

Reimagining Caregiving Through Connected Technology: A Human- Centered Evaluation of Watch Our Own

AN EVALUATION BY HITLAB



This report presents HITLAB's independent evaluation of the Watch Our Own platform, a digital caregiving coordination solution designed to support proactive monitoring, strengthen communication across caregiving networks, and enable timely, informed support for vulnerable individuals outside traditional healthcare settings.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This white paper presents HITLAB’s independent heuristic evaluation of the Watch Our Own platform, a connected caregiving solution designed to support caregivers in monitoring and assisting individuals requiring additional care through a smartwatch and mobile application ecosystem. The platform aims to enhance safety, coordination, and peace of mind by enabling real-time health monitoring, location tracking, emergency alerts, caregiving group communication, and access to critical medical information.

HITLAB’s findings indicate that Watch Our Own demonstrates a strong foundation in structured navigation, clear feature organization, and comprehensive caregiving functionality. The platform effectively brings together multiple caregiving needs into a unified system, supporting communication and oversight across caregivers while enabling timely access to essential information. These elements contribute to an overall experience that aligns well with the practical needs of caregivers managing ongoing care responsibilities.

Using Jakob Nielsen’s Ten Usability Heuristics, HITLAB conducted a comprehensive review of the platform across key workflows, including onboarding, dashboard interaction, caregiving group management, medical information entry, location tracking, communication tools, and support features. The evaluation assessed system visibility, navigation clarity, interaction flow, feedback mechanisms, and overall usability in real-world caregiving scenarios.

Watch Our Own is a comprehensive digital caregiving platform that integrates wearable technology with a mobile application to support real-time monitoring, communication, and coordination among caregivers. Designed for individuals who require ongoing care—such as older adults or those with specific health needs—the platform enables features like health tracking, location monitoring, emergency alerts, and centralized medical information access.

By bringing caregivers together through shared visibility and communication tools, Watch Our Own enhances safety, responsiveness, and peace of mind, making it easier to manage care efficiently and stay connected in both routine and critical situations.

Targeted opportunities for refinement were identified to further enhance usability, particularly in areas such as navigation clarity, feature discoverability, system feedback, error handling, and workflow consistency. Addressing these aspects will be critical to ensuring that caregivers can interact with the platform efficiently and access critical information without friction, especially in time-sensitive situations.

HITLAB’s heuristic evaluation plays a key role in identifying these improvement areas through a structured, evidence-based approach grounded in established usability principles. Overall, Watch Our Own shows strong potential as a digital caregiving tool, with the ability to improve coordination, strengthen communication, and support safer, more informed caregiving. With continued refinement, the platform is well-positioned to deliver a reliable and user-centered experience that meets the evolving needs of caregivers and care recipients.

The Caregiving Challenge

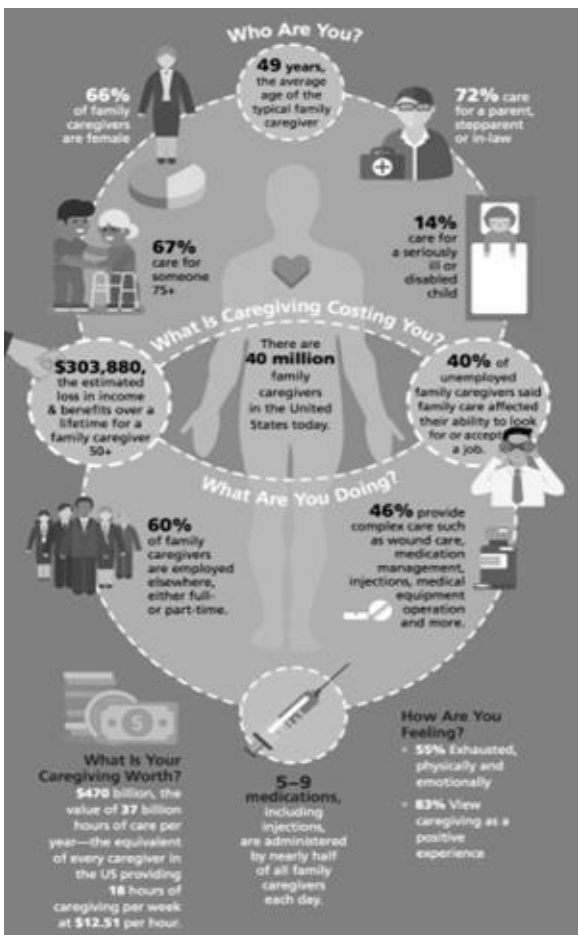
Caregiving Burden

Caregiving for older adults and individuals with health needs is increasingly complex, fragmented, and urgent. Families and caregivers must coordinate across multiple people, devices, and information sources—often without adequate tools to ensure timely response during critical moments.

Despite the growing availability of digital health tools, caregiving coordination remains fragmented. Many solutions address isolated needs—such as appointment reminders or messaging—without integrating monitoring, communication, and emergency response into a unified system. As a result, caregivers often rely on disconnected tools, leading to missed updates, delayed interventions, and increased stress during urgent situations.

Caregiving Challenges in the United States

Caregiving in the United States is increasingly complex, requiring individuals—often family members—to manage medical, emotional, and logistical responsibilities without adequate support systems. Caregivers frequently coordinate across fragmented healthcare services, monitor health conditions, ensure medication adherence, and respond to emergencies, all while balancing personal and professional obligations. This growing burden is intensified by aging populations, rising chronic disease prevalence, and limited integration of caregiving tools, leading to stress, burnout, and reduced quality of care (AARP, 2023; National Alliance for Caregiving, 2020). Despite advancements in digital health technologies, many caregiving processes remain manual, fragmented, and reactive rather than proactive. The lack of centralized systems for communication, monitoring, and coordination creates inefficiencies, increases cognitive load, and delays critical decision-making. These challenges highlight a significant gap in accessible, user-friendly caregiving solutions that can support real-time monitoring, improve coordination, and reduce caregiver burden (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2022).



Key Statistics	
1 in 5 Americans provide unpaid care to a family member or friend	70% Of caregivers struggle to coordinate care across multiple contacts
24 hrs Average weekly hours devoted to caregiving activities	40% Of caregivers experience high emotional stress levels

Unmet Needs and Gaps

1. Fragmented Care Coordination

Caregivers in the United States often face fragmented care coordination, where they are required to manage multiple healthcare providers, appointments, and care plans without the support of integrated systems. This lack of coordination leads to miscommunication, duplication of efforts, and gaps in care continuity, ultimately increasing the risk of medical errors and inefficiencies in care delivery (National Alliance for Caregiving, 2020).

2. High Caregiver Burden and Burnout

Caregiving responsibilities place significant physical, emotional, and financial strain on individuals over extended periods. This sustained burden frequently results in caregiver burnout, heightened stress levels, and declining mental and physical health, which can negatively impact both the caregiver's well-being and the quality of care provided (AARP, 2023).

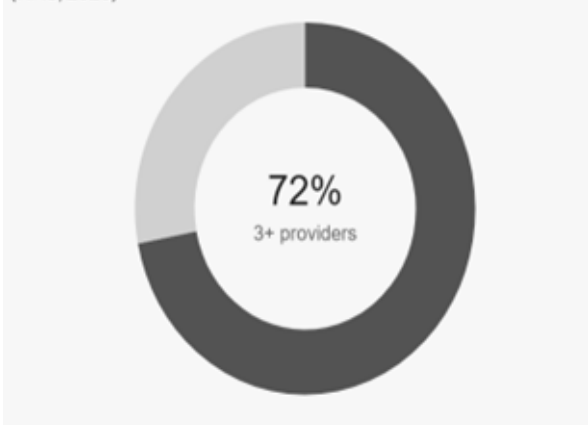
3. Limited Real-Time Health Monitoring

The absence of continuous, real-time health monitoring tools forces caregivers to rely on periodic updates or manual check-ins to assess the condition of care recipients. This limitation increases the likelihood of missing early warning signs of health deterioration, leading to delayed interventions and potentially poorer health outcomes (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2022).

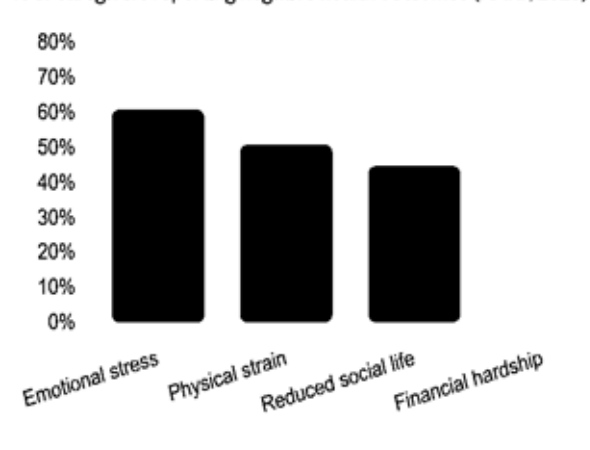
4. Emergency Response Delays

Without access to automated alert systems or real-time tracking technologies, caregivers may not be immediately informed of emergencies such as falls or sudden medical events. These delays in awareness and response can significantly compromise patient safety and increase the severity of health incidents (AARP, 2023).

Caregivers managing multiple providers without integrated tools (NAC, 2020)



% of caregivers reporting negative health outcomes (AARP, 2023)



Unmet Needs and Gaps

5. Poor Communication Among Caregiving Networks

Caregiving often involves coordination among multiple stakeholders, including family members, healthcare providers, and support staff. However, the lack of effective communication tools leads to information silos, misunderstandings, and misaligned care decisions, reducing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of caregiving efforts (National Alliance for Caregiving, 2020).

6. Medication and Health Management Complexity

Managing medications, treatment schedules, and health records manually presents a considerable challenge for caregivers. This complexity increases the risk of medication errors, missed doses, and non-adherence, particularly for individuals with chronic conditions, thereby affecting treatment outcomes and patient safety (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2022).

7. Lack of Centralized Medical Information

Critical patient information is often scattered across multiple platforms or stored in non-digital formats, making it difficult for caregivers to access accurate and up-to-date data. This lack of centralization hinders effective decision-making, especially during emergencies or care transitions, and can disrupt continuity of care (AARP, 2023).

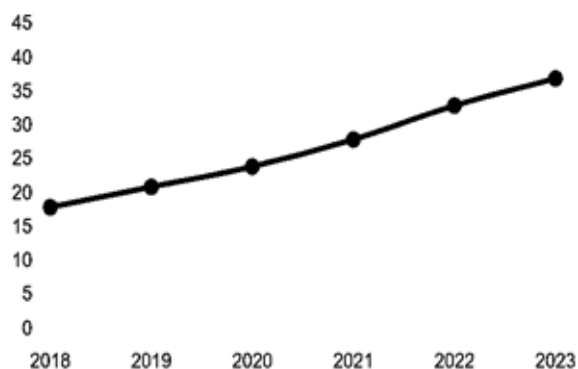
8. Safety and Location Tracking Challenges

Caregivers supporting individuals with cognitive impairments, such as dementia, face significant challenges in ensuring safety due to the lack of reliable real-time location tracking and monitoring tools. This increases the risk of wandering incidents and delays in providing assistance during unsafe situations, posing serious safety concerns (National Alliance for Caregiving, 2020).

Caregiver detection method for health emergencies (FCA, 2022)



Annual medication incidents attributed to manual management (FCA, 2022)



Economic Burden of Caregiving in the United States

Caregiving in the United States places a substantial economic burden on individuals, families, and the broader healthcare system. A significant portion of caregiving is unpaid, yet it represents one of the largest hidden contributions to the healthcare economy. According to AARP, family caregivers collectively provide billions of hours of unpaid care annually, with the estimated economic value exceeding hundreds of billions, and more recent estimates surpassing \$1 trillion. This underscores the critical but often underrecognized financial role that caregivers play in sustaining long-term care systems.

At the individual level, caregivers frequently incur considerable out-of-pocket expenses related to medical care, medications, transportation, and home modifications. On average, caregivers spend a significant proportion of their income—often around a quarter—on caregiving-related costs (AARP, 2023). These financial pressures are further exacerbated by indirect economic impacts, including reduced work hours, lost wages, and, in some cases, complete withdrawal from the workforce. Research from the National Alliance for Caregiving indicates that many caregivers face employment disruptions, with a notable percentage reducing working hours or leaving jobs entirely to meet caregiving demands. The economic strain extends beyond direct and indirect costs to long-term financial security. Caregivers often deplete savings, reduce retirement contributions, and accumulate debt, increasing their vulnerability to future financial instability. These effects are particularly pronounced among high-intensity caregivers who dedicate substantial time to care activities. Additionally, disparities in income and access to resources can amplify the burden, disproportionately affecting lower-income households.

At a system level, the reliance on unpaid caregiving represents both a cost-saving mechanism and a structural vulnerability. While it reduces immediate healthcare expenditures, it shifts the financial and emotional burden onto families, potentially leading to caregiver burnout and increased downstream healthcare costs. Organizations such as the Family Caregiver Alliance highlight that without adequate support systems and digital tools, these economic pressures are likely to intensify as the aging population grows.

Overall, the economic burden of caregiving reflects a complex interplay of direct costs, lost productivity, and long-term financial risks. Addressing these challenges requires integrated solutions that not only support caregiving activities but also reduce inefficiencies, improve coordination, and enable caregivers to balance their financial and care responsibilities more effectively.

\$1T+
annually
worth of unpaid
caregiving

**\$7,000+/
year**
Average out-of-
pocket costs

~26%
of income
Spent on
caregiving

36 billion
hours/year
unpaid care
provided

27%
reduced work
hours

16%
leave jobs

~50%
report financial
strain

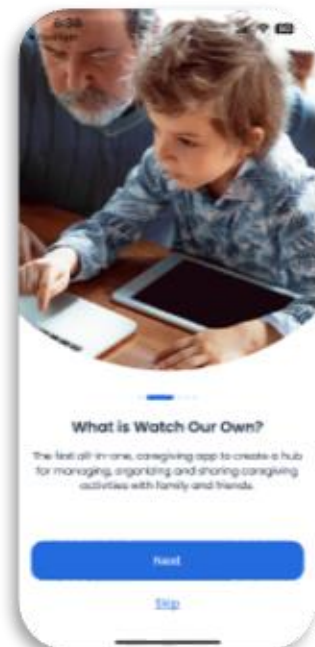
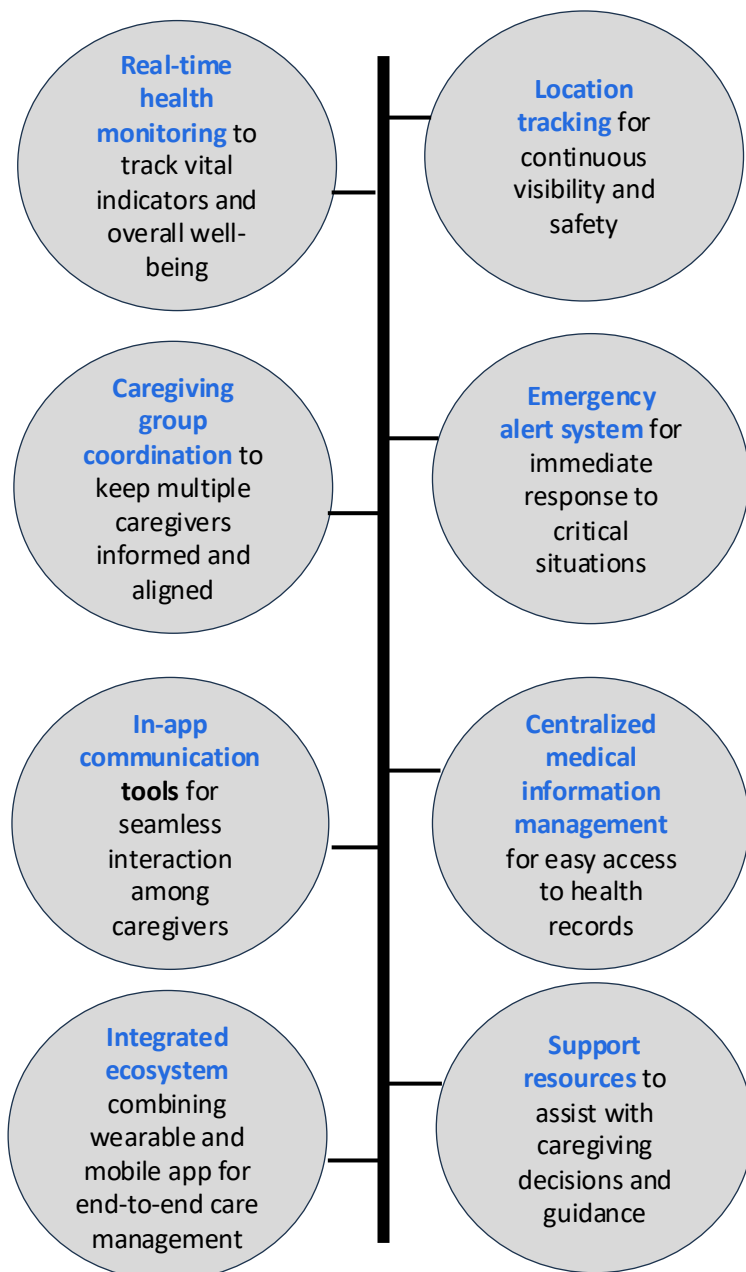
Watch Our Own

Smarter Care, Safer Lives, Connected Caregiving

What is Watch Our Own

Watch Our Own is a connected digital caregiving platform that integrates a smartwatch with a mobile application to support real-time monitoring, communication, and coordination of care. Designed for caregivers and individuals requiring ongoing support such as older adults or those with health needs, the platform enables continuous oversight while promoting safety, independence, and peace of mind.

What Does Watch Our Own Offer



Watch Our Own

A Platform-Led Approach to Caregiving Infrastructure

Watch Our Own is designed to address the gaps by reframing caregiving as a coordinated, accountable system rather than an isolated personal responsibility. Instead of positioning itself as a traditional healthcare product, the platform functions as a caregiving operations layer that supports individuals and networks in real-world settings.

Integrated Caregiving Ecosystem

The platform combines:

- A **connected smartwatch** for monitoring vitals, detecting falls, and enabling emergency alerts
- A **mobile application** that centralizes caregiving coordination, communication, and shared care records
- **Real-time location tracking** to help caregivers locate and monitor loved ones, with automatic alerts when they leave designated safe zones
- **Centralized medical records** including prescriptions, vitals, allergies, and pre-existing conditions accessible to any authorized caregiver
- **AI-powered assistant** that answers caregiving questions and provides contextual guidance on managing daily care responsibilities
- **Caregiving group management** that allows multiple family members to share tasks, assign roles, and coordinate care through a single interface

Together, these components allow caregivers to form a **virtual care network** around a loved one, ensuring critical information and alerts are accessible to all authorized caregivers when needed.

Key Differentiators

Caregiver-Centric Coordination

Enables caregivers to organise tasks, responsibilities, and roles across trusted networks — reducing fragmentation and reliance on ad-hoc communication

Event-Driven Safety and Escalation

Incorporates alert mechanisms that help caregivers respond proactively to emergencies or risks — moving from crisis response to early intervention.

Contextual Awareness

Location awareness and task validation align caregiving actions with real-world context — improving accountability without increasing burden.

Human-in-the-Loop Design

Augments human decision-making with structured workflows and insights — respecting the complexity of caregiving rather than replacing caregivers.

Policy-Aligned Flexibility

Operates outside rigid clinical frameworks to complement existing health and social policies, filling critical operational gaps that policy alone has not addressed.

Watch Our Own

Watch Our Own delivers meaningful impact across multiple stakeholder groups by centralizing caregiving coordination, enabling real-time monitoring, and reducing response delays.

Impact Potential

Family Caregivers

For the millions managing a loved one's care from a distance, Watch Our Own offers a way to stay meaningfully connected without constant manual check-ins. Real-time monitoring, automated alerts, and task coordination reduce cognitive load and ensure emergencies won't go unnoticed. Caregivers can delegate responsibilities with confidence that the full team is aligned and ready to respond.

Older Adults and Care Recipients

For older adults living independently, the platform provides a safety net that respects their autonomy. The connected smartwatch offers unobtrusive monitoring, and the emergency alert system ensures that a fall or health emergency triggers an immediate caregiver response—potentially preventing hospitalizations and reducing the severity of adverse outcomes.

Professional and Paid Caregivers

Home health aides and professional caregivers can coordinate with the broader network, receive structured task assignments, and document activities within a shared care record. This improves accountability, reduces miscommunication, and ensures smooth, well-documented transitions of care across multiple recipients.

FROM CLINICAL SETTINGS TO EMPLOYER-SPONSORED WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Healthcare Providers

While not a clinical tool, Watch Our Own generates valuable data for medical decision-making. Providers gain visibility into daily health status, medication adherence, and incident history—improving diagnostic accuracy, supporting care planning, and enabling proactive interventions before conditions deteriorate to the point of hospitalization.

Employers and Payers

Caregiver burnout is a significant driver of workforce absenteeism and healthcare utilization. By reducing the burden of caregiving coordination, Watch Our Own supports employee well-being, reduces caregiver-driven absenteeism, and lowers downstream healthcare costs. For payers and employers focused on value-based outcomes, the platform represents a cost-effective investment in proactive care infrastructure.

Broader Impact Potential

The platform shifts caregiving from reactive to proactive through real-time visibility into safety signals. It increases caregiver confidence with consolidated, actionable information, reduces emergency response delays via integrated alerts, strengthens caregiving networks through structured communication, and improves safety for vulnerable populations through ongoing monitoring.

Watch Our Own: The Team



Giancarlo Paolillo

Founder & CEO

Giancarlo is a technology executive with 35 years of experience across cybersecurity, infrastructure, and emerging technologies. Having held senior leadership roles at HSBC, Bank of America, and Vonage — where he earned both the CIO Award and the Most Impact Award — he brings deep enterprise expertise to Watch Our Own. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from Rutgers University.



Sherrie Simms

Co-Founder & President

Sherrie brings over 20 years of Human Resources experience across the financial services and pharmaceutical industries. Having begun her career in finance, she transitioned into HR where she held senior roles spanning recruitment, employee relations, talent management, and organizational design. She holds a Master's in Business Management and a Bachelor's in Finance Management.



Peter Borodich

Head of Development & Founding Member

Peter is a full-stack engineer and technology leader with deep expertise in cloud architecture, DevOps, and scalable software development. His background includes building a social engine for private investors, developing a 100-channel streaming service, and modernizing legacy infrastructure across multiple organizations. He also holds foundational experience in accounting from KPMG and EisnerAmper.



David Modoski

Head of Infrastructure & Founding Member

David is an IT Director with over two decades of experience in infrastructure management, network security, and enterprise systems. His accomplishments include leading major ERP upgrades, implementing VoIP transitions, and designing a fault-tolerant VPN supporting over 7,000 remote users. He holds certifications from the SANS Institute and as a Checkpoint Certified System Engineer.



Glenna Crooks, PhD

Advisor & Contributor

Glenna is a seasoned healthcare strategist and former Presidential Appointee overseeing a \$70 billion healthcare program portfolio. She also served as Global VP at a Fortune 50 biopharmaceutical company and has founded multiple organizations and a global consultancy. A published author and sought-after speaker, her work focuses on designing high-impact solutions to complex healthcare challenges.

HITLAB Heuristic Evaluation

HITLAB conducted a heuristic evaluation of the Watch Our Own platform, applying structured usability inspection methods to assess its design, layout, functionality, navigation, and content, identifying areas where the platform diverges from established usability standards or creates barriers that could hinder the user experience.

Methodology

The assessment was guided by Jakob Nielsen's Ten Usability Heuristics, a globally recognized framework for evaluating interface design. Each heuristic principle: visibility of system status, match between system and the real world, user control and freedom; consistency and standards, error prevention, recognition rather than recall, flexibility and efficiency of use, aesthetic and minimalist design, help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors, and help and documentation—was systematically applied to identify strengths and areas for refinement.

The evaluation involved a review of the Watch Our Own platform, focusing on both the mobile application and device interface. The assessment explored usability, functionality, and overall user experience to identify strengths and improvement opportunities in supporting daily caregiving, building a support system for the elderly through the platform.

This evaluation was conducted by two expert researchers. The review examined the typical user experience of the Watch Our Own mobile application from the perspective of a 42-year-old marketing professional caring for her 74-year-old mother who lives alone.



Evaluation Methodology Steps

- **STEP 01: Framework Selection**
Jakob Nielsen's 10 Usability Heuristics (1994) — validated standard for digital health
- **STEP 02: Persona Development**
A 42-year-old marketing professional caring for her 74-year-old mother
- **STEP 03: Multi-Day Expert Walkthrough**
Two expert researchers evaluated the Watch Our Own iOS app across all key sections
- **STEP 04: Section-by-Section Analysis**
Onboarding · Dashboard · Caregiving groups · Medical info · Location · Communication · Help Hub
- **STEP 05: Recommendations & Impact Rating**
Issues assigned impact levels with actionable recommendations

HITLAB Heuristic Evaluation

USER PERSONAS

Personas provide insights into human experience, pain points, motivations, and realities. They are a research-based empathy tool to understand the needs and barriers of a population. We developed a persona for a 42-year-old corporate marketing professional responsible for caring for her 74-year-old mother, who lives alone.

Persona: 42-year-old marketing employee



Laura Merchant
Occupation: Marketing Manager
Age: 42

“

I want an easy way to stay informed about my mother's wellbeing, even when I'm busy or away. Coordinating care with my siblings shouldn't feel overwhelming or disorganized. I need a solution that keeps us connected and ready to respond when it matters most..

”

Background

Laura is a full-time working professional who balances her job, family responsibilities, and caring for her 74-year-old mother with mild mobility issues. She helps manage her mother's medications, appointments, and emergencies while coordinating care with siblings who live in different cities.

Goals

- Ensure her mother's safety and wellbeing even if she is not physically present
- Coordinate caregiving tasks effectively with family members
- Stay informed about emergencies or important health updates
- Reduce the stress and confusion associated with managing multiple caregiving responsibilities

Challenges

- Managing caregiving responsibilities alongside work and family commitments
- Lack of centralized communication with other caregivers
- Difficulty tracking appointments, medications, and care tasks
- Delayed responses during emergencies due to fragmented communication

Motivations

- Providing the best possible care for her mother
- Staying connected and informed about her mother's health status
- Reducing stress by using tools that simplify caregiving coordination
- Ensuring quick support during urgent situations

Frustrations

- Multiple phone calls and messages needed to coordinate caregiving tasks
- Missing important updates because information is scattered across platforms
- Difficulty keeping all caregivers aligned on schedules and responsibilities

Needs

- A centralized app to manage caregiving tasks and communication
- Real-time alerts during incidents or emergencies
- Easy sharing of medical information, appointments, and care updates

HITLAB Heuristic Evaluation

Findings

The Watch Our Own platform demonstrated strong performance across key usability dimensions relevant to digital caregiving and remote monitoring. Notable strengths include its integration of real-world caregiving workflows, intuitive organization of core features, and effective support for coordination among multiple caregivers within a shared care network. The platform enables caregivers to access critical information and manage care responsibilities in a structured and accessible manner.

The evaluation further highlighted strengths in real-time monitoring capabilities, including location tracking and emergency alerts, which enhance responsiveness and safety. The centralized presentation of medical information and communication features supports informed decision-making and continuity of care. Additionally, the platform’s emphasis on safety-focused functionalities and caregiver collaboration contributes to building trust and reliability within caregiving environments. HITLAB acknowledges that Watch Our Own is currently in the development phase, and several of the identified usability gaps may be addressed as the platform continues to evolve and mature.

Heuristic Ratings

Heuristic Criterion	Rating
Visibility of system status	■ ■ ■ □ □
Match between system and the real world	■ ■ ■ ■ □
User control and freedom	■ ■ ■ ■ □
Consistency and standards	■ ■ ■ □ □
Error prevention	■ ■ ■ □ □
Recognition rather than recall	■ ■ ■ ■ □
Flexibility and efficiency of use	■ ■ ■ □ □
Aesthetic and minimalist design	■ ■ ■ ■ □
Help users recognize, diagnose, recover from errors	■ ■ ■ ■ □
Help and documentation	■ ■ ■ □ □

The app scored consistently across HITLAB’s heuristic dimensions, with most ratings in the **3-4 range out of 5**, underscoring a strong, clinician-oriented design. No critical-severity issues were identified, and all areas requiring refinement are implementation-level adjustments rather than structural concerns.

HITLAB Heuristic Evaluation

Positive Features

Clear Caregiving Intent and Purposeful Design

The platform strongly reflects real caregiving needs, emphasizing safety, coordination, and shared responsibility at every level of the interface. From the onboarding experience to the emergency alert system, every feature is oriented around the caregiver's primary goals: staying informed, staying connected, and responding quickly when it matters. This purposeful design reduces cognitive friction and helps users understand the value of the platform immediately.

Supportive Onboarding Experience

The onboarding screens provide a clear, structured introduction to the app's core features. Visual walkthroughs, contextual explanations, and engaging imagery help users understand the app's purpose and key functionalities before they begin using it. The step-by-step approach reduces the intimidation factor for less tech-savvy users, including older adults and first-time caregiving app users.

Readable Dashboard with Large Typography

The main landing page uses large, clearly readable fonts and high-contrast color design that makes the interface accessible to a wide range of users. Task status categories (Upcoming, Active, Incomplete, Completed) are prominently displayed, and the overall layout provides a quick-glance overview of caregiving responsibilities.

Well-Organized Profile Section

The Profile icon consolidates most of the important features related to the watch and the app in one accessible location. Features are well-sectioned and logically grouped, helping users navigate settings without confusion. The visually clean arrangement of text and options makes this section easy to read and pleasant to use.

Centralized Medical and Care Information

The Medical and Location section centralizes care-related data—prescriptions, vitals, allergies, vaccines, addresses, and pre-existing conditions—so any authorized caregiver can access critical health context immediately, eliminating the risk of lost or inaccessible information during emergencies.

Emergency Alert Infrastructure

Watch Our Own's patented first Family Emergency Response System combines long-press emergency buttons and smartwatch fall detection with automatic triggers — including phone-based fall detection, uncompleted critical tasks, and verbal activation via Siri. When any event is detected, the entire caregiving group is instantly notified, enabling a swift, coordinated response without requiring the care recipient to manually call for help.

Structured Communication and Group Coordination

Caregiving group management lets multiple caregivers form a virtual care network, share responsibilities, and communicate through a centralized interface. Inviting family members, assigning roles, and tracking tasks within one platform meaningfully differentiates it from generic communication tools.

HITLAB Heuristic Evaluation

Strengths

➤ Integrated Caregiving Ecosystem

The seamless integration of smartwatch and mobile app ensures consistent interaction patterns and reduces fragmentation, enabling users to navigate and manage care within a unified system.

➤ Real-Time Monitoring & Safety Features

Features such as real-time location tracking and emergency alerts provide continuous system feedback, keeping caregivers informed about the user's status at all times.

➤ Caregiver Network Coordination

Support for multiple caregivers and shared responsibilities enhances efficiency by allowing users to coordinate care dynamically based on roles and availability.

➤ Centralized Medical Information Access

Storing all medical information in one place reduces the need for memory recall, enabling caregivers to quickly access critical data when needed.

➤ Alignment with Real-World Caregiving Needs

The platform reflects real-life caregiving workflows, making interactions intuitive and aligned with users' expectations and mental models.

➤ Communication & Support Features

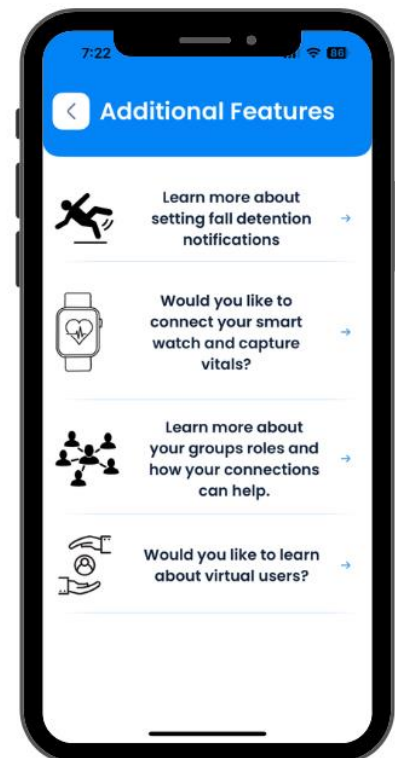
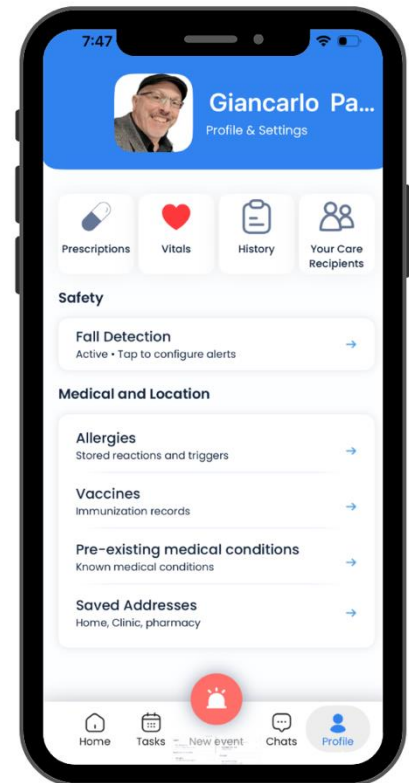
In-app communication and support resources provide guidance and assistance, helping users navigate caregiving tasks effectively.

➤ Focus on Safety and Peace of Mind

Proactive safety features such as alerts and monitoring reduce the likelihood of critical incidents or delayed responses.

➤ Scalable and Evolving Platform

The platform's design supports future enhancements and adaptability, allowing it to scale with user needs and evolving caregiving scenarios.



HITLAB Heuristic Evaluation

Overall, Watch Our Own demonstrates strong alignment with key usability heuristics, particularly in visibility, real-world alignment, and efficiency, reinforcing its potential as a user-centered caregiving solution.

Opportunities for Improvement

- **Navigation clarity and labelling:** Clearer feature labelling and hierarchy would improve learnability and confidence.
- **System feedback and stability:** More consistent feedback during actions (e.g., group creation, feature activation) would strengthen trust.
- **Role and feature clarity:** Distinguishing informational vs. actionable features (e.g., fall detection) would reduce confusion.
- **Accessibility and customization:** Basic personalization options could further support diverse caregiver needs.

HITLAB's evaluation positions Watch Our Own as a scalable, human-centered digital health platform with strong potential to deliver measurable impact while responding to a growing societal need for more effective caregiving infrastructure which is:

PROACTIVE

Shifts caregiving from reactive crisis response

CONNECTED

Aligns distributed caregiving networks

SCALABLE

Ready for broad adoption with refinements

Recommended Next Steps

Immediate Capabilities (0-2 months)

Enhance system stability by resolving critical issues such as improve system visibility through clearer status indicators and introduce intuitive safeguards for error prevention and recovery. Strengthen basic security measures and ensure key caregiving actions are transparent and reliable.

User Experience Optimization (2-4 months)

Refine navigation labeling and information architecture to reduce confusion, consolidate overlapping or duplicated features, and expand in-platform support resources (e.g., Help section, tooltips, onboarding guidance). Streamline onboarding to help caregivers quickly understand platform functionality and establish care networks with ease

Contextual Awareness Pilot Validation & Scaling (4-6 months)

Validate usability improvements through real-world caregiver testing, gather feedback across diverse caregiving scenarios, and iteratively refine workflows. Strengthen platform scalability and reliability to support broader adoption, including extended care networks and more complex caregiving needs.

User Testimonial

Users Profile

Linda Mac Dougall Digital Sovereignty Architect-

Creator of the Sovereignty Vault framework and Shadow File Protocol. Linda brings a systems perspective to senior care, specializing in Metadata Mirroring and Algorithmic Transparency.

Linda frames Watch Our Own as essential infrastructure:

- Leverages technology already in a client's pocket — tracking vitals, detecting falls, monitoring location in real-time
- Gives families and care managers objective clinical data to intervene before a minor incident becomes a catastrophic hospital admission
- Closes the information gap that the medical-industrial complex exploits to push seniors out of their homes
- Supports the "Sandwich Generation" workforce with a Sovereignty Duo-Vault: patient-generated health data as a permanent, admissible record

"Giancarlo's app isn't a digital babysitter; it is a tactical intelligence feed for the home front."

Glenna Crooks, PhD Former Presidential Appointee & Healthcare Author

Oversaw a \$70B federal healthcare portfolio. Former Fortune 50 Global VP. Author of The SeniorSage (in press). Known for designing high-leverage solutions to complex healthcare problems.

Glenna coordinated nine caregivers across multiple states for an elderly parent aging in place — often from more than 1,000 miles away. Her caregiving experience directly shaped her NetworkSage consulting framework. She reflected:

- Without Watch Our Own: multiple calls, emails, voicemails; tempers flared; burnout became a reality
- Caregiver burnout prematurely forced relocation to assisted living, ending her loved one's goal of independence at home
- Fall detection, shared medical records, and task delegation across a distributed team would have been invaluable
- Watch Our Own directly addresses the gap she identified: caregivers rarely optimize their care networks, threatening caregiving success, professional performance, health, and quality of life

"In my LinkedIn profile, I note the value of network connections and the need for thoughtful technology support for the caregiving journey. Watch Our Own provides both."

"Watch Our Own would have helped save on emergency flights, eased the stress of being distant, and reassured me that the rest of the care team was 'on board.'"

Common features highlighted

Real-time visibility

live tracking of location, vitals, and incidents shared across the care network

Closing information gaps

both emphasize how the platform replaces fragmented communication with structured, shared data

Keeping seniors at home

Proactive monitoring supports aging-in-place goals rather than forced relocation

User Testimonial

Diane Carbo, RN

Caregiver Advocate & Founder, Caregiver Relief

Nationally recognised RN and care manager. Submitted a full written professional referral directly endorsing Watch Our Own for care coordinators and elder care specialists.

As a nurse, caregiver advocate, and care manager, Diane evaluates platforms that truly support both family caregivers and professionals. She identifies Watch Our Own as the platform she confidently recommended, citing:

- Fall detection and safety monitoring that removes guesswork for remote caregivers
- Medication management with detailed reports incorporating vitals, prescriptions, and clinical data for primary care providers
- An Event Assistant providing real-time prompts during emergencies — alerting the team if a critical medication is delayed
- Hospital discharge reviews, wellness visit tracking, risk identification, and task assignment across the care team

"We are facing what many are calling a 'silver tsunami.' What makes Watch Our Own stand out is its ability to bring caregiving out of isolation and into a structured, collaborative care environment. The platform shifts caregiving from overwhelming and fragmented to organized and supported."

For care managers, elder care specialists, and healthcare professionals, Watch Our Own is more than a tool — it is an opportunity to extend your value, offering clients a structured system for ongoing care coordination, communication, and accountability.

"Watch Our Own is not just an app — it is a solution that empowers caregivers and professionals to work together more effectively, safely, and confidently."

Dr. Jill M. Bjerke Founder, Silver Spaces

Senior housing specialist focused on environments that support healthy, independent ageing. Her affiliation validates Watch Our Own's positioning in the ageing-in-place and senior housing market.

As a specialist in senior living transitions and aging-in-place, Dr. Bjerke understands the fragmentation families face. She highlighted Watch Our Own's role in:

- Bridging communication gaps between remote family members and on-the-ground caregivers
- Enabling proactive rather than reactive caregiving through shared information and alerts
- Supporting seniors' independence at home by giving the entire care network a shared platform

"Watch Our Own provides the kind of real-time coordination and visibility that families desperately need when navigating senior care from a distance."

Common features highlighted

Fall detection

specifically call it out as critical for remote caregivers who can't be physically present

Task & team coordination

delegating responsibilities across a distributed care team (family, nurses, professionals)

Caregiver burnout prevention

both connect disorganized caregiving directly to burnout, and see the platform as the structural fix

Shared medical records

unified health data accessible to everyone involved in the care plan

Conclusion

The broader context underscores the urgency of getting this right. As caregiving responsibilities continue to rise globally—driven by aging populations, chronic disease prevalence, and increasing reliance on home-based care—caregivers are under growing physical, emotional, and logistical strain. In this environment, fragmented tools are no longer sufficient. There is a clear and pressing need for integrated, reliable, and intuitive platforms that can support caregivers holistically, especially during high-stress or time-sensitive situations.

Watch Our Own is well-positioned to meet this need. Its unified approach to caregiving—bringing together coordination, communication, monitoring, and emergency response—aligns closely with real-world caregiving dynamics. By addressing the identified usability refinements and continuing to evolve based on user needs, the platform has the potential to significantly improve caregiver confidence, reduce burden, and enhance the safety and well-being of care recipients.

The heuristic evaluation conducted by HITLAB confirms that Watch Our Own is a purpose-built, caregiver-centered platform designed to address the fragmentation and communication gaps that define modern caregiving. By bringing together essential caregiving functions into a unified ecosystem, it reduces reliance on multiple disconnected tools while improving coordination, visibility, and engagement among care networks.

The evaluation highlights Watch Our Own's strengths in workflow alignment, ease of use, and its ability to support the complex, multi-faceted nature of caregiving. By integrating monitoring, communication, coordination, and emergency response into a single platform, it effectively addresses the high cognitive and emotional demands placed on caregivers. Its ability to provide a centralized, real-time view of caregiving activities—without overwhelming users—demonstrates strong adherence to usability principles while supporting safety, responsiveness, and caregiver confidence.



Watch Our Own stands out as a promising and thoughtfully designed caregiving solution. With targeted improvements and continued development, it has the potential to become a highly impactful tool in the digital health ecosystem—empowering caregivers to provide more coordinated, responsive, and compassionate care.

“

Watch Our Own exemplifies how thoughtfully designed digital solutions can support caregivers in real-world settings—reducing coordination burden while improving communication, safety, and peace of mind. It demonstrates the power of integrated caregiving platforms to enhance daily care workflows without compromising trust or usability.”

— Stan Kachnowski, Chair, HITLAB

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Overall, Watch Our Own stands out as a forward-looking caregiving solution that empowers caregivers to stay connected, organized, and responsive—ultimately improving the quality of care and well-being for both caregivers and their loved ones.

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HITLAB



WATCH OUR OWN

HITLAB is a leading healthcare innovation lab dedicated to improving health outcomes worldwide. Through rigorous research, education, and collaboration, HITLAB identifies and supports the development of transformative health technologies.

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