



1st July, '25

Accessing digital health services: addressing belief & trust barriers

VCSE

health &
wellbeing
alliance ■



Good Things

Welcome & housekeeping

- Please add any questions or reflections into the chat panel. We will draw on questions from the chat panel during the Q&A session after the presentations.
- Session will be recorded, and the recording will be made available on the Good Things website after the event.
- Slides from the session will be circulated after the event.
- Two quick polls at the beginning and end of the session, to help our evaluation.

Welcome & opening poll

Setting the scene: digital health services and healthcare inequalities

Karol Kuczera, NHS England

Learning from the beliefs and trust co-design project

Jo Reynolds, Good Things Foundation

Supporting engagement with digital health services: a carers' perspective

Bernie Huntingdon & Shaf Majid, Forward Carers

Q&A, closing poll & finish

Agenda

The right side of the slide features a dark blue background. In the bottom right corner, there are several large, overlapping, teal-colored abstract shapes that resemble stylized brushstrokes or organic forms.

About us



Good Things
Foundation

Our mission is to Fix the Digital Divide
– for Good.

We want everyone to:

Have the internet access they need

Feel able and safe in the online world

Have somewhere local they can go to
get help to use the internet



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Opening poll

To help us understand any difference the session makes, we invite you to complete an anonymous poll now, and at the end of the session. We'd love to know:

- What **sector** you work in
- Your level of **understanding** of belief and trust barriers to accessing digital health services
- Your level of **confidence** to help someone address belief and trust barriers to accessing digital health services



Setting the scene: digital health services and health inequalities

Karol Kuczera, NHS England

Digital inclusion: Beliefs and Trust

July 2025

Karol Leszek Kuczera

Senior Healthcare Policy Manager
Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme

Healthcare inequalities improvement programme

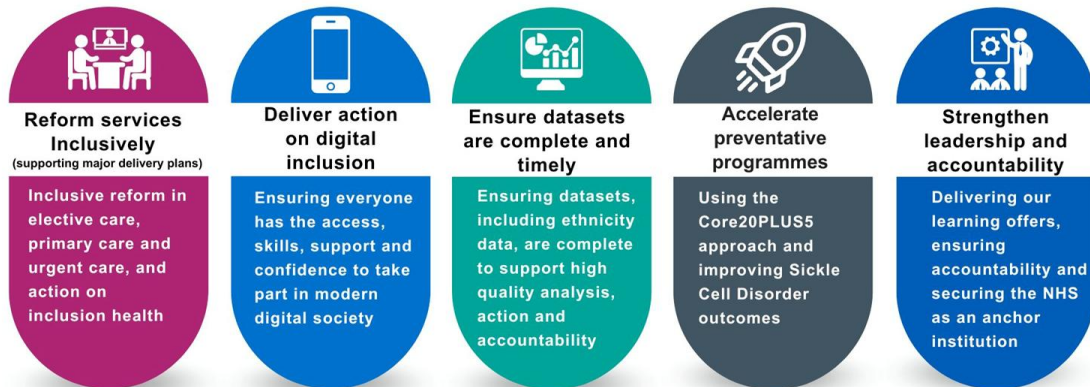
england.healthinequalities@nhs.net

Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme

Strategic priorities

Vision: Exceptional quality healthcare for all; through equitable access, excellent experience and optimal outcomes

To support our vision, we have set five strategic priorities with associated support and initiatives



Digital Inclusion Framework



<https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/inclusive-digital-healthcare-a-framework-for-nhs-action-on-digital-inclusion/>



Belief and trust barriers to accessing digital health services

Jo Reynolds, Good Things Foundation

NHS framework for action on digital inclusion

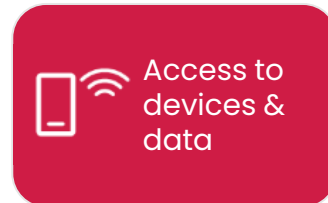
[Link to framework](#)

Beliefs and trust identified as one of the 5 core domains to inclusive digital health services.

But we lack understanding of what the belief and trust barriers might be, and how to address them.

Project aims:

1. To explore belief & trust barriers, and
2. To co-design a resource to help address them



Defining digital health services

Digital health services can include:

- NHS App
- GP appointment booking platforms
- Video platforms for consultations / therapy
- Health monitoring / treatment apps
- Other online platforms / tools for accessing personal medical information or services



Research & co-design project – our approach

Background research

Review of recent literature, to steer next phases

Discover & define

- Workshops with 32 people with lived experience; hosted by 3 community organisations
- Explored experience, beliefs and concerns about digital health services

Design

- Follow-up workshops to generate ideas for a resource to help address key concerns
- Additional consultation activities with health & care staff, and other community members

Refine & deliver

Finalisation of leaflet, following further feedback from co-design participants

Key areas of concern: data & quality of care

Data sharing and privacy

Concerns about:

- Who has access to personal medical data
- Risk of data breach / loss
- Fear of data being shared with external parties (beyond patient's best interests)

"Who is accessing my medical notes? We are not told"

Communication & quality of care

Concerns that:

- It's harder to communicate with health professionals through digital tools eg lack of non-verbal cues
- Care is less personal
- Language and literacy challenges make it harder to be heard for some
- May not receive appropriate care as a result

"They don't see me"

Key areas of concern: hard to use & autonomy

Digital health services may be difficult to use

Concerns about:

- The time and effort it takes to get started
- Where to go for support if a digital service doesn't seem to be working
- Higher chance of making a mistake (patients and staff)

"How do I know it gets it right?"

Lack of choice & autonomy

Concerns that:

- Once you move to digital there is no going back to face-to-face
- Increasing digital health services is a cost-cutting exercise
- Digital services are not designed for 'people like me'

"There is no turning back"

Recommended features of a resource

Reassurance

**Case studies of
positive experience**

**To be used in
conversation**

Balanced tone

**Practical
considerations**

Signposting

Wider learning for the health/ care system

Belief & confidence barriers among staff:

Need better understanding and to empower staff to be able to support patients

Confusing range & variety of digital tools:

Need more consistency of digital health platforms, to reduce confusion for patients & staff

Clearer communication about reason for digital shift: Help bridge trust gap by communicating benefits and limitations of digital tools

Inclusive design and local support needed:

Emphasis on need for inclusive service design, and equitable, local support for people to feel confident



[Link to project report](#)

Introducing the leaflet

Worried about using digital health services?

If you have concerns about going online to access health services, you're not alone.

This guide provides information about common worries about using digital health services, and suggests questions you can ask to find out more.



This guide has been produced with input from people who, either personally or through family members, have faced challenges doing things online. It has been published by Good Things Foundation with support from the VCSE Health & Wellbeing Alliance



1. Concerned about what happens to your personal information?

Many people feel uneasy about sharing their data or to know who can view their health information. If you're OK to ask your GP or other healthcare staff about information is stored and shared.

Here are some questions you could ask:

- Who can see the information I provide service like booking an appointment or test results?
- Who can I speak to when I need to check email about my healthcare is real, and
- How can I check and update who has health records?



Naveed, 52, has always been cautious about sharing personal information. When his GP practice introduced online appointment booking, he was worried about who could access his medical history and whether the system was secure.

After discussing his concerns with the receptionist at the

surgery, he learned the system was approved by the receptionist and means only qualified healthcare professionals see his data. Although Naveed's phone booking matters, he now more confident online system for appointments.

Find out more

Read more about how the NHS uses personal data at <https://digital.nhs.uk/your-data>



2. Concerned that health care will be personal?

Some people worry that talking about their health online will be harder than in person. They're concerned they might not get the right care.

Here are some questions you can ask to make sure that's best for you:

- If I don't feel my concerns were properly discussed during a phone or video consultation, what can I do?
- How can I request an in-person appointment if a phone or video consultation isn't working?



Leah, 41, has a young child with asthma and often needs to book GP appointments. She was initially concerned that using digital health services might feel impersonal, especially regarding her child's health.

She started by using online appointment booking and found it more convenient than waiting on hold. She then started using the NHS App to request repeat prescriptions, which saved her time.

When her child became worse, initially offered consultation. She was worried that she would person appointment arranged.

Leah now uses for practical tasks booking appointment prescriptions by person appointment serious concern



3. Concerned that digital health services will be difficult to use?

Some people worry that setting up digital health services will be complicated and that they might make a mistake.

Sometimes these services can be a little bit tricky for support to get started. Here are some questions you could ask:

- Who can I speak to if I find a health service difficult to use?
- If I make a mistake when filling in a form online, someone to get this fixed?
- Can I try out an online service for something urgent?



Alisa, 72, isn't confident with technology and finds online forms frustrating. When she received a text from her GP practice asking her to book an appointment online, she didn't know where to start and worried she might press the wrong button.

She visited her local community centre, where a volunteer helped her go through the

Find out more

The Learn My Way platform offers free training on digital skills, including using digital health services. Visit <https://www.learnmyway.com/>



4. Concerned that you don't have a choice around digital health services?

Some people feel that digital health services are being forced upon them. They are worried that they have no choice about how to make appointments or receive care.

You can always ask about your options for non-digital care, to make sure you're receiving care in the best way for you. Here are some questions you could ask:

- Can I still request an urgent appointment over the phone or in person instead of using an online system?
- Can I switch between digital and in-person services depending on my needs?
- If I try a digital service but later decide I prefer in-person care, can I switch back?



Robbie, 38, helps to care for his father, who has a long-term condition. Robbie was initially worried that digital health services would make it harder to get in-person GP practice appointments when needed.

Robbie found he saved time by using online booking for his father's check-ups and requesting repeat prescriptions through the NHS App. It was also less stressful.

With Robbie's help, his father has had a couple of successful video consultations about his condition, meaning they didn't need to visit the surgery. However, Robbie will request in-person appointments for any urgent issues that arise for his father.

Next steps & acknowledgements

Next steps:

- Keen to develop the leaflet in different, accessible formats
- Would love to hear feedback and how you're using it (email research@goodthingsfoundation.org)
- Explore crossover with other online services

Very grateful to the contributions of:

- The 32 people who participated in the co-design workshops
- Forward Carers, Crossgates Good Neighbours, and Health for All who helped coordinate the co-design workshops
- The 19 people who contributed to the additional consultation activities
- Sarah Alden who facilitated the co-design workshops
- NHS England and the VCSE Health & Wellbeing Alliance



Supporting engagement with digital health services: a carers' perspective

Bernie Huntingdon & Shaf Majid,
Forward Carers

Reflections, questions & discussion

Time for your comments and questions –
please add them to the chat panel.



Closing poll

To help us understand the value of this session, please complete the follow-up poll questions:

- How much **understanding** you feel you have **now** of belief and trust barriers to accessing digital health services
- How much **confidence** you feel you have **now** to help someone address belief and trust barriers to accessing digital health services

Learn more good things

Contact us:

research@goodthingsfoundation.org



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