

Product Specification Document for CareLink

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1. Executive Summary

CareLink aims to revolutionize the Canadian daycare industry with a real-time, location-based marketplace. This platform connects daycare seekers with providers, addressing the critical gaps identified in a research synthesis report. The report highlighted the challenges faced by working-class adults in finding affordable, reliable, and conveniently located daycare services. CareLink will prioritize safety, transparency, and user satisfaction, ensuring a seamless experience for parents and providers.

Problem Statement

Working-class adults in Canada face challenges in accessing affordable, high-quality, and conveniently located daycare services. This affects their job performance, mental health, and overall family well-being. The absence of a centralized system to verify provider credentials and gather community feedback makes it harder to make informed daycare choices.

Hypothesis

We hypothesize that a centralized online platform which aggregates daycare services, verified reviews, and flexible booking options will significantly reduce the time and stress involved in securing daycare. We anticipate that such a platform will result in higher satisfaction levels among parents, better quality childcare services, and a more fluid daycare market that responds effectively to supply and demand dynamics.

2. Problem Space

The problem space is defined by the unmet need for a user-friendly, comprehensive, and trustworthy daycare discovery and booking system. Current approaches are fragmented and often result in dissatisfactory compromises due to the opaque nature of service offerings, lack of immediate availability, and insufficient quality assurance mechanisms.

3. Why it Must Be Addressed

The daycare dilemma is a critical pain point that has direct implications on the economic participation of a significant portion of the workforce. It is also a matter of children’s welfare and parental peace of mind. Addressing it is crucial for societal wellbeing and economic stability.

4. Customer/Persona

Persona 1: Alex Timberlake	Persona 2: Sarah Smith
Demographics: • Age: 32 • Gender: Male • Location: Downtown Toronto, Ontario • Family Status: Married with one child, aged 2 • Occupation: IT Project Manager • Education: Bachelor’s Degree in Computer Science • Income: CAD \$95,000 per year Psychographics: • Values: Efficiency, security, family well-being • Personality: Detail-oriented, pragmatic, tech-savvy	Demographics: • Age: 28 • Gender: Female • Location: Calgary, Alberta • Family Status: Single mother with two children, ages 4 and 6 • Occupation: Elementary School Teacher • Education: Master’s Degree in Education • Income: CAD \$65,000 per year Psychographics: • Values: Community, transparency, affordability

• Lifestyle: Busy urban life, environmentally conscious, prefers online shopping and services • Behavior: Relies heavily on technology for problem-solving, appreciates data privacy and security Needs and Goals: • Needs to find a daycare within walking distance from home or work. • Values educational activities and early childhood development programs. • Wants the ability to check on their child during the day, potentially through a daycare app with updates and live feeds. • Seeks flexibility for occasional late work hours and emergencies. Challenges: • Often struggles with last-minute business trips, requiring unexpected daycare solutions. • Concerned about the security and reliability of unlicensed daycare providers. • Has a high standard for educational content and caregiver qualifications.	• Personality: Warm, community-oriented, resourceful • Lifestyle: Active in local parenting groups, budget-conscious, prefers hands-on activities with kids • Behavior: Seeks out community support and resources, trusts word-of-mouth recommendations Needs and Goals: • Wants a cost-effective daycare that aligns with her modest budget. • Prefers a daycare that provides a strong sense of community and personal attention. • Looks for a service with robust communication channels between parents and caregivers. • Desires a platform that offers transparency in terms of reviews and ratings. Challenges: • Balances a tight budget, often finding it difficult to afford high-quality daycare. • Needs a daycare option that aligns with her educator's perspective on childhood development. • Sometimes requires care outside of normal hours due to parent-teacher meetings and school events.
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Both Alex and Sarah represent typical users of the proposed CareLink platform, each with their unique set of needs and challenges that CareLink would aim to address with its features and services.

5. Problem to Address

The specific problem CareLink aims to address is the inefficiency in the **current daycare search and selection process**, which is plagued by information asymmetry, lack of real-time availability, and limited transparency in provider standards and parent reviews.

6. Current "Solution"

The current solutions include a mix of government-regulated provider lists, informal word-of-mouth recommendations, and various fragmented digital platforms that do not comprehensively address user needs or facilitate the daycare search and booking process effectively.

The MVP for CareLink is dedicated to solving the critical issue of accessibility and information asymmetry faced by working-class adults in locating suitable daycare services for their children. The marketplace aims to streamline the search and validation process for daycare providers by addressing the following key pain point:

Lack of Centralized, Accessible Information:

- Parents struggle to find a centralized source of information that offers a comprehensive list of daycare options, including both licensed and unlicensed providers, near their preferred locations (home or work).
- There is an absence of a unified platform that collates real-time availability, allowing parents to immediately see which daycares have openings.
- The current methods employed by parents to find daycare services are fragmented and time-consuming, often requiring them to navigate through multiple websites, forums, or word-of-mouth recommendations without the guarantee of finding a spot.

The MVP will focus on developing a robust solution to this problem by creating an easily navigable platform that consolidates all the necessary information in one place. CareLink will empower parents like Alex and Sarah to quickly identify and compare daycare options based on their specific criteria such as proximity, availability, and quality indicators. By doing so, CareLink will significantly reduce the time and effort required to secure reliable daycare, thereby

alleviating one of the most pressing challenges faced by working-class families in finding suitable childcare.

7. Proposed Solution (WIP)

CareLink will be a responsive web platform with optional mobile application components. It will feature:

- A robust search engine for finding daycare options by location, price, and service type.
- Detailed profiles for licensed and unlicensed daycare providers, including qualifications, services offered, and real-time availability.
- A transparent review and rating system where parents can leave feedback.

8. User Stories and Scenarios

Stories and Scenarios

1. As a working parent, I want to easily find licensed and unlicensed daycare options near my office so that I can drop off and pick up my child conveniently around my work schedule.

AC:

Given a list of licensed daycares is available, When I input my office address, Then the platform should display all licensed daycares within a pre-selected mile radius of the address.

2. As a single father, I want to filter daycare providers by those offering flexible hours so that I can accommodate my varying shift patterns.

AC:

Given the daycare profiles contain operating hours information, When I select the 'flexible hours' filter, Then the platform should only display daycares that offer flexible timing as an option.

3. As a first-time mother, I want to see in-app reviews and ratings of local daycares so that I can make an informed decision about the safest environment for my child.

AC:

Given that reviews and ratings are present for each daycare, When I browse the daycare listings, Then each listing should display an aggregate rating and have an option to read detailed reviews.

4. As a parent new to the city, I want to view a map of daycares in my area so that I can understand which options are most practical in terms of commuting times.

AC:

Given the daycares are geo-tagged with their locations, When I access the map view on the platform, Then the map should show all daycares in my specified area with pins that can be clicked on for more information.

9. Goals & Measuring Success

Goal 1: Enhance User Experience in Finding Daycare

- **Metric:** Achieve a NPS score of 9-10 as measured by surveys and in-app feedback regarding ease of use within the first six months after launch.
- Repeat Usage Rate % = (Total number of users in a given period/Number of users who return and use the service again)

Goal 2: Expand Daycare Listings

- **Metric:** Onboard at least 200 daycare providers in the first three months, with at least 50% offering flexible hours and/or emergency care options. Ensure that 100% of listed daycare providers have detailed profiles with reviews, ratings.
- Referral Rate % = (Total number of new users/Number of new users who joined through referrals)

Goal 3: Increase Accessibility to Daycare Services

- **Metric:** User onboarding completion rate % = (number of users who complete onboarding/total number of new users).

10. Milestones & Timeline

Month 1: Design & Prototyping Phase

Week	Sprint Activities	Deliverables
1-2	Sprint 1: Requirements Gathering and Ideation	- User stories and requirements document - Initial wireframes
3-4	Sprint 2: Design Iterations and User Feedback	- Refined wireframes - Clickable prototype - User feedback report

Month 1 Objectives:

- Define design requirements.
- Create initial wireframes and mock-ups.
- Develop clickable prototypes for early user testing.
- Collect feedback and iterate on the design.

Month 2: Development Phase I

Week	Sprint Activities	Deliverables
5-6	Sprint 3: Development Kickoff and Setup	- Development environment setup - Begin coding of core functionalities
7-8	Sprint 4: Feature Development and Backend Integration	- Working features (e.g., search, listing) - Backend services integration (e.g., database, authentication)

Month 2 Objectives:

- Set up the development environment.
- Start coding based on prioritized features.
- Integrate backend services such as user authentication and database management.
- Conduct initial internal testing and bug fixes.

Month 3: Development Phase II & Testing

Week	Sprint Activities	Deliverables
9-10	Sprint 5: Continued Feature Development and Frontend Integration	- Additional working features (e.g., reviews, booking) - Frontend and backend integration testing
11	Sprint 6: Quality Assurance and User Testing	- Completed MVP product for testing - Test cases and reports - User testing feedback
12	Sprint 7: Finalization and Launch Prep	- Finalized MVP with revisions based on testing - Marketing materials - Launch plan

Month 3 Objectives:

- Continue to develop remaining features.
- Conduct thorough testing, including unit tests, integration tests, and system tests.
- Perform user acceptance testing (UAT) with a select user group.
- Address any issues found during testing and polish the product.
- Prepare for launch, including marketing and go-to-market strategy.

During each sprint, daily standups should be held to discuss progress, and at the end of each sprint, a review and retrospective should be conducted to discuss what went well, what could be improved, and what will be done in the next sprint.

- **M1:** Concept validation, stakeholder engagement, initial design, and prototyping.
- **M2-M3:** Development of MVP, commencement of beta testing with select users.
- **M4:** Full launch in target cities, marketing campaigns, and continuous feedback integration.
- Follows next: Expansion to additional cities, feature enhancements based on user data.

11. Open Questions

- What level of vetting is required for unlicensed providers to ensure safety and quality?
- How will emergency daycare needs be vetted and fulfilled?
- What partnership opportunities exist for financial subsidies and support?
- Liabilities, insurance and guarantees

12. Appendix

Includes technical documentation, user surveys and feedback, market analysis reports, regulatory compliance guidelines, and design wireframes.

Problem space:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m9DTTV0sF1hrr70pCNYg4VgrGqSK02FMid1nu9ugnY/edit?usp=sharing>

Research synthesis:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NC8exWOimK7MSNv04kgCFgARgMJtvieEruHx4QbGwe8/edit?usp=sharing>

13. References/Links

References to the research synthesis report, related academic studies, government regulatory documents, and links to existing marketplace platforms for benchmarking purposes.

This document outlines the vision for CareLink, detailing the critical pain points it seeks to address and the proposed solution framework. The specification is a living document and will evolve based on continuous user feedback, market research, and stakeholder input.