

Central Iowa Shelter & Services New Mobile App Empowers Stability and Self-Sufficiency - May 15, 2025

DES MOINES, Iowa, May 15, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- [Central Iowa Shelter & Services](#) (CISS) is proud to launch bindl-companion, a community-driven mobile app designed to empower individuals experiencing homelessness by connecting them to essential resources and guiding them toward self-sufficiency. The bindl-companion app is a portion of a 2-year \$2.55 million commitment to CISS by [Iowa Total Care](#) and the [Centene Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation.

The bindl-companion app puts choice and control directly into users' hands, streamlining access to resources without the traditional barriers of complex systems. Users can actively manage their journey to stability from their smartphones, supported by empowerment partners. Specifically designed to empower users towards self-sufficiency, aligning clearly with our Empowerment Formula (Effort x Motivation<sup>2</sup> + Support<sup>3</sup> = Pathway).

### **Scaling Human-Centered Empowerment**

The bindl-companion app is built upon a proven human-centered approach developed through the Empowerment Command Center model. By digitally scaling this approach, this app extends personal agency and self-sufficiency strategies while preserving critical human connections and support networks.

### **Ongoing Community-Driven Innovation**

The bindl-companion was co-designed by over 309 community members, including users, empowerment partners, nonprofit leaders, community leaders, and public officials. Its ongoing design and development have been generously supported by the Centene Foundation, CISS Board Members Jennifer Findlay, Don Schoen, and James Wessels, and Carlos Rojas from twopoint0, whose commitment to innovation helped shape the platform.

### **Version 1.0 is Just the Beginning**

The current release marks an exciting start, showcasing initial core capabilities. Future updates will add enhanced functionalities informed by community feedback and real-world use. Community members, service providers, and stakeholders passionate about empowerment and innovation are invited to help shape bindl-companion's continued evolution.

"The bindl-companion puts empowerment at the core, helping individuals take meaningful control of their lives while building stronger community connections," said Melissa O'Neil, CEO at CISS. "This is about meeting people exactly where they are and walking alongside them toward stability and success."

### **Download and Learn More**

bindl-companion is available now in the Google Play store as "bindl-companion" or you can visit the CISS [Empowerment Command Center](#) for more information.

### **About Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS)**

[Central Iowa Shelter & Services](#) is the largest low-barrier shelter in Iowa. Its mission is to provide shelter, meals and support services to adults experiencing homelessness and to facilitate their move toward self-sufficiency. CISS also provides housing services to a 15-county region through its Rolling Hills Coalition.

### **About Iowa Total Care**

[Iowa Total Care](#) provides Medicaid healthcare coverage to eligible individuals in Iowa. Established in 2019, Iowa Total Care exists to improve the health of its members through focused, compassionate, and coordinated care. Iowa Total Care is a wholly owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation, a leading healthcare enterprise that is committed to helping people live healthier lives.

### **About the Centene Foundation**

[The Centene Foundation](#) (the "Foundation"), a private nonprofit focused on investing in economically challenged communities, is the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation ("Centene"). The Foundation supports projects and initiatives strategically aligned with Centene's mission-driven culture and enhances the work Centene is doing to remove the barriers to wellness underserved and low-income populations face. The Foundation is committed to addressing social determinants of health and improving health equity in three distinct areas of focus: healthcare access, social services, and education. To learn more, visit the Centene Foundation's website.

SOURCE Iowa Total Care

For further information: CISS Contact: Melissa O'Neil, CEO, Central Iowa Shelter & Services, 515-284-5719, [director@centraliowashelter.org](mailto:director@centraliowashelter.org) or Iowa Total Care Contact: Nancy Thompson, Director, Marketing & Community Relations, [mediainquiriesIA@iowatotalcare.com](mailto:mediainquiriesIA@iowatotalcare.com)

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