

INSIGHT SERIES

Digital Platformisation in the Care Sector

Adrija Ghose



Acknowledgement of Country

Anglicare Southern Queensland acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first Australians and recognises their culture, history, diversity, and deep connection to the land. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which our service was founded and on which our sites are operating today.

We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders both past and present, who have influenced and supported Anglicare Southern Queensland on its journey thus far. We also extend that respect to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, clients and partners (past, present and future) and we hope we can work together to build a service that values and respects our First Nations people.

We acknowledge the past and present injustices that First Nations people have endured and seek to understand and reconcile these histories as foundational to moving forward together in unity.

Anglicare is committed to being more culturally responsive and inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and we are committed to embedding cultural capabilities across all facets of the organisation.

About Anglicare Southern Queensland

Anglicare Southern Queensland (Anglicare) has responded to the needs of our community through more than 150 years of delivering innovative, quality care services. More than 3,000 Anglicare staff and volunteers operate across southern Queensland and in Townsville. Our comprehensive, integrated range of community services includes community aged care; residential aged care; and community support programs, including youth justice, child safety, disability support, counselling and education, mental health, homelessness, and chronic conditions. Our services are designed to 'wrap around' clients in a comprehensive way, recognising their health needs but also addressing the social needs which contribute to wellness.

About the Insight Series

<http://anglicaresq.org.au/research/insight-series>

The Anglicare Southern Queensland Insight Series is a new series written by Anglicare staff, for Anglicare staff, and for those with an interest in Anglicare's core areas of work. Based on research, essays in the Insight Series share ideas, encourage dialogue, and generate feedback on issues related to Anglicare's key areas of service delivery and organisational operations.

The Insight Series is edited by the Research, Evaluation & Advocacy team within the Mission Research & Advocacy portfolio.

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Cover image

Crowd on Busy Street. Urban Life, 5 December 2024. Credit: Carlos Castilla, Shutterstock.

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Introduction

Technological innovation – the introduction of new technologies to create services or products that enhance efficiency and productivity – has transformed our lives and laid the foundations for the rise of the digital economy and digital labour platforms (International Labour Organisation [ILO] 2021). A digital labour platform is an online service (app or website) that helps arrange for or facilitate work to be completed (Fair Work Ombudsman 2026). Such platforms offer new markets and reduced operating costs for businesses and more income-generation opportunities for workers who might have been previously excluded from the workforce (ILO 2021). The rise in digital platforms in the care sector has allowed for greater worker flexibility for caregivers, students and temporary visa holders who might be otherwise unable to enter the job market through traditional employment. This increased flexibility does come with reduced worker protections and labour regulations.

Ridesharing platforms (like Uber, Didi and Ola) and online food-delivery platforms (like UberEats and DoorDash) incentivised digital platformisation to become industry disruptors in their respective industries (Smith 2016). Digital platformisation can be defined as the widespread penetration of digital platforms into various economic, societal and cultural spheres of life as well as the reorganisation of infrastructures and cultural practices around these platforms (Poell et al. 2019). Research describes how these platforms' innovative business models feature an on-demand service with a come-to model (Smith 2016). This means that consumers can get on-demand services anytime, anywhere, which replaces ownership with accessibility (Smith 2016). These alternative business models have led to the popularisation of a gig economy, which is a labour market model where a person (gig worker) is hired through an app or website (digital labour platform) to undertake short-term, flexible or on-demand work for a third party (Safe Work Australia 2026).

Benefits have accompanied this rise of the digital economy, as digital labour platforms promote switching to their workforce model by highlighting incentives for both consumers and workers. Consumers get competitive rates together with greater choice and control over who provides what services; and workers, in turn, are offered independent self-employment, competitive rates, flexible work hours, and greater control over whom to work for (Macdonald 2023). These platforms not only affect the organisational and operational structure of the labour market but also the relationship between the workers and the market (ILO 2021). This has also generated a growing industry, as the ILO predicts that in the next 10 years, up to 22% of the global adult working population will be engaging in some form of platform-mediated work (Khan et al. 2023). In Australia, across 138 identified digital labour platforms, around 14.1% of the adult working population perform work or have performed work in the last 12 months (Williams et al. 2024).

The gradual implementation of this new workforce model also comes with challenges. Digital labour platforms organise work without investing in capital assets or in hiring employees, as workers are deemed as 'independent contractors': that is, people who provide services to another person or business without being directly employed by them (ILO 2021; Macdonald 2023). These 'independent contractors' and most digital labour platforms fall outside the scope of labour and government regulations (Macdonald 2023). Therefore, workers may operate in insecure and unsafe conditions without employee protections, minimum wages, guaranteed hours, supervision, workers' compensation or representation that would otherwise be guaranteed (Macdonald 2023). Moreover, these platforms mediate work between consumers and workers through algorithms, which monitor and discipline worker behaviour and tasks (ILO 2021; Macdonald 2023). These algorithms classify and filter worker profiles based on consumer ratings and reviews, previous work done and communication patterns through the platform (Macdonald 2023). This type of algorithmic people management can constrain worker behaviour and access to jobs and affect job security (Macdonald 2023). It can also create potential discrimination and inequalities based on gender, race and class (Macdonald 2023).

This essay will explore the benefits and limitations of digital platformisation in the care sector, particularly community and human services (aged care and disability care). After providing some context on the popularisation and characteristics of digital platforms, this essay will offer an overview of some of the most prominent and widely used platforms within the care sector.

Rise of digital platformisation in the care sector

In Australia, service providers in the care sector have mostly been government-funded, not-for-profit organisations (Macdonald 2023). Since the 1990s, however, under the ‘marketisation’ policies of successive governments, cash-for-care arrangements have been popularised across the care sector, under the belief that they can provide cheaper and better alternatives to traditional service providers (Macdonald 2023).¹ Digital care platforms started emerging in Australia in 2014 and now include both multi-national corporations and smaller national or regional platforms (Macdonald 2023). Of the 14.1% engaged in digital platform work, 11.9% participate in care work, which includes aged or disability care, pet services, babysitting and nanny services (Williams et al. 2024).

There are two distinct types of digital platforms operating within the aged care and disability sectors. Firstly, digital care platforms offer access to home care and disability support workers. Secondly, care management platforms provide software solutions for home, residential and disability care.

Digital care platforms

Digital care platforms fall under ‘location-based’ platform gig work, which involves work undertaken at a specified physical location (Macdonald 2023). Here, the worker would usually support a client in their home or accompany them in their community (Macdonald 2023). Rideshare and online food-delivery platforms also come under ‘location-based’ gig work. These platforms are different from ‘crowdwork’ platforms, which involve work that can be performed anywhere, most often online (Macdonald 2023).

Most care and support platforms work in a similar fashion, as Figure 1 demonstrates:

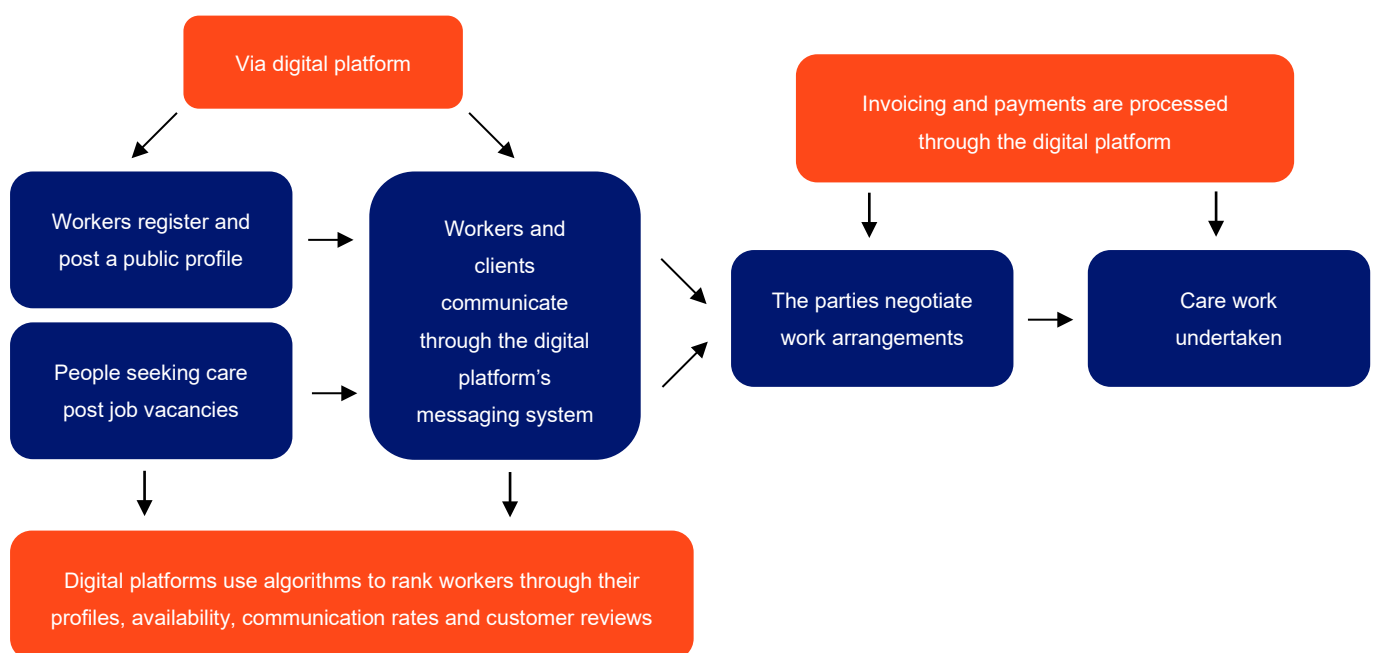


Figure 1. Operating process of a digital care platform (Khan et al. 2024; Macdonald 2023).

¹ Researchers highlight that there has been no evidence to suggest that switching to cash-for-care arrangements would lead to a reduction in overall costs for care and support provision (Macdonald 2023).

In the care sector, care workers register via an app or website for the digital care platform. In the process, workers share considerable personal information, like age, gender, location, availability, qualifications, past work experience and pay rates (Macdonald 2023). People seeking care or the client can post an available job with information regarding the care work to be performed, location, job requirements and even personal characteristics of the person seeking care (Macdonald 2023). Before a care worker can start work, the platform performs police and qualification checks as part of a basic screening process (Macdonald 2023). Certain platforms charge subscription fees for workers to gain access to all job opportunities and for clients to contact multiple workers through the app (Khan et al. 2024; Macdonald 2023). Clients and workers negotiate the work arrangements through the app and privately (Khan et al. 2024; Macdonald 2023).

Clients are responsible for shortlisting, interviewing and negotiating payment terms as the platform only acts as a 'middleman' (Khan et al. 2024). For the care work performed, platforms charge clients a platform fee and workers a service fee (Macdonald 2023). Workers use the platform app to communicate with clients, log on and off care visits, maintain timesheets, submit care reports and process invoices (Macdonald 2023). Platforms use algorithms to dictate what job opportunities workers see and what worker profiles clients view (Khan et al. 2024). Factors like worker locations, communication rates, client reviews and ratings, and number of jobs previously completed impact worker and job visibility on the platform (Khan et al. 2024).

Through a digital care platform, work undertaken often includes indirect care, direct care, or both (Macdonald 2023).

1. **Indirect care:** Personal care, household tasks (cleaning, cooking, minor repairs) and aiding the client in their community (Macdonald 2023).
2. **Direct care:** Care work undertaken by allied health professionals, registered nurses, childcare workers, personal support workers, aged care workers and disability workers (Macdonald 2023).

Williams et al.'s (2024) large scale survey of digital platform workers in Australia identified the most common platforms used by care workers: Mable, Hireup, Care.com, and Careseekers.

Mable

Mable started in 2014 as a digital platform where Australians looking for disability and aged care support could connect with independent support workers (Mable 2026a). Since then, Mable has become an industry disruptor in aged care provision. According to Mable (2026a), the digital platform connects over 23,000 active self-employed support workers to over 30,000 active a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and aged care clients. With the introduction of the new rights-based *Aged Care Act 2024* (Cth) from 1 November 2025, Mable has become a registered Digital Platform provider (Mable 2026b). Under this mandated registration, Mable needs to meet certain regulations such as performing verification checks on all support workers' credentials to make sure they meet applicable screening requirements. and providing information on how these checks are performed (Mable 2026b). Despite Mable becoming a registered digital provider, older Australians are still required to have a registered Aged Care Provider, like Anglicare or similar organisations, for managing their funds and clinical care (Mable 2026b). The former is more likely to provide at-home support services, and the latter is more likely to be responsible for care management.

Hireup

Hireup was founded in 2015 by siblings Laura O'Reilly, a social entrepreneur, and Jordan O'Reilly, a former occupational therapist (Hireup 2026b). It is a NDIS registered provider and claims to be the first to provide choice and control to participants through a digital support platform in Australia (Hireup 2026b). Hireup is also the only digital care platform that casually employs their support workers with all employee protections, including industry-appropriate casual wages, penalty rates, tax and superannuation payments and workers' insurance (Gilbert Hunt

2017). According to Hireup (2026b), the platform now has over 11,000 NDIS and aged care clients and over 14,000 active workers Australia-wide. Hireup also provides on-demand staffing solutions for disability and aged care organisations (Hireup 2026a). Based on organisational and client needs, these organisations get access to Hireup's flexible workforce of pre-vetted, screened and trained casual workers for short-term or ongoing employment (Hireup 2026a).

Care.com

Care.com is one of the largest digital care platforms in the world, operating across 17 countries including Australia (Macdonald 2023). First established in the United States in 2006, Care.com asserts that its platform currently has over 45 million families and caregivers accessing their platform (Care.com 2026). Care.com offers services that allow families to find and manage care and provides self-employment opportunities for care workers (Care.com 2026). Their care marketplace includes jobs for babysitters, childcare, pet care, housekeeping, tutoring and senior care (Care.com 2026). Care.com charges subscription/membership fees from both workers and clients (Macdonald 2023). People seeking carers can post job vacancies on the platform for free, but they need to purchase monthly or annual memberships to view workers' applications or contact them (Macdonald 2023). Workers can also apply to available jobs for free but need to pay subscription fees to have their profiles promoted by the platform, have background checks conducted or get profile verification ticks — all of which increase their chances of getting employed (Macdonald 2023).

Careseekers

Careseekers was founded in 2015 as a digital platform to help connect individuals with disability support and aged care workers (Careseekers 2026). They are a registered NDIS provider and work with aged care providers as well to allow the client to use their Support at Home funding on a worker of their choice (Careseekers 2026). Aged care workers on this platform mostly provide indirect care like domestic assistance, community access, social support and personal care (Careseekers 2026). Their online platform also provides an AI matching tool called CS Whiz, which uses client and worker data to shortlist workers and generate 'spot-on matches in seconds' (Careseekers 2026).

Care management platforms

Care management platforms or systems are technologies leveraged by aged care providers to manage relevant information about the people in their care (Aged Care Research and Industry Innovation Australia [ARIIA] 2026). These platforms allow residential and home care providers to manage information, personalise interactions and cater to individual client needs, thus improving engagement and communication and providing a higher quality of care (ARIIA 2026).

The process whereby care providers use these systems differs from workplace to workplace, but most platforms have similar features that incorporate client management, financial management, medication management, mobile apps, AI integration, and virtual care, as Figure 2 demonstrates:

Client Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud-based or on-site software solutions that simplify business and administrative processes • Client onboarding, care planning and task documentation • Budget forecasting, scheduling, invoicing, qualification tracking and incident reporting (Care Systems 206; Nightingale Software 2026; TurnPoint Care 2026b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some platforms also offer smart rostering and client matching tools that leverage staff competencies, availability, client and staff location and client preferences to make the scheduling process seamless (Care Systems 206; Nightingale Software 2026; TurnPoint Care 2026b)
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payroll solutions with modules for financial and asset management that help streamline payment handling by incorporating an award interpreter for common healthcare Awards (TurnPoint Care 2026c) 	
Medication Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication management for residential aged care providers • Allows prescribers to update resident's medication charts electronically (Telstra Health 2026a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows staff to view and capture medication administration information • Promotes clear communication between care staff, pharmacists and general practitioners (GPs) (Telstra Health 2026a)
Mobile App	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some home care software apps can be used by staff to securely access client information, manage and modify visits, upload documentation and contact clients' families/carers (Telstra Health 2026a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients and their families/carers can also use these apps to schedule appointments, access care plans and complete forms (AlayaCare 2026c; Nightingale Software 2026; Telstra Health 2026a)
AI Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some care management platforms also have AI assistants integrated into their cloud software providing instant access to client data, care plans, visit updates and scheduling information through a secure chat interface (AlayaCare 2026c) 	
Virtual Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some care management platforms also offer virtual care solutions in the form of telehealth conferencing, wearables and remote monitoring (AlayaCare 2026c; Telstra Health 2026b) 	

Figure 2. Care management platform features (AlayaCare 2026c; Care Systems 2026; Nightingale Software 2026; Telstra Health 2026a; Telstra Health 2026b; TurnPoint Care 2026b; TurnPoint Care 2026c).

AlayaCare

AlayaCare was founded in 2014 in Canada as a home care technology platform and continues to serve Canadian home healthcare and palliative care providers (AlayaCare 2026b). In Australia and New Zealand, they are a cloud-based technology that provides an end-to-end software solution for residential, home care and disability providers (AlayaCare 2026b). AlayaCare has two main platforms:

1. **AlayaCare Cloud – A cloud-based solution for home care providers:** AlayaCare Cloud provides user-friendly mobile client management software, web-based scheduling and reporting and AI capabilities (AlayaCare 2026c). They recently launched an AI assistant, Layla, specifically for home and community care providers (AlayaCare 2026c). According to AlayaCare (2026c), this assistant provides instant access to client data, care plans, visit updates and scheduling information through a secure chat interface. The software also comes with a Home Care mobile app that staff can use to gain secure access to client information, scheduling and documentation (AlayaCare 2026c). They also offer a complete virtual care solution through telehealth conferencing and wearables that complement in-person care (AlayaCare 2026c).
2. **AlayaCare Residential:** AlayaCare Residential is an all-in-one cloud system that integrates both financial and client management for retirement living facilities and residential aged care (AlayaCare 2026a). AlayaCare Australia's General Manager, Annette Hili reported in the *Australian Ageing Agenda* that after relaunching in April 2020, AlayaCare Residential acquired fellow aged, community and disability software vendor Procura (Hili 2020).

Telstra Health

Telstra Health (2026a) claims to have been in the aged care market for over 21 years, providing innovative solutions for Australian residential aged care providers. These solutions include:

1. **Clinical Manager:** Improves the way residential aged care providers manage administrative processes (Telstra Health 2026a).
2. **CareKeeper:** Allows residential staff to document tasks and activity workflows with resident input (Telstra Health 2026a).
3. **Resident Manager:** A software solution that helps providers better manage their resident administration (admission and leaves process), funding and reporting processes for Services Australia (Telstra Health 2026a).
4. **Medication Management:** Improves the quality management of medications, promotes clear communication between care staff, pharmacists and GPs and through their MedMobile app, allows staff to view and capture medication administration information (Telstra Health 2026a).
5. **Message Manager:** An email and SMS messaging software to streamline communication with a resident's loved ones and easily track what information has been shared (Telstra Health 2026a).
6. **MedPoint:** A module that allows prescribers to update a resident's medication chart electronically, thus improving workflow efficiencies between the aged care facility, pharmacies and prescribers (Telstra Health 2026a). The MedMobile app and MedPoint module sit within the Medication Management software (Telstra Health 2026a).

Telstra Health (2026b) also provides a virtual care solution for aged and community care providers called the Virtual Health Platform which offers a more digital, automated and streamlined care delivery process through real-time health information, remote monitoring, communication and education. It uses an integrated risk management dashboard that tracks biometric data through multiple medical devices and identifies deteriorating clients to provide necessary interventions (Telstra Health 2026b).

The Australian Digital Health Agency (2025) awarded Telstra Health the contract to head the transformation of the Australian federal government's My Health Record system, which houses more than 1.8 billion clinical documents from Australian healthcare consumers. They will partner with Smile Digital Health and Leidos Australia to deliver real-time health solutions and key information to Australian healthcare providers (Australian Digital Health Agency 2025). Some other organisations that Telstra Health has partnered with are BlueCross, the Tasmanian Government and Western Australia's Department of Health (Telstra Health 2026).

TurnPoint Software

TurnPoint offers a fully integrated, end-to-end cloud-based software for home care and NDIS organisations (TurnPoint Care 2026a). It aims to consolidate four different systems – client management, rostering, invoicing and payroll into one streamlined system, allowing workers to focus on care provision (TurnPoint Care 2026a). Their website claims to have provided over 6.6 million hours of care coordination to over 75,000 care recipients (TurnPoint Care 2026a). Being a cloud-based software, TurnPoint can work across multiple internet-capable devices, whether in the office or in the field (TurnPoint Care 2026a).

TurnPoint has two core products – that are available to aged care (Support at Home and Commonwealth Home Support Program [CHSP]), NDIS and allied health organisations:

1. **TurnPoint Assist:** A cloud system that simplifies business processes like scheduling, budget forecasting, invoicing and care planning (TurnPoint Care 2026b). It also assists in staff management, including payroll, journey planning and GPS services, qualification tracking and client matching (TurnPoint Care 2026b).

2. **TurnPoint Pay:** Only provides payroll solutions, helping to streamline payment handling by incorporating an award interpreter for common healthcare Awards (TurnPoint Care 2026c).

Nightingale Community Aged Care Software

Nightingale Software provides Aged Care (Support at Home and CHSP) software solutions that simplify the processes of scheduling, client management, invoicing, incident tracking and Home Care Package management (Nightingale Software 2026). According to Nightingale Software (2026), their care management platform is specifically designed to align with the requirements for transitioning to the new Support at Home program and is continuously working through government directives to make this transition seamless. Their software also has features like smart rostering tools and a Client and Family App (Nightingale Software 2026). These rostering tools leverage staff competencies, availability, client and staff locations and client preferences to make the rostering process simpler (Nightingale Software 2026). Their app allows clients and families/carers to request services, make any appointment changes and complete forms through the app (Nightingale Software, 2026).

According to *The Weekly Source*, the Nightingale Software was recently acquired by the care platform, AlayaCare, which now caters to about 30% of the Australian home care market (Egan 2025).

Care Systems

Care Systems is a family-owned company that started in 1984 by launching their first Care Systems product for an aged care facility in Queensland (Care Systems 2026). They now support providers across Australia with aged care solutions (Care Systems 2026). Care Systems offer a range of flexible and customisable features for residential, community care and NDIS providers as well as for independent living facilities (Care Systems 2026). They provide a scalable Aged Care Management Software for client and staff management and client onboarding and a fully integrated product suite with modules for complex reporting and financial and asset management (Care Systems 2026).

Conclusion

Digital platformisation has been reshaping the care sector and altering care provision in Australia, while increasingly competing with traditional service providers like Anglicare Southern Queensland. As outlined in this paper, there are two distinct types of digital platforms in operation: digital care platforms that connect consumers with independent care workers; and care management platforms that help providers improve operational efficiency and reduce administrative burden.

On the one hand, the popularity of gig-work models and the flexibility offered by digital care platforms have the potential to draw consumers and employees away from traditional service providers. On the other hand, the organisational integration of care management platforms can improve service quality and delivery while helping to better meet individual client needs.

As the care sector undergoes a technological transformation, Anglicare and similar organisations are looking to innovative, future-focused workforce models, supported by the benefits of effective care management platforms, to reinforce their role as a trusted aged care provider with the client always at the centre.

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