



Case Study

Helping Hands Orillia

Bridging the gap with technology
and partnership



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Everybody in health care and within community and social support services are really challenged right now with human resources.”



— **Doug Rawson**, *Executive Director,*
Helping Hands Orillia

Based in Orillia, Ontario, Canada, Helping Hands is a not-for-profit organization that provides care and support services for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Established in 1978 and funded by the Ontario government, Helping Hands has been offering essential services such as home support, transportation, and Meals on Wheels to the Orillia community for five decades. The organization is committed to supporting people in need, empowering them to live with dignity and independence, and improving their quality of life.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Doug Rawson, Helping Hands has grown to become a crucial resource in the Orillia community, serving over 1,400 clients annually. The organization has also expanded its services to include a caregiver support group, a wellness program, and an adult

day program that provides respite for caregivers while enhancing the physical, social, and cognitive well-being of their loved ones. With a team of 55 staff and over 200 volunteers, Helping Hands is dedicated to providing compassionate care and support to its clients and their families.

Helping Hands partnered with AlayaCare to enhance its service delivery and improve the quality of care for its clients, and the staff had a positive experience with AlayaCare from the start – even though they had barely begun to scratch the surface of AlayaCare’s power, and weren’t using it to its full potential. It was an age-old problem that prompted Helping Hands to ask their AlayaCare success partner for help in bridging the gap.



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Technologically smart” —Addressing a common concern for health and social services organizations.

— Doug Rawson,
*Executive Director,
Helping Hands Orillia*

Like most healthcare and social services organizations, Helping Hands consistently faces human resource challenges. As the demand for their vital services grew, they were finding it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of their clients with the resources available. They needed to bridge the gap while still providing the personal touch clients need.

One simple but significant issue: client reminder calls. Staff were spending upwards of 50 hours a week on this task alone, reminding clients of upcoming events like doctor's appointments or home visits. A necessary task, this was nevertheless too much time spent on too little added value. Helping Hands decided to get laser-focused on the time spent making reminder calls, hoping they could free up time for higher value work.

Mr. Rawson reached out to AlayaCare for advice, and with the help of their success partner, they found that the AlayaCare Connector could potentially meet their need. Since AlayaCare Connector can automate reminders with a variety of contact methods from text to email to phone calls, it seemed the perfect solution for reigning in the reminder workload.

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One of the core drivers of our strategic plan is being technologically smart,” says Mr. Rawson.



Meeting clients where they are

Most Helping Hands clients are seniors without access to smartphones, computers, or the internet. When surveyed, they weren't interested in access to services via new technology – so text message and email reminders were out. Helping Hands clients need calls.

But as it turns out, after briefly setting expectations, clients had no problem with “robocalls”. Luckily, AlayaCare Connector can automate calls using pre-recorded scripts and schedule calls for the day before appointments. Helping Hands was able to work with clients to understand their needs and work with their AlayaCare success manager to quickly adjust those communications methods based on feedback like “I didn't get the full message” by implementing repeats.

Now clients expect to get automated calls, and not only are reminders more consistent and less time-consuming, that reliability has reduced inbound call volume at the office as well.

“

We're able to refocus our number of 50 hours of manual labor towards other key deliverables to meet and exceed the needs of our community.”

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Our clients are happy, our staff are happy and I'm happy...”





Surprising success

After only two weeks, AlayaCare Connector was up and running. Time to noticeable results? **A day.**

In fact, over the initial test run Helping Hands was able to eliminate 50 hours per week of manual labor and simultaneously improve documentation dramatically, since AlayaCare Connector places a journal entry inside every client's chart when calls go out.

That's a big deal for an organization with too much to do and too few people to do it. Expecting to reduce reminder call workload, they were surprised to find that Connector didn't just reduce that work – it eliminated it entirely. Says Executive Director Rawnsen, "Within a week we weren't even really paying attention or watching what we used to do. We literally had free time that we could refocus on other things."



Now they can refocus on bigger, more impactful priorities, which promises to improve their services across the board. The launch of automated reminder calls was eye-opening for Helping Hands, to say the least. Immediately, they started looking for the next game-changing improvement they could make with AlayaCare.

“...it wasn't weeks, it was the next day...”



A bright future

Helping Hands' automated reminder call project was a wild success. AlayaCare Connector exceeded expectations and did it in short order (under two weeks from initial conversation to implementation). Clients have been happy, the staff is happy, and Mr. Rawson is thrilled about the opportunity to refocus those 50 hours a week of labor. But this isn't the end of the story for Helping Hands and AlayaCare. In fact, it's just the beginning. Now, Helping Hands is excited to find out what else AlayaCare can do, and they're committed to learning to leverage AlayaCare's full potential.

Next, they'll be tackling improved measurement and reporting, a key task for determining what's working – and they won't be stopping there. Mr. Rawson hopes to engage their AlayaCare success partner on billing, invoicing, and even staff scheduling after that. They hadn't even considered those areas when they first came on with AlayaCare, but after their success in addressing the client reminder time sink, Mr. Rawson and the staff at Helping Hands are ready to take AlayaCare to the next level and supercharge their level of service.

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Without that partnership with our account manager AlayaCare none of this would be possible.”





The X factor: Partnership

At AlayaCare, we pride ourselves on the partnerships we build with our customers – it’s what sets us apart. To hear executive director Doug Rawson talk, it’s clear that AlayaCare is a product he believes in, but the software itself is only the tip of the iceberg. For Doug, it’s the collaborative partnership with AlayaCare that’s really valuable. Yes, automated reminders were a game changer, and robust measurement and reporting promises to have a huge impact.

But “without that partnership with our account manager AlayaCare none of this would be possible,” says Mr. Rawson. Without that partner to reach out to and find out what they didn’t know they didn’t know about AlayaCare, Helping Hands would still be “spending 50 hours or more doing reminder calls” and “not really leveraging the

key effectiveness” of AlayaCare. Now, Helping Hands is driven to find more opportunities for improved efficiency, and according to Mr. Rawson, “we’re excited to uncover, research, develop and double down on our investment. And by far without this partnership, we wouldn’t be where we are today.”

For Helping Hands, it’s all about that human connection and partnership – after all, that is what they do for their clients. So, it makes sense that their technology partner should do it for them. That reliability has reduced inbound call volume at the office as well.

The future indeed looks bright for Helping Hands and the people they help, and that all comes from partnership and collaboration.





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...from my lens the partnership in collaboration with AlayaCare is second to none...

I'm so excited and enthusiastic about what future opportunities are before us, because through this collaborative relationship, what we once thought was impossible is now quite possible.”

— **Doug Rawson,**
Executive Director,
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