

How To Build Your Own Referral System

A simple guide for assisted living, memory care, adult family home, and home care providers who are tired of paying a placement agency every single time.

A FREE GUIDE FROM CRAFTSFLOW

If you're like most senior care and home care business owners, you're getting new residents or clients one of two ways: word of mouth, or a placement agency. Word of mouth is unpredictable. A placement agency works, but it charges you a fee every single time, usually a big chunk of a month's rent, and only after someone actually moves in.

There's a third way: build your own referral system. It takes more effort up front, but once it's running, it keeps working without a new fee every time someone moves in. This guide walks through exactly how, in plain terms, no jargon.

1. Get Found Online First

Before you reach out to anyone, make sure there's something real for them to find. Most senior care and home care businesses skip this step, and it costs them.

- A simple, professional website that clearly explains what you do
- A complete Google Business Profile — photos, hours, services, all filled in, not half-done
- Active social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) that looks current, not abandoned

Why this matters: when a case manager considers referring a family to you, or a family is comparing their options, the first thing they do is look you up. If there's nothing there, or it looks outdated, you lose them before you ever get a chance to make your case.

2. Know Who Actually Refers Patients

Referrals for senior care and home care don't usually come out of nowhere. They come from specific people whose job is to help families figure out where to go next. The main ones:

- Hospital discharge planners (often nurses or social workers)
- Geriatric care managers, also called Aging Life Care Professionals
- Hospital and skilled nursing facility social workers
- Home health agency case managers
- Insurance / managed care case managers

These people build a mental list of businesses they trust and refer to again and again. Getting on that list is the whole game.

3. Find Them

You don't need special software for this. Here's where to look:

- Search Google for “[your city] hospital discharge planner” or “[your city] geriatric care manager”
- Search LinkedIn for “case manager [your city]” or “discharge planner [your city]”
- Check the Aging Life Care Association directory — it lists care managers by location
- Check your local Area Agency on Aging — most counties have one, and they often keep lists of local senior services

4. Reach Out And Build The Relationship

- 1 Put together a one-page overview of your business — what you offer, your current openings or availability, a few photos, what makes you different.
- 2 Reach out directly — a LinkedIn message, an email, or a phone call — introducing your business and asking to be considered for their referrals.
- 3 Don't expect an instant yes. These are professional relationships, and they take a few months to build real trust.
- 4 Stay in touch. A quick update every few weeks on your current availability keeps you top of mind without being pushy.

5. Be Patient

This isn't an overnight fix. Most businesses start seeing real referral flow after two to three months of consistent outreach. The businesses that give up after a few weeks are the ones that never see it work. The ones that stick with it build something that keeps paying off long after the effort of those first few months.

Doing This Yourself vs. Having It Done For You

Everything in this guide is something you can do on your own. It takes real time: building a website and Google presence properly, researching the right referral contacts in your specific area, writing outreach that actually gets a response, and staying consistent with follow-up for months, not weeks.

If you'd rather have this handled for you, by a team that does this specifically for senior care and home care businesses, that's exactly what we do at Craftsflow.

→ **Book a free 15-minute call**

→ **Or get your free Referral Readiness Snapshot to see exactly where you stand today**