



Thryve Labs and Barber National Institute Take Next Step in Pilot Partnership to Advance AI-Enhanced Caregiving Technologies

Erie, PA – Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2025 – Thryve Labs, an AI-powered caregiving technology company, today took the next step in a pilot partnership with Barber National Institute to deploy intelligent monitoring technology in community homes serving individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism.

The two organizations have reached a critical milestone, identifying a pilot location and establishing a clear timeline for the partnership. The collaboration aims to combine real-world insights from staff and families - backed by decades of person-centered care expertise - with Thryve's AI models to improve outcomes for both residents and their caregivers.

The partnership and pilot represent a significant step forward in Barber National Institute's 73-year mission to provide hope and opportunity to individuals with disabilities and their families, a vision established by its founder Dr. Gertrude A. Barber when she opened the first classroom for children with intellectual disabilities in Erie in 1952.

"Dr. Barber's legacy was built on ensuring dignity, respect, and opportunity for every individual she served," said Thryve Labs CEO Dr. Robert J. Szczerba. "Our technology is designed to honor that vision by empowering caregivers and administrators with the tools and insights they need to deliver even better care while reducing the administrative burden that takes them away from the people they serve."

Thryve Labs is a spinout of Carnegie Foundry, a venture studio that partners with Carnegie Mellon University to launch companies using advanced technologies including AI, robotics, and sensors.

The partnership comes at a critical time for the caregiving sector. With 55 million Americans providing unpaid care to 70 million people, and residential care facilities facing high burnout rates and unprecedented demand, - projected to grow from 7.2 million residents today to 9.2 million by 2030 - innovative solutions are essential.

"Dr. Barber advocated for children and adults with intellectual disabilities to be members of their communities and live life to their fullest potential," said Barber National Institute Senior Vice President Robert Barber. "This partnership with Thryve Labs represents the next chapter in our cause, using cutting-edge technology to ensure our staff have the support they need to provide the highest quality care."

Barber continued, "Like many organizations in our field, we face significant waitlists of families seeking residential services while struggling to recruit and retain the quality direct support professionals this demanding work requires. If Thryve's technology can help us reduce the hours our staff spend on documentation and administrative tasks, support them in delivering high quality, responsive care, and give families greater transparency into their loved ones' daily lives, we believe it has the potential to help us serve more individuals without compromising the personalized attention that defines quality care. That's capacity building that matters, not just for Barber National Institute, but for every family waiting for services and every dedicated caregiver who chose this profession to make a difference in people's lives."

Barber National Institute, which serves more than 5,400 children and adults annually across Pennsylvania with over 3,000 dedicated staff members, is pioneering the integration of AI to enhance, rather than replace, the human expertise of direct support professionals and program specialists.

Thryve's passive AI system will be testing and learning ways to provide continuous environmental awareness that helps caregivers:

- **Reduce administrative time:** AI-generated shift notes and documentation support free caregivers to spend more time on direct care rather than paperwork.
- **Enable evidence-based care plans:** Rich observational data helps program specialists develop more effective, personalized care strategies and track progress over time.
- **Improve incident response:** Automated detection of atypical situations and comprehensive documentation streamline case management.
- **Support family communication:** Scheduled or on-demand updates keep families informed about their loved ones' well-being.

Critically, the system is designed with custom privacy controls including local data storage, no audio recording and consent-based tracking that respects individual dignity. "This isn't about surveillance, it's about support," added Barber. "We're providing direct support professionals with intelligent awareness that helps them deliver better care while maintaining the respect and dignity that every individual deserves."

Understanding that AI technology can raise legitimate concerns, both organizations emphasize that this initiative is built on principles of dignity, quality of care, and workforce support. The technology is explicitly designed to support, not replace, direct support professionals. By reducing time spent on documentation and administrative tasks, the system enables direct support professionals to focus on what they do best: providing compassionate, skilled care. The pilot will actively involve staff feedback to ensure the technology enhances, rather than hinders, their important work.

Thryve Labs recently announced its acceptance into prestigious AI startup programs with AWS, Microsoft, Google, and NVIDIA, recognition that positions the company to scale its mission of supporting caregivers and improving quality of life for vulnerable populations. As detailed in their recent [announcement](#), these partnerships provide crucial infrastructure and support for developing technology that can transform caregiving across settings.

Dr. Barber's pioneering work changed the landscape of modern caregiving by insisting that individuals with disabilities deserved dignity, community integration, and the opportunity to reach their full potential. Today, Barber National Institute continues that mission across 94 community homes and multiple service locations throughout Pennsylvania.

About Thryve Labs

Thryve Labs is an AI-powered caregiving technology company focused on addressing the national caregiving crisis. A spinout of Carnegie Foundry, a venture studio that partners with Carnegie Mellon University's National Robotics Engineering Center, Thryve develops predictive monitoring solutions that empower caregivers by taking over much of the mundane documentation required and more. With backing from Stand Together Ventures Lab and Barber National Institute, Thryve is committed to maintaining dignity and privacy while improving quality of life for aging adults and individuals with developmental circumstances. Learn more at www.thryvelabs.ai.

About Barber National Institute

Barber National Institute is guided by compassion, innovation, and an unshakable belief in human potential. The organization works every day to help make dreams come true for people of all abilities. Founded in 1952 by Dr. Gertrude A. Barber, it has grown from a single classroom into a comprehensive network of services for 5,400 adults and children with intellectual disabilities, autism, and behavioral health

challenges. With locations in Bedford, Erie, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Somerset, and Warren, the organization empowers individuals and families through education, residential options, employment, and community programs. Barber National Institute carries forward Dr. Barber's legacy and vision of a world where everyone belongs and lives to their fullest potential. Learn more at www.barberinstitute.org.

Media Contacts

Matt Wachter
Thryve Labs
matt@thryvelabs.ai
(814) 572-7467

Tammy Roche
Barber National Institute
tammyroche@barberni.org
(814) 969-8027

Editor's Note: The image provided is AI-generated.