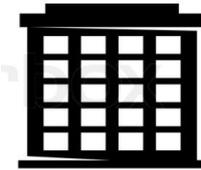
Department Housing and Urban Development



Shelter system



Drop-in Center



Allegheny County Housing Authority

Challenges: Navigating the Network

He also wants to find help for this girlfriend's increasing drug use and home health assistance for his mother.

but ran into similar obstacles



“When does the next rehab spot open up?”

“These agencies are giving me the runaround. I’m being referred from one place to another.”

“What does my mother need to be eligible for home healthcare services? It doesn’t say on the website.”



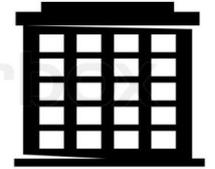
Bayada Home Health Care



Allegheny County Network



Bethlehem Haven Clinic



Healthcare at Home

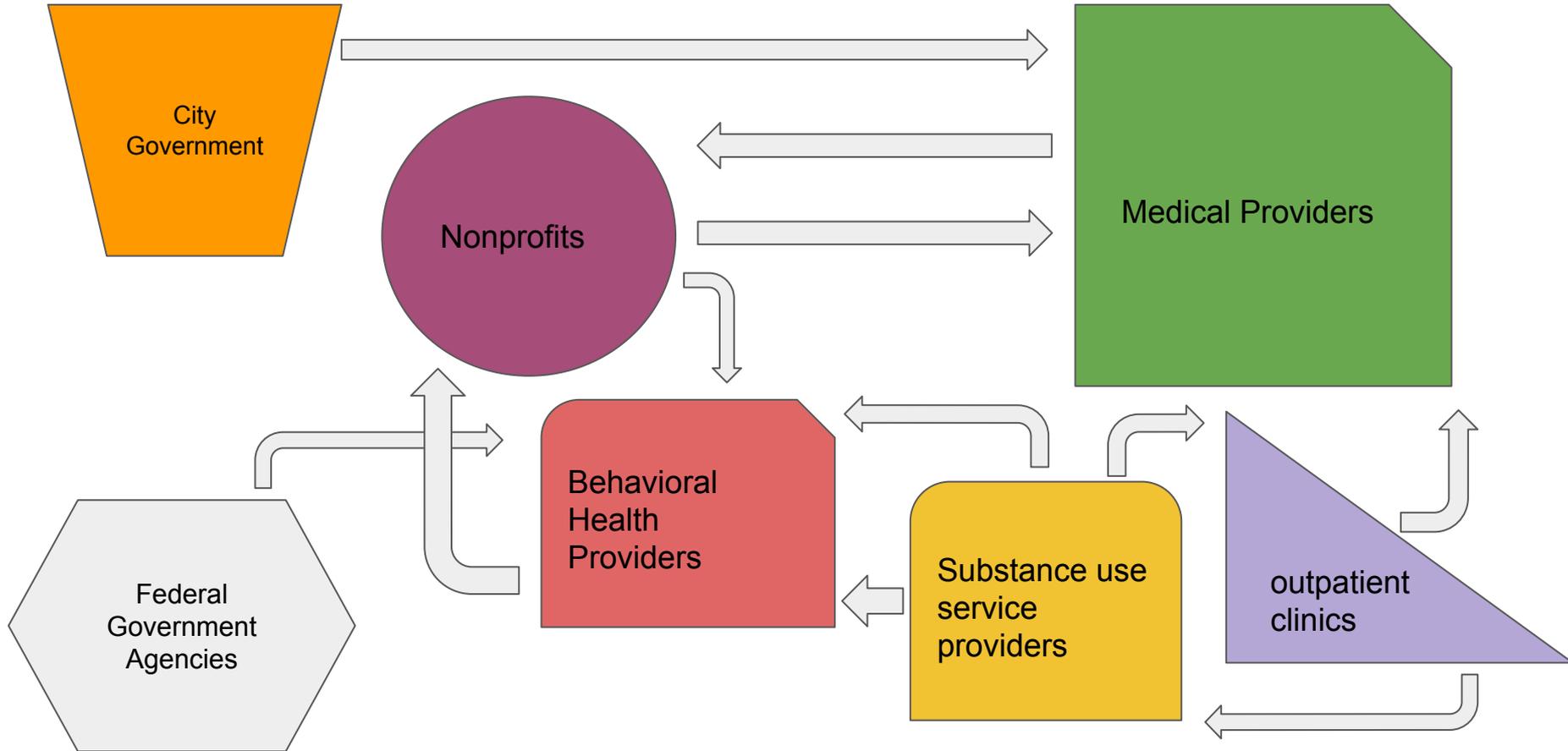


Inpatient drug rehab



Central Resource and Referral Center

Fragmented Communication System



Challenges

To assist unstably-housed households such as Roger's, Allegheny County has a social service network of more than 120 programs.

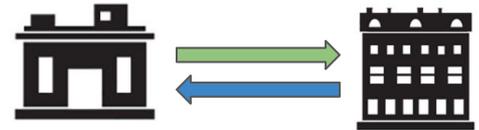
- Various funding sources
- Different target populations
- Varying and (sometimes) changing eligibility requirements
- Different Program Priorities



Navigating System



Knowing Available Services



Inter-agency communication

Service Gaps

A complex and fragmented services network causes gaps in services and care

i. “One-touch” services

- Only addressing acute problem
- What about precipitating factors?

ii. Falling out of care

iii. Service Recidivism



Comparing to the DHS Vision...

“To create an accessible, culturally competent, integrated and comprehensive human services system that ensures individually tailored, seamless and holistic services to Allegheny County residents, in particular, the county’s vulnerable populations.”

The Solution

What if the client's experience of seeking housing could be as accessible, streamlined, and individually tailored as using their favorite app to choose a restaurant?

Analogous Inspiration from NoWait and Yelp



1. Discover and Decide

Search "Waitlist" to browse restaurants in your area and find wait times that fit your schedule before leaving the house. Thousands of restaurants use NoWait and we're adding more each and every day.



2. Join the List

Don't waste time standing in a crowded lobby. Add yourself to a waitlist with a single tap right from your phone. Add yourself to the waitlist right from your phone. Check your place in line so you know exactly when your party will be seated.



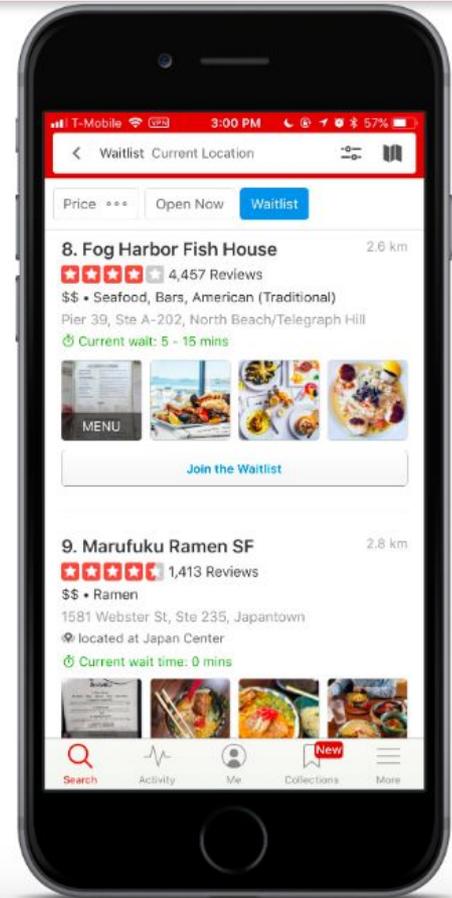
3. Come On In

We'll notify you when a text as soon as your table is ready. When you walk up to the host stand, you can walk right to your table.



4. Rate Your Experience

Write a review to help restaurants provide the best experience possible.



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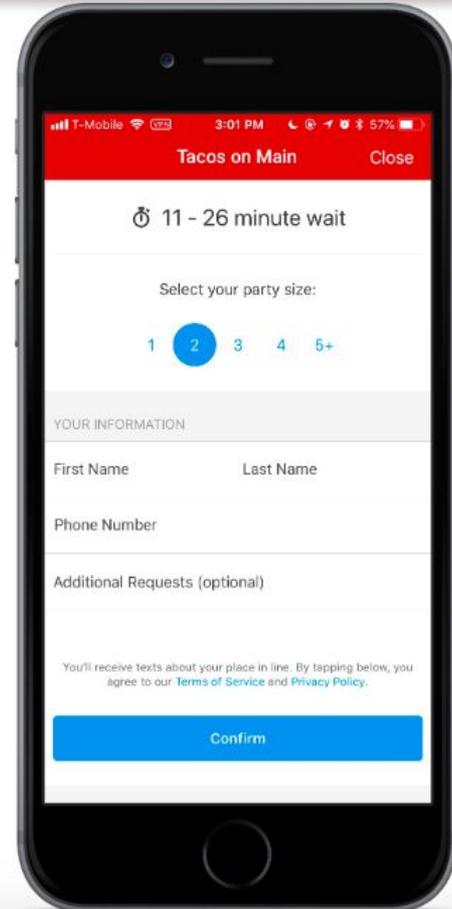
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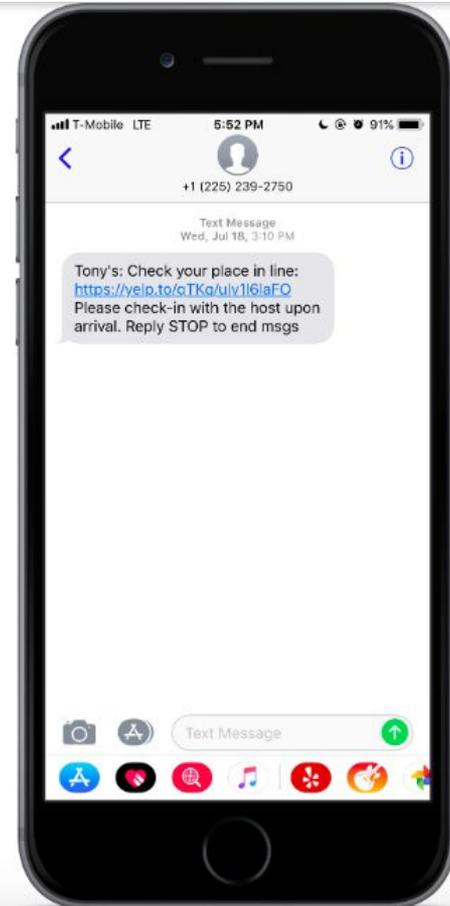
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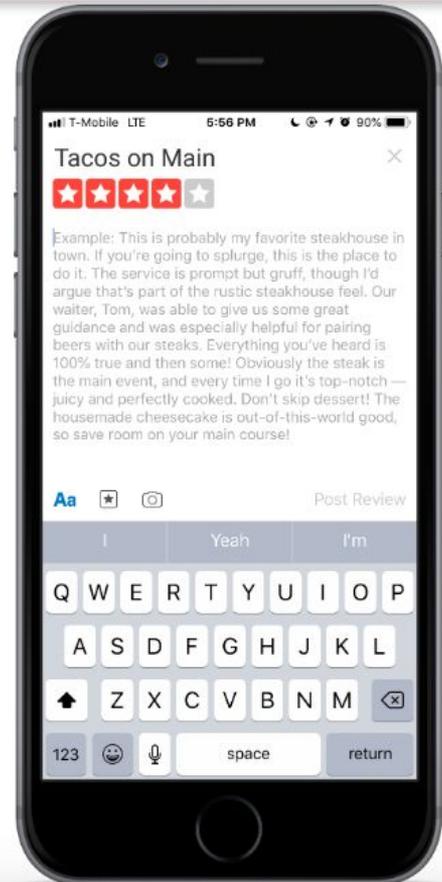
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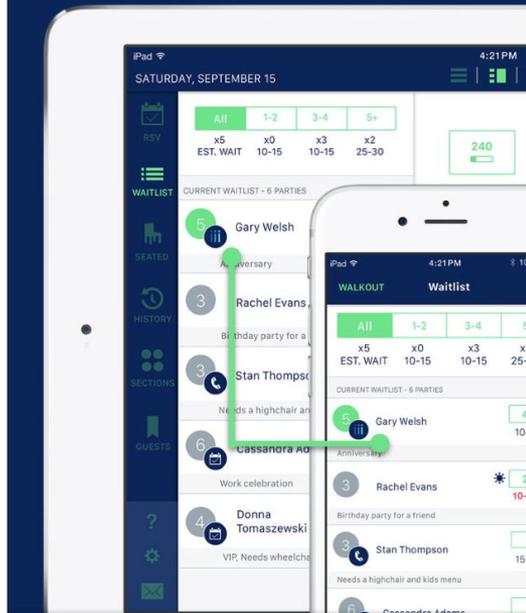
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Analogous Inspiration: NoWait and Yelp

USE MULTIPLE DEVICES



Devices sync in real time

ANALYTICS GENERATED DAILY

WAIT LIST STATISTICS

Start Date: Tuesday, 01/05/16 End Date: Friday, 02/05/16 [Update](#)

Data grouping:

AUTO

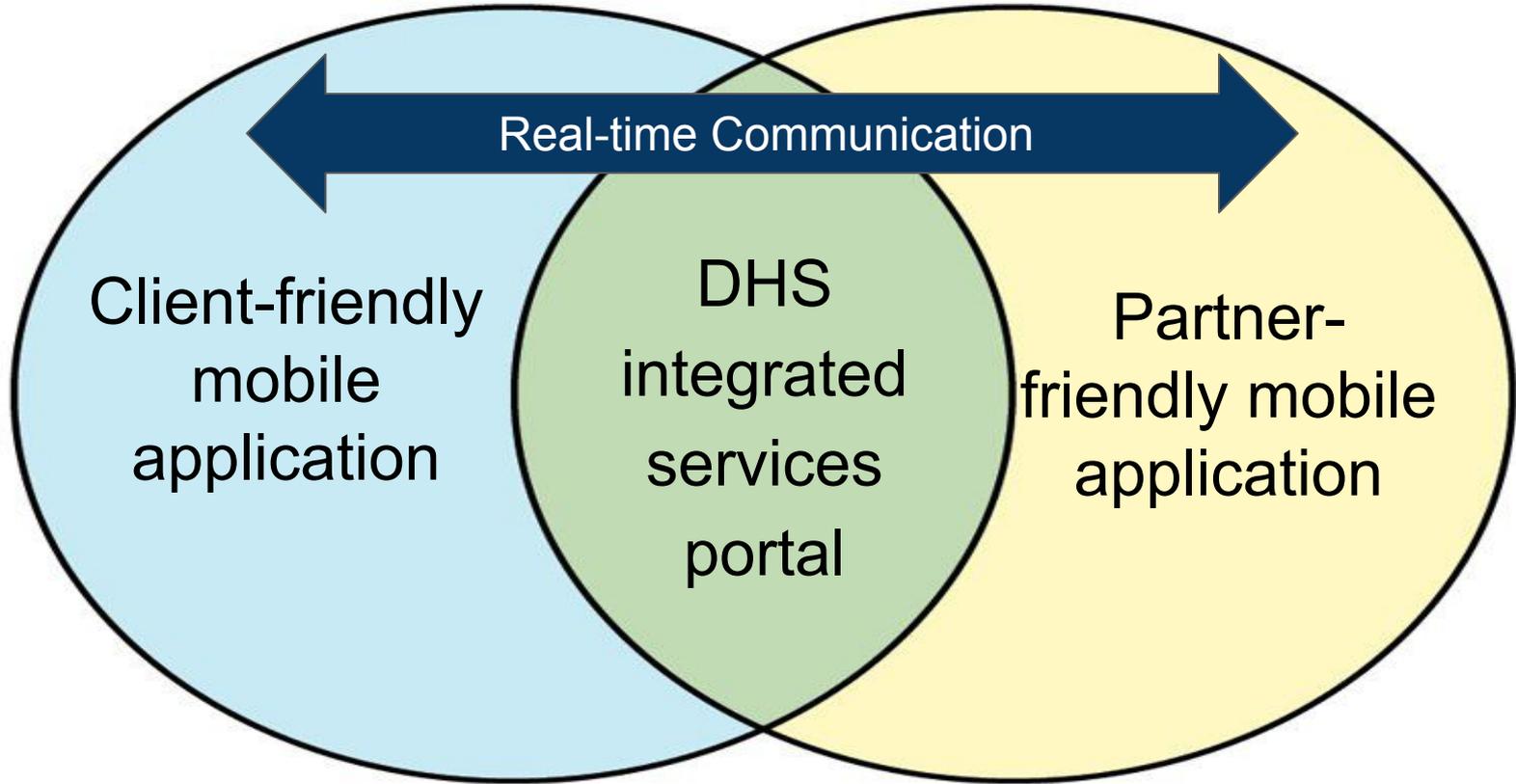
DAY VS. DAY

WEEK

Restaurant Volume ?



The Solution



The Link App

Screen 1: General intake form

- Self-completed
- Standardized interactive intake form
- Information is stored centrally so client does not have to fill out same information over and over
 - Trauma-informed



The Link App

Screen 2: Need Selection

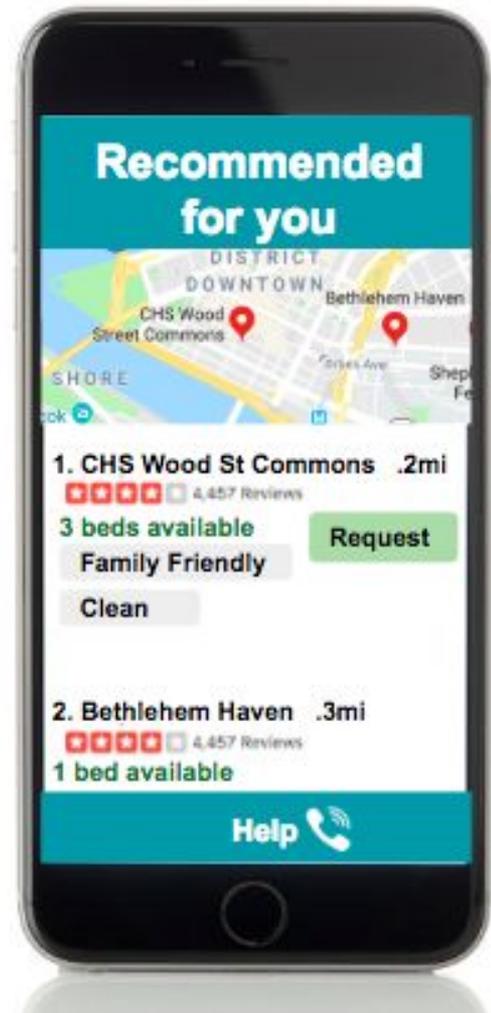
- Client selects their primary needs



The Link App

Screen 3: Browse and Decide

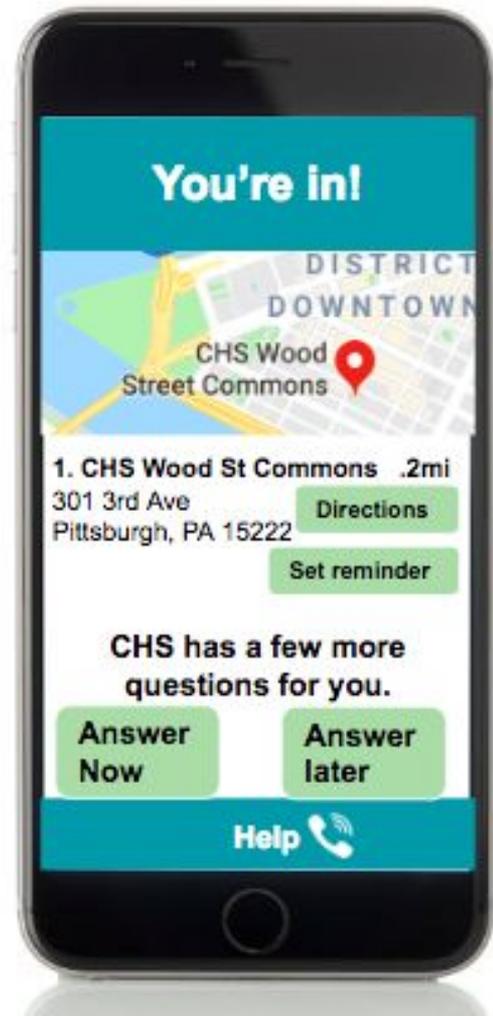
- Client exercises their own choice based on:
 - real-time bed capacity information
 - personal preferences
 - optimized search results



The Link App

Screen 4: Booking Confirmation

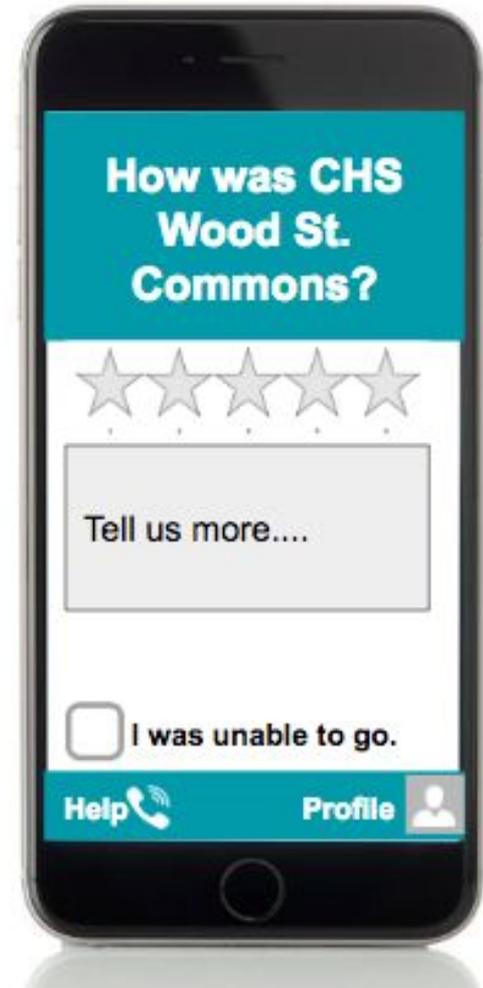
- Provides helpful options such as directions and reminder notifications to encourage clients to follow through
- Option to enter more partner-specific intake information
 - Stores and auto populates future forms
 - Document scan and upload feature



The Link App

Screen 4: Closing the Loop and Gathering Feedback

- Next time client opens the app, they are prompted to report feedback
 - Empowers client
 - Gives DHS valuable performance data
- All previously entered intake information and documentation is stored under Profile
 - Trauma-informed
 - Easily shared between partners
 - Client can update
 - Providers can upload client documents
 - Continuum of Care



Budget

Initial cost estimate is \$55,200 based on the [howmuchtomakeanapp.com](https://www.howmuchtomakeanapp.com).

The ongoing cost of portal maintenance and organizing could be around \$12,000 a year based on [cooldata.com](https://www.cooldata.com)'s conservative estimate of a mid-sized data warehouse.

Your app estimate

\$55,200

[Hide Breakdown](#)



Do you need an app icon?

No [\(Change\)](#)



How nice should your app look?

Stock [\(Change\)](#)



Does your app need to connect with your website?

Yes [\(Change\)](#)



Do people rate or review things?

Yes [\(Change\)](#)



How will you make money from your app?

Free [\(Change\)](#)



Do people create personal profiles?

Yes [\(Change\)](#)



Do people have to login?

Email [\(Change\)](#)



What type of app are you building?

Apple iOS and Android [\(Change\)](#)

Challenges and Solutions

Challenge	Solution
Partner adoption and buy-in	DHS mandate; appeal to shared vision
High initial cost	Offset by future cost-savings; apply for grants
Client hesitancy to provide information	Minimize required information
Maintaining security of confidential client information	TPS encryption; extend same level of care as in current operational databases
Making potential clients aware of the app	Coordinated campaign to market app especially at first point of contact with government
Limitations of machines	Gradual rollout and extensive testing by experienced professionals
Access to smartphones	Caseworker retains ability to assist; portal available online

Implementation Timeline

Pilot

- Develop app
- 100% of housing partners adopt
- Training
- Raise awareness
- Seek partner and client feedback

Building

- Expand app to other partner areas: addiction, mental health, etc.
- Improve accuracy of wait time estimates
- Improve partner and client experience

Complete Service Integration

- Build database capabilities
- Optimize resource allocation
- Predictive analytics
- Integrated referrals
- Data-sharing between agencies
- Multiple Languages
- Accessible to individuals with disabilities

Short Term



Long Term

Impacts

- Improve accessibility of social services for clients
- Empowers clients to self-navigate and select services
- Close gaps in service between agencies and promotes wrap-around and comprehensive services.
- Facilitates communication between clients and service providers
- Reduces staff time fielding program eligibility and availability inquiries.
 - Results in cost savings for DHS
- Better integrates various services throughout Allegheny County.
- Increases number of clients we can help, as well as allows DHS to create a holistic experience.



Questions?