



Independent Life Podcast Features PPL's Mark Altieri



Have you heard? There's an episode out there that you need to check out! "The Independent Life," featuring Mark Altieri, PPL's VP of Business Development, the episode is called "Self-Directed Home Care with Mark Altieri."

Host Tony Delisle discusses with Mark the basics behind self-directed care, its benefits and PPL's role in this model. Mark begins with his personal experience and connection to self-direction. When Mark's son was 2 years old, he required a heart transplant. While Mark's son is now a junior in high school, but that experience had a

defining effect on Mark's professional path. He says he learned about the journey a parent makes when managing the health of a seriously ill child. He could empathize with our participants and the multitude of providers they deal with.

During the conversation, Mark broke down the reasons for self-direction and why – especially now – it's a great solution.

Why now, more than ever, is home care so important?

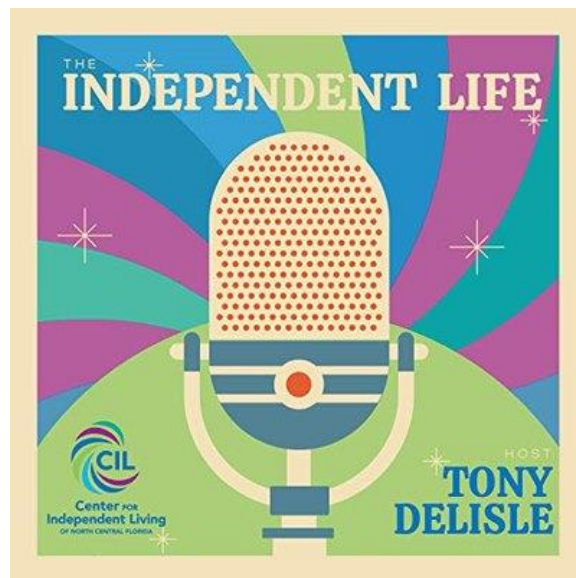
We've seen a decline in the number of facilities – some of this is due to COVID-19. The pandemic also decimated the home care workforce. During COVID-19, many care givers left their jobs and landed other positions where pay was comparable to a caregiver's hourly wage and perhaps with better benefits (less burnout, more flexible schedule, quick onboarding, etc.).

Another factor fueling the self-directed market is the aging of the baby boomer generation. The U.S. population will be older than it's ever been in 2030 when all the baby boomers reach retirement age. This creates a greater need for a healthcare solution. It also contributes to a decline in the workforce.

What are the types of homecare support?

- **Support with ADLs** (activities of daily living) – getting out of bed, dressed, from one floor to another, one room to another, getting a healthy meal that's eaten, getting the mail, homemaker tasks (clean up after meal), and so important - social interaction that keeps people healthy. Additionally, helping with tasks like getting out to the grocery store, to empower individuals to maintain their control over the process and get some social interaction.
- **Traditional care** – the participant has to adapt to the system versus Self-Direction where the system adapts to the person.
- **Respite** – for mental health for the caregiver where caregivers can use time away to avoid caregiver fatigue.

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What are some of the financial dynamics of self-directed care?

There are billions of dollars of unpaid caregivers in the U.S. - family or friends that are caring for a loved one who are not being compensated. Self-directed care enables these individuals to receive some pay perhaps alleviating the financial stress that caring for a loved one can have on a family/individual.

Participant-centered care also allows for additional funds to go right to the caregiver versus agencies who take a cut of the pay so there are more dollars for care vs. administrative fees/overhead. Participant-centered allows for higher hourly pay.

Are there other benefits to self-directed care?

Self-directed care is more accommodating to the individual's schedule. A participant may have an evening routine or is an early riser – a self-directed caregiver is generally closer geographically to the participant and knows their routines better. We're finding in rural areas; agency caregivers may not be able to get to the participant as readily.

Self-directed care puts control in the participant's hands. Participants can pick their own caregiver - someone they know and trust to be in their home and will provide a more intimate level of care. Often caregivers are already in the mix, providing care for family or friends.

Longevity of the caregiver. The hope is there is less change in caregivers when a participant selects their own caregiver. They'll stay in the role for a longer time than agency caregivers who can transition in/out of the agency.

Read on to see excerpts from Mark Altieri as taken from this podcast.

What inspires you?

It is being a dad of a 16-year-old and 12-year-old. When my kids ask me what I do? I'm proud to tell them the work I do makes people's lives better, we empower, support individuals to live their best lives.

What does the "independent life" mean to you?

It's not having someone else to tell you 'the who', how and when as it relates to one's care for themselves or a loved one. If that's compromised, it's impactful to a person's outlook, sense of freedom and choice.

PPL gets the individual enrolled in one of our programs (paperwork, hiring paperwork completed, payroll and more). This allows the participant to focus on getting care.

- Adult companion care-getting people out to socialize.
- Homemaker-most care in home, dishes are done after the meal.
- Personal care.
- Attendant nursing care.
- Intermittent skilled nurse.
- Could be a combination of the above.

“A lot of times people need help in their life journey. They're not alone. Often you find people that you're close to that may have had experiences on this path that you may not have realized.” – Mark Altieri