Notes from the Village

Building the trust network around your health data, one update at a time.

TrustMyOwn.Health 021 — Why For-Profit?

Someone asked me this week: Why isn't TrustMyOwn.Health a nonprofit?

Fair question. When an organization says it will hold your health data and never sell it without your permission, a nonprofit can seem like the safer bet. No owners taking profits out. Every dollar goes back to the mission.

We chose to be a company for two reasons.

First, flexibility. TMOH is the hub of a village, not the whole village. Being a for-profit company lets us work with many kinds of partners, from small businesses to clinics to community groups, and tailor each relationship to the job.

Second, nonprofit doesn't mean ethical, nor does it guarantee that the people it serves get a say. According to the American Hospital Association, more than half of US hospitals are nonprofit, and some nonprofit health systems bring in over $100 billion a year. I've worked in nonprofit hospitals and for-profit insurers. I've seen a managed care office balance mission and money well, and a nonprofit run all about the bottom line, with the mission there for show. Tax status didn't predict which one I'd trust. Trust comes from promises you can verify, which no one can quietly rewrite. That's what our Data Sovereignty Covenant is for.

Here's how we picture the village right now.

TMOH keeps the promises. We write and guard the covenant, build the TMOH health data vault, and decide who gets to join.

Local data banks do the hands-on work: setup, training, and the "why won't this upload?" calls. Each one joins TMOH through what we call a white-label franchise. That means it has its own local name, look, and presence while keeping TMOH's core promises and software. A local data bank might be a small business, a community health center, a library, or a nonprofit.

Trust networks bring people together: a caregiver group, a disease community, or a congregation. They have a say in how their local data bank operates.

Service vendors do specific jobs, like generating a report on my sleep and blood pressure. They see only what I agree to show them, for as long as I agree.

At the center is you, the Vault Owner. You own your data and sign every agreement regarding its use.

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Each part of the village can take whatever form suits its purpose. A nonprofit data bank and a for-profit one make the same promises, with the same limits. The covenant travels with your data, not with anyone's tax status. Trust is local.

We're in alpha, testing with real people and real-world use cases, and the details will keep changing as we learn. So, I'll ask you: What would make you trust a local data bank? Hit reply. I read every one.

Best health for where you are, with what you have, right now.

Onward,
Danny Health Hats

I use Claude Opus 5.5 and Grammarly to help edit for brevity, flow, and tone. I am responsible for the content.