**User experience report**

***CareNest***

*People for People NGO*

A logo of hands and flowers

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# Introduction

The success of an application does not rely strictly on performance, security, or architecture, but one of its most important stages of development is creating a user experience that stands out and confers and intuitive, enjoyable and seamless use of the functionalities. The purpose of this report is to analyse the user experience of *CareNest* web application, bringing to attention strengths, weaknesses, areas of improvement and recommendations that will help elevate the overall con tact a user has with the platform.

# Project overview

# Case description

The idea behind *CareNest* is to create an innovative, user-friendly solution that follows the key values of People for People NGO and can be used by elderly or sick people to assure their wellbeing in the comfort of their own home. At the same time, the web application serves as a channel of communication and promotion for caretakers that offer their services, and managers that share healthcare announcements for registered users.

## Technical goals

The goals of this project include:

* Creating a platform that confers the elderly or sick people’s desire for networking
* Having a public website that promotes services of caretakers
* A safe environment that brings together people who share the same needs

## User interface goals

The user interface is designed to serve as:

* User-friendly interface that confers a pleasurable experience for a target audience
* Intuitive design
* User engagement in application actions

# UX insight

## Target audience

*CareNest* has a target audience that takes into consideration: elderly and sick individuals seeking home care services and an environment that encourages social activities. The core values of this audience include simplicity, accessibility, and trustworthiness. Simultaneously, the platform caters to caretakers and managers, creating a system that allows free communication. Caretakers require a platform that promotes their services and manages requests effectively, while managers need tools to share their knowledge and advice with those who appreciate their efforts.

## Developmental research

The design and development of *CareNest* were based on research into user behaviour, general preferences and target audience statistics. Key steps included:

* Audience behaviour analysis:
  + Elderly users with limited technical knowledge, needing larger text, clear navigation, explicit messages
  + Caretakers requiring promotion tools.
  + Managers focused on analytics and announcement features.
* Field study:
  + Studying successful platforms that have a view to the health of the users
  + Identifying gaps, such as the lack of personalized interaction
* Accessibility Considerations:
  + Testing colour contrast and readability for elderly users.

Research outcomes highlighted the importance of intuitive design, tailored specifically for the addressed niche, but also a seamless navigation throughout the entire application.

## Design fundamentals

The design of *CareNest* follows the Nielsen & Molich heuristic principles to ensure usability and functionality. Below are the principles and their application to *CareNest*:

* Visibility of System Status:

Incorporates loading indicators, and feedback notifications for user actions.

* Match Between System and the Real World:

Uses familiar icons and terminology, such as a house icon for the homepage and clear labels for buttons (e.g., "Create account").

* User Control and Freedom:

Allows users cancel actions like edits to available sicknesses (see appendix picture 7)

* Consistency:

Maintains a consistent, green-themed colour palette and typography across all pages (see appendix picture 1)

* Error Prevention:

validation rules for form inputs, such as email format checks during login and registration, with explicit messages in case of error

* Recognition Rather Than Recall:

quick access to commonly used features using a fixed navigation bar at the top of the page.

* Aesthetic and Minimalist Design:

Uses a clean design, allowing for essential information to be seen without difficulty

* Help Users Recognize errors:

Displays error messages with clear explanations and actionable steps (see appendix picture 2)

## Design fundamentals

The visual design of CareNest reflects its mission of care and community. Key elements include:

* Colour Palette:
  + #2e6b34 for buttons and headings
  + #f0fdf4 for backgrounds, conveys trust and health.
* Fonts:
  + Simple and legible fonts, with larger sizes for elderly users.
  + Fonts like Inter and Helvetica are known for their clarity, making them excellent for displaying text clearly across various screen sizes
  + Including Arial and sans-serif ensures the design remains functional even if the primary fonts are unavailable
* Responsive Design:
  + Ensures compatibility with various devices, particularly tablets and smartphones, often used by elderly users.
* Branding:
  + Incorporates the logo and branding of People for People NGO, for credibility.

## UX features

In the **patient** accounts, the following key actions are present:

* Account management (see appendix picture 5)

One can easily create a new account with valid credentials, but also update personal details in a dedicated section if necessary (see appendix picture 2).

* Caretaker list view

Patients can see lists of available caretakers whose services they can request (see appendix picture 3)

* Announcement view

Registered patients can see lists of announcements posted by managers (see appendix picture 4)

**Managers**’ highlighted actions are:

* Personal account management (see appendix picture 5)
* Announcements management

Announcements can be posted and edited

* Managers lists

Managers have the authority to add new managers to the system, but also see lists of these active employees (see appendix picture 6)

**Caretakers’** actions include:

* Personal account management
* Request management

One can accept or deny requests received from patients

# Testing and Findings

After successfully developing a stable version of the application based on research and general statistics, it is highly important that it meets the user’s approval, and it is accepted by those the platform was designed for. This is why in this chapter one can find the results of several testing sessions performed over the course of the project.

## Session 1

### Results of users’ feedback

Participant 1: User acting as Caretaker/Manager

**Description:**

* Name: Alexandru Ivan
* Age: 21 years old
* Profession: Student at Fontys ICT
* Background: Proficient in technology and experienced in using web applications for managing tasks.
* Relation to target audience: Is familiar with self-promoting services
* Purpose of Testing: Evaluated the caretaker and manager features

**Positive Aspects:**

* User Interface (UI): The clean layout and intuitive navigation were appreciated. The user found the green-themed design visually appealing and in accordance with the theme of the application.
* Performance: Loading times for pages, especially the caretaker list and announcement management sections, helped understand the time estimations.
* Features: The ability to manage announcements were straightforward and efficient.

**Critical Feedback:**

* “Lazy” System: The user would want to know about newly posted announcements while taking care of other tasks, not by constantly navigating to the announcements page to see if there are any updates
* Onboarding Experience: It was not clear for the user what were the responsibilities of a manager, and what can be done via this web application

Participant 2: User acting as patient

**Description:**

* Name: Ionica Cristea
* Age: 72 years old
* Background: Retired schoolteacher living independently with mild mobility issues.
* Technical Background: Limited experience with technology, primarily uses a phone for video calls and browsing.
* Relation to target audience: Fits the age group, is interested in the services of caretakers, enjoys learning about how to improve her health
* Purpose of Testing: Focused on the patient features

**Positive Aspects:**

* Accessibility: The large fonts and high-contrast colour scheme were highly appreciated. The user found the text easy to read and buttons easy to click.
* Clarity: Labels and icons were clear and self-explanatory. Actions like announcements were easy to identity and perform.
* Simplicity: The minimalist design helped user focus on essential tasks without confusion.

**Critical Feedback:**

* Navigation: The fixed navbar covered parts of the screen on smaller devices, making it hard to view all content.
* Search Functionality: It was hard for the user to find the specialisation of a caretaker
* Form Filling: While the forms were simple, the elderly user struggled with dropdown menus due to their small click areas
* Loading Indicators: Some actions, like creating an account, did not have visible feedback (e.g., a loading spinner), leading to uncertainty about the progress state of the action

### Findings and points of improvement

Based on the feedback provided in the first testing session, several improvements have been identified, so that the application can provide the best user experience from every perspective: patient, caretaker and manager as well.

For managers and caretakers, integrating a notification system for new announcements or requests will make sure that the new information is seen faster. A step-by-step onboarding tutorial would provide first-time users with a smoother introduction to the platform's features.

For patients, the fixed navbar issue on smaller devices can be addressed by adjusting the responsiveness of the design. Introducing the search functionality to the application (including filters such as caretaker specialization or location) will make finding suitable caretakers easier, but at the same time the cards containing the highlighting information of the caretaker should mention the specialisation for avoiding misunderstandings. Loading indicators will be added to actions like account creation or caretaker requests to provide clear feedback on progress.

# Conclusion

In conclusion, the *CareNest* platform demonstrates a foundation of design principles, meeting the needs of its users. However, the findings from the initial testing session have revealed areas for improvement, such as including a notification system, adding onboarding tutorials, and resolving usability issues like navbar responsiveness and form interactions. These refinements will ensure a seamless and enjoyable user experience for all stakeholders, aligning with the mission of *CareNest* and the values of *People for People NGO*. By continually asking for feedback, *CareNest* can solidify its role as a trusted and accessible platform for elderly individuals, caretakers, and managers alike.

# Appendix

A screenshot of a computer

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Picture 1. Visuals

A screenshot of a computer

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Picture 2. Error messages

A screenshot of a computer

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Picture 3. Caretakers view

A screenshot of a computer

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Picture 4. Announcements view

A screenshot of a computer

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Picture 5. Personal profile

A screenshot of a computer

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Picture 6. Managers management

A screenshot of a computer

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Picture 6. Actions cancelling