Digital inclusion guide for health and social care

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Information and technology for better health and care
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1. Introduction

Key messages

1. The NHS, and the wider health and care system, is committed to delivering information and services digitally wherever appropriate.

2. For patients, digital health can mean better access to information and care, increased convenience, and more opportunities for greater control of their own health and shared care.

3. For the health and care system digital health can mean more effective delivery of care, better outcomes and reduced costs.

4. However many of the people who could most benefit from digital services are the least likely to be online. One in five people lack basic digital skills and one in eleven people have never been online. These are likely to be older, less educated and in poorer health than the rest of the population.

5. Local health and care services should take into account the needs of people who may be digitally excluded.

6. There is a strong business case for the benefits of improving digital inclusion.

7. Health and care organisations can work with a range of community partners to improve digital inclusion.

8. This guide includes a range of resources which can help commissioners and providers to take action locally.

Who this guide is for

This guide to digital inclusion is aimed at local health and care organisations to help them to take practical steps to support digital inclusion in their communities.

It should be relevant to:

- commissioners of health and care services, including clinical commissioning groups – so that they can take into account the needs of local populations who may be digitally excluded
- sustainability and transformation partnerships and emerging integrated care systems – so that they can ensure that digital inclusion is central to the design of future services
- providers of health and care services – so that they can ensure that services delivered digitally are as inclusive as possible
- local authorities and voluntary organisations – so that they can make the most of partnerships with the health and care sector to improve digital inclusion

How this guide can help

The guide is intended to help you to understand:

- what we mean by digital inclusion
- who is likely to be digitally excluded and the barriers they may face
- why digital inclusion matters in health and care
• the benefits of supporting people to get online
• practical steps you can take to support digital inclusion locally
• the tools you can use to commission, provide and evaluate digital inclusion support
• resources for developing digital skills of health and care staff, carers and patients

This guide is part of the [NHS Empower the Person roadmap for digital health and care services](https://www.england.nhs.uk/empowerperson/).
2. What do we mean by digital inclusion?

Definition of digital inclusion

Digital inclusion is defined (in the Government Digital Inclusion Strategy) in terms of:

Digital skills

Being able to use computers and the internet. This is important, but a lack of digital skills is not necessarily the only, or the biggest, barrier people face.

Connectivity

And access to the internet. People need the right infrastructure but that is only the start.

Accessibility

Services should be designed to meet all users’ needs, including those dependent on assistive technology to access digital services. Accessibility is a barrier for many people, but digital inclusion is broader.

Assisted digital

Digital inclusion initiatives can help users improve their digital skills so that they can use online services. However some people will still need “assisted digital” support such as:

- access through alternative channels (telephone, face to face)
- help to use online services

Barriers to digital inclusion

Research for the UK Digital Strategy suggests that there are a number of important barriers, and more than one may affect individuals at any one time. They are:

- access - not everyone has the ability to connect to the internet and go online
- skills - not everyone has the ability to use the internet and online services
- confidence - some people fear online crime, lack trust or don’t know where to start online
- motivation - not everyone sees why using the internet could be relevant and helpful

As access, skills and confidence improve, it is increasingly important to tackle other barriers, including:

- design - not all digital services and products are accessible and easy to use
- awareness - not everyone is aware of digital services and products available to them
- staff capability and capacity - not all health and care staff have the skills and knowledge to recommend digital services and products to patients and service users

Who’s likely to be digitally excluded?

There has been real progress in internet access and use of online services. Today:
86% of households have internet access
75% of people go online via a mobile device
82% of people go online every day

The GOV.UK Digital Inclusion Dashboard shows progress on achieving a digitally inclusive society with the latest figures on digital inclusion. It includes data from Office of National Statistics, Ofcom, Oxford Internet Institute, Doteveryone and BBC social surveys.

But there are still significant levels of digital exclusion. 11.5m people in the UK lack the basic digital skills they need to use the internet effectively. And 4.8m people never go online at all.

Some sections of the population are more likely to be digitally excluded than others. These are:

- older people – 51% of digitally excluded are over 65
- people in lower income groups – 45% of digitally excluded earn less than £11.5k a year
- people without a job – 19% of digitally excluded are unemployed
- people in social housing – 37% of digitally excluded are social housing tenants
- people with disabilities – 56% of digitally excluded have a disability or long-term condition and 27% of adults with a disability (3.3m people) have never been online
- people with fewer educational qualifications - 78% of digitally excluded left school before 16
- people living in rural areas
- homeless people
Digital inclusion guide for health and social care

- people whose first language is not English

Good Things Foundation publishes an annually updated infographic showing who is digitally excluded in the UK and the reasons why they are not online.

**Who’s using digital health services?**

Half of all adults access health information online.

72% of adults use a smartphone.

Two thirds of visits to NHS Choices are now via smartphone.

One in ten people now have a wearable device such as a smart watch or fitness tracker.

Uptake of Patient Online is increasing but 76% of patients are still not registered for online GP services including appointment bookings and repeat prescriptions. One of the reasons is lack of awareness but another is patients (including heavy users of NHS services) not being online or lacking digital skills.

These videos from Patient Online illustrate the benefits to patients and the NHS of using GP online services, with personal case studies.
3. Why does digital inclusion matter to health and social care?

How digital inclusion can support health and social care priorities

Supporting people to get online and use digital health resources can be crucial to achieving local priorities including:

- physical and mental wellbeing
- prevention
- avoiding deterioration of existing health conditions
- self care
- long term condition management
- appropriate use of urgent and emergency care
- shared care
- shared decision making

In these videos, healthcare leaders talk about the importance of digital to local service transformation, and why digital inclusion is important so that nobody is left behind.

**Digital Inclusion: Improving access** - Rob Webster, Chief Executive, South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust talks about how digital inclusion is making a real difference to mental health service users.

**Digital Inclusion: Social prescribing** - Sir Sam Everington, GP and Chair of Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group, talks about social prescribing at the Bromley-by-Bow Centre.

**Digital Inclusion: Long-term conditions** - Dr Ruth Chambers, GP and Clinical Telehealth Lead at Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group, talks about how local clinical commissioning groups are taking on board digital inclusion.

**Digital inclusion and health inequalities**

People who have characteristics that are protected under the [Equality Act 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents) (age, disability, race) are less likely to have access to a computer and the internet, and the skills to use them. Health and care organisations should take this into account when carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs).

**Policy context**

Important commitments to digital inclusion have been made in:

**Five Year Forward View**

“Build the capacity of all citizens to access information”

“Develop partnerships with the voluntary sector and industry to support digital inclusion”
Personalised Health and Care 2020

“Ensure that the digital inclusion opportunity is inclusive”

“Build better insight into the barriers to digital inclusion”

In December 2015, Baroness Martha Lane Fox made recommendations to the NHS on tackling digital exclusion. These focused on rolling out universal free wi-fi throughout the NHS, prioritising the needs of the furthest first, and ensuring health staff have the skills to be digital champions. Martha talks about A Digital NHS for Everyone in this video.

Local digital roadmaps

In January 2017 local digital roadmaps (LDRs) were published for 65 local health and care “footprints”. Access all the local digital roadmaps with lists of the organisations involved.

Guidance on development of local digital roadmaps says:

“Local health and care systems should pay due attention to key enablers of the vision, including digital inclusion and the digital literacy of the workforce and patients and carers”

Local digital roadmaps vary considerably in how much attention they give to digital inclusion. This blog summarises a review of local digital roadmaps which looked at this. Look at yours and see how seriously it takes the issue. If you are involved in the ongoing development of your LDR make sure that future iterations take digital inclusion into account.

Here are some good examples of local digital roadmaps which do address digital inclusion:

Merseyside

“We will support digital inclusion so that digital opportunities are available to all who could benefit.

We will ensure increased digital skills for workforce and citizens. Fifty digital hubs for free internet access and volunteer digital champions to train those wishing to access the internet”.

North Central London

“There is differing ability to access and take advantage of technologies due to low health and IT literacy across NCL. Citizens will be supported by a network of digital champions to ensure those who are less comfortable with using digital technologies are not disadvantaged.”

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

“We recognise that digital literacy and digital inclusion are key enablers of our vision. To address these we have launched initiatives on digital skills for citizens and patients. These will take into account our obligations in terms of the Equality Act 2010 and Section 14 of the NHS Act 2006”.

Bassetlaw

“We need to concentrate on improving digital literacy so that interventions help to bridge, not exacerbate, the digital divide and health inequalities.”
Sustainability and transformation partnerships

NHS organisations and local authorities are developing joint proposals for how they will deliver health and care. Plans from sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs) covering all of England have been published. Over time, some STPs will become accountable care systems (ACSs), in which NHS providers and commissioners choose to take on collective responsibility for resources and population health, often in partnership with local authorities.

Video: Sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs)

STPs are focused on closing three gaps identified in the Five Year Forward View:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Care and quality
3. Finance and efficiency

Digital inclusion is crucial to:

- encouraging prevention and self-care
- improving access and convenience
- finding financial savings through shift to lower cost digital channels

Primary care

Most people’s contact with the health service is through their GP and primary care services, so it’s here that there is the greatest potential for widening digital inclusion.

Ensuring people are digitally included enables innovation in primary care, including High Impact Actions under NHS England’s General Practice Development Programme. Here are some case studies which show how patients can be supported in new ways – if they are online:

- **Active signposting** - web and app-based portals which provide self-help and self-management resources.
- **New consultation types** - including online consultations.
- **Supporting self-care and management** - through signposting to sources of information, advice and support in the community.
- **Social prescribing** - use referral and signposting to non-medical services in the community that increase wellbeing and independence.

Benefits of digital inclusion for health

When considering the business case, there is now good evidence of the benefits of improving digital inclusion.

The benefits for individual patients and carers, include:

- improved self-care for minor ailments
- improved self-management of long term conditions
- improved take-up of digital health tools and services
- time saved through accessing services digitally
• cost saved through accessing services digitally
• reduced loneliness and isolation
And benefits for the health and care system, including:
• lower cost of delivering services digitally
• more appropriate use of services, including primary care and urgent care
• better patient adherence to medicines and treatments
Evaluation of Phase One of the NHS Widening Digital Participation programme provides the most detailed analysis of the impact of increasing digital inclusion on health. Of those who were supported by the programme:
• 56% went on to find information on the internet about health
• 59% felt more confident in using health information
• 51% have now used the internet to explore ways to improve mental health and wellbeing
• 52% feel less lonely or isolated
• 54% of those in need of non-urgent medical advice said they would now go online before consulting their GP, to look at sites such as NHS Choices
• 21% have had less visits to their GP
• 22% have progressed to booking GP appointments online and 20% to ordering prescriptions online
• 39% have saved time through carrying out health transactions online
Read the evaluation report in full.

This evaluation estimates a return on investment of £6.40 for every £1.00 spent by the NHS on digital inclusion support.

Benefits for society and return on investment

Of course, increasing digital inclusion has benefits for society as a whole as well as for the NHS. It is important to take these benefits into consideration when considering the impacts for public health.

A 2014 report from BT - Valuing Digital Inclusion - calculated the social return on investment (SROI) of digital inclusion for individuals and for workers.

For individuals, getting online is worth £1,064 a year due to:

- increased confidence
- less social isolation
financial savings
increased opportunities in employment and leisure

For workers, getting online is worth £3,568 a year due to:
opportunities for remote working
increased earnings

A 2016 analysis of Scottish data carried out by Ipsos MORI for Carnegie UK Trust illustrates the wider societal benefits how internet use is associated with better health and wellbeing.

Those who use the internet are more likely to have:
been to a cultural event
visited outdoors for recreation
taken part in sport
volunteered

Conversely those who are not online are more likely to have visited their doctor once a month or more.

**Downsides**

While there are significant benefits, remember that being online can also have downsides. Some people have been scammed or victims of cyber-crime. Others (particularly young people) have been victims of online bullying. There is an abundance of “fake news” in health with poor quality health information online. Increasingly digital skills support is focusing on helping people approach the internet critically so that they can appraise information, and mindfully so they are not overwhelmed by it.
4. How can we support digital inclusion locally?

How can we find out levels of digital exclusion locally?

Use the digital exclusion heatmap to check levels of digital exclusion locally. The Heatmap shows overall likelihood of digital exclusion by local authority. It does this by combining indicators including infrastructure (broadband and 4G), access (percentage of adults online), basic digital skills, and social indicators (age, education, income and health).

The One Digital Toolkit includes a useful guide from Citizens Online on mapping data for digital inclusion activity. The guide covers data sources relevant to mapping, and an introduction to mapping using available software.

Click on the map to see the likelihood of digital exclusion in your area.
Practical steps to help with digital inclusion

Several practical steps can be taken to support digital inclusion locally. Here are some examples of ways in which we can create the best environment for successful digital inclusion support.

Social prescribing

In Stockport, GPs at the Alvanley Family Practice are prescribing to non-medical support including gardening and cooking. In this video staff at the practice talk about their approach to social prescribing. One of the interventions prescribed is digital skills training provided by Starting Point Community Learning Partnership.

In Sheffield, GPs at Sloan Medical Centre are referring patients to digital skills training provided by Heeley Development Trust. In this video, GP Dr Ollie Hart talks about the partnership.

Video - Sloan Medical Centre and Heeley Development Trust: a healthy partnership

The Social Prescribing Network has been established to share good practice. View a set of video case studies on social prescribing.

Access to devices and digital skills training

Online Centres (see Section 5) provide places where people can go to get online in supported environments. Most also provide training in digital skills. Read case studies from Online Centres here.

This case study describes how Sarah learned digital skills to improve her health at the Electronic Village in Dewsbury.

You can see more about specialist organisations providing digital skills training in Section 5.

Here are some case studies showing how service users and digital champions have been supported through access to digital technology and training:

Good Things Foundation
Digital Unite
One Digital
We Are Digital

Raising awareness

Many people are not aware of the support available to help them get online and improve their digital skills. Health and care organisations can get involved in awareness raising campaigns, including the annual Get Online Week which takes place in October.

Find out more about Get Online Week. Here are some examples of how the local NHS in Hackney promoted access to online GP services during Get Online Week.

Free public wi-fi

Access to free wi-fi on NHS premises makes it easier for patients to use information and services when they most need them. Free wi-fi in all GP practices will be available by early 2018, with all hospital trusts providing free wi-fi by the end of 2018.
These case studies show how free wi-fi has improved communication with patients and their families.

Bury CCG were early adopters of the NHS wi-fi Programme. Here they describe benefits for the NHS and patients of providing free wi-fi.

Supporting digital skills of staff

Health and care staff do not always have knowledge and confidence in using digital health resources themselves. This means that they are unlikely to act as digital champions and recommend digital tools to their patients. This can be one of the biggest barriers to digital inclusion.

Health Education England is leading work on digital literacy for health and care staff, as part of the Building a Digital Ready Workforce programme.

This video explains why digital literacy is important to the health and care workforce.

Video - What is digital literacy and why is it important to the health and social care workforce?
Health Education England’s definitions of digital literacy apply equally to patients, carers and service users as they do to health and care staff.

How can we commission digital inclusion support?

A Digital Training and Support Framework agreement is available for use by public sector organisations (including clinical commissioning groups and local authorities). The framework includes over 50 companies, social enterprises and voluntary sector organisations that specialise in providing digital skills training and assisted digital support. Using the framework can provide a simpler and quicker route than carrying out a full-scale procurement exercise.

The framework can be used to buy services under different lots covering:

- assisted digital support
• digital inclusion research and analysis
• digital inclusion training design
• digital inclusion training delivery
• digital inclusion marketing

**How can we evaluate digital inclusion support initiatives?**

A range of quantitative and qualitative methods could be appropriate for evaluating digital inclusion. These include activity measures (such as numbers engaged or trained), surveys, user interviews, stakeholder interviews, observation, and case studies.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has produced a [practical toolkit for evaluating digital inclusion initiatives](#) to demonstrate social impact.

*The Patient Activation Measure* is being used in the NHS to measure the knowledge, skills and confidence a person has in managing their own health — and the improvement in activation following an intervention. It may be appropriate to use as a tool for measuring the impact of a digital inclusion intervention such as digital skills training.

The Digital Inclusion Evaluation Toolkit contains a range of resources which you could use to measure the impact of digital inclusion initiatives. The toolkit is built around a four stage evaluation process and contains useful tools such as:

• bank of outcomes
• stakeholder management guide
• survey template
• report template
Providing accessible online services

In the UK, one in five people have a disability - this could be visual, hearing, motor or cognitive (affecting memory and thinking). But the concept of accessibility doesn’t just apply to people with disabilities - all users will have different needs at different times and in different circumstances.

Someone’s ability to use a service could be affected by their:
- location - they could be in a noisy cafe, sunny park or area with slow wi-fi
- health - they may be tired, recovering from a stroke or have a broken arm
- equipment - they could be on a mobile phone or using an older browser

Accessibility is about making sure your service can be used by as many people as possible. Thinking about this from the beginning will help you:
- make sure that nobody is excluded
- find out earlier if any parts of your service aren’t accessible

Whether you are building or commissioning an online service there are tools and standards available to ensure the service is accessible to everyone. You can:
- build on emerging NHS Digital guidelines and talk to us about delivering accessible services (email servicemanual@nhs.net)
- draw on web accessibility guidelines such as Web Accessibility Content Checklist to ensure online services conform to Level AA standards
- use online accessibility checklists such as WAVE to give a quick view of how accessible your services are
- read the GOV.UK guidance on Making your service accessible and Designing for different browsers and devices
- view this video from Citizens Online – Make Technology Work for Everyone: Introducing Digital Accessibility
All organisations that supply NHS care or publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard. The Standard sets out a specific, consistent approach to identifying, recording, flagging, sharing and meeting the information and communication support needs of patients, service users, carers and parents with a disability, impairment or sensory loss.

**Accessibility software**

Texthelp works closely with over 60 NHS organisations currently, helping make websites and digital platforms more accessible to all. This short video provides an overview of how accessibility software can help.

Here are some examples of NHS organisations using assistive software to make digital services more accessible:

- **Bridgewater Community Healthcare takes steps to make digital access easier**
- **Healthwatch Trafford ensures community members can access online content**
- **How Guys & St Thomas’ are supporting staff in this case study**

**Design principles for digital inclusion**

The Government Digital Service (GDS) has developed a Service Manual and Digital Service Standard to help government organisations create and run good digital services.

GDS has also published a Checklist for Digital Inclusion:

1. Start with user needs – not our own
2. Make things accessible – stop making them difficult
3. Motivate people – find something they care about
4. Keep it safe – build trust
5. Work with others – don’t do it alone

**Draft NHS design principles**

**Put people at the heart of everything you do**

Patients, family, carers, staff. We design things that understand people’s needs, and treat them with respect. Take the time to understand people’s emotional, physical and technical needs. Design with compassion.

**Design with the outcome in mind**

What will good look like? What are the health outcomes (or other measurable outcomes) that your work will impact? Your work should improve lives, either directly or indirectly.

**Be inclusive**

NHS services, however they are accessed, are for everyone. Ensure your design is usable by people with different physical, mental, social, or cultural needs.
Design for the context in which this service will be used

Don’t just design your part of a service. Consider the entire experience. Do research. Think about how people begin and end their time with what you are designing, and what their emotions may be on that journey.

Design for trust

People trust the NHS. Take care not to jeopardise it. Design things that are reliable, simple and secure.

Test your assumptions with evidence

Design and test your work with real people. Observe behaviour and gather data. Do not rely on hunches.

Make, learn, iterate

Start small. Make prototypes to gather insight. Test and refine.

Work hard to make it simple

Healthcare journeys can be complex. Take the time to understand what you are trying to solve. Do not push complexity onto the people using what you are designing.

Make things open; it makes things better

Share your learning, share your work. Be transparent in your design decisions. Be accountable, and have confidence in your solutions.

Design brilliant experiences

The NHS belongs to the people. Use your knowledge and expertise to design the very best services and tools for them.

Widening Digital Inclusion Pathfinders

NHS Digital has been working with Good Things Foundation and local health and care stakeholders to discover more about the barriers to digital inclusion, and to co-design and test solutions with service users.

We call these local initiatives Widening Digital Inclusion Pathfinders. All pathfinders are being developed with the full buy-in and cooperation of local clinical commissioning groups. Up to 20 pathfinders will be funded over the next three years. This blog tells you more about what being a Pathfinder involves and how to express an interest.
Visit the Widening Digital Participation Pathfinder Platform to see all the research, toolkits and guides from the pathfinders.

You can use this map to keep in touch with location of Widening Digital Participation Pathfinders and how the work is progressing.

Click on the image to open the map.

**2017-18 Pathfinders**

**Sheffield**
Focus: Social prescribing and digital health
Lead organisation: Sheffield CCG
Stakeholders include: Sheffield City Council, Heeley Development Trust, local GP practices

Read a blog about the [approach to service design for the Sheffield pathfinder](#).

**North London**
Focus: Young people’s mental health.
Lead organisation: Islington CCG.
Stakeholders include: Whittington Health NHS Trust, Islington Council Children’s Services.

Read a blog about [learning from young people in Islington](#).

**Bradford**
Focus: People with dementia, people with diabetes and young people who care for them
Lead organisation: MYMUP
Stakeholders include: Bradford CCG, Bradford City Council

**West Yorkshire STP**
Focus: People with accessibility needs and wearable technology
Lead organisation: Wakefield CCG
Stakeholders include: mHabitat, Leeds City Council, Leeds CCG, South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust, West Yorkshire STP, Mollie Watt Trust

**Stoke-on-Trent**
Focus: People with long term conditions (atrial fibrillation, diabetes, asthma)
Lead organisation: Stoke-on-Trent CCG
Stakeholders include: West Midlands Academic Health Sciences Network, Redmoor Health, Keele University, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire County Council, local voluntary groups

View these videos on digital health in Stoke-on-Trent:
- Support for atrial fibrillation using Facebook
- Support for AF using Facebook: patient’s perspective
- Using Skype to connect to care homes
- Using Skype with care homes: a doctor’s perspective

**Hastings**
Focus: Digital health interventions for people who are (or at risk of becoming) homeless.
Lead organisation: Seaview Project
Stakeholders include: Hastings and Rother CCG, Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council

Read a blog on reaching the furthest first in Hastings.

**Nailsea**
Focus: High street digital health hub
Lead organisation: Nailsea Town Council
Stakeholders include: North Somerset CCG, Arts and Health South West, Citizens Advice

Read a blog on using co-design to develop a pop-up digital hub on the high street.

**Supporting digital inclusion – step by step**
1. Assess need – heatmap of digital inclusion status of local population
2. Review digital maturity – enablers including public wi-fi and staff capability
3. Review local existing resources/plans - including Local Digital Roadmap
4. Review any existing digital inclusion support – including local Online Centre, voluntary organisations
5. Work with local stakeholders to identify needs and co-design approaches to digital inclusion support
6. Identify potential delivery partners
7. Develop appropriate evaluation mechanisms
8. Establish baseline, targets and performance indicators
9. Commission appropriate digital inclusion support
10. Evaluate, refine and scale
NHS commissioning cycle: this diagram shows ways in which patients and the public can engage and participate in the different stages of the commissioning cycle.
5. Who can we work with?

Local authorities

In some places the local health service has formed a partnership with the local authority to tackle digital exclusion. The local authority may take the lead in delivering digital inclusion in the sustainability and transformation partnership.

In Stoke-on-Trent, the city council has a digital inclusion strategy and action plan: Making Stoke-on-Trent a digitally inclusive city.

In Hereford and Worcestershire, the Local Digital Roadmap says “For patients we will look to leverage schemes that county and district councils have to enable internet access to empower patients”.

In Doncaster, “Partners in Doncaster must collaboratively deliver improved outcomes to reduce social factors. The Council is delivering a Digital Inclusion Strategy to ensure exclusion can be minimized.

Public libraries

Your local public library can help local people be digitally included. A core responsibility of every public library is to provide:

- free to use public access computers
- staff trained in accessing digital information resources

Almost all public libraries now have free wi-fi access. Many public libraries are Online Centres, providing free digital skills training.

The Society of Chief Librarians has made a commitment to a Universal Health Offer which should be available in public libraries. The offer includes:

- trusted non-clinical space
- online access to health information
- local partnerships for health and wellbeing
- access to Reading Well collection of quality assured health books

NHS library and knowledge services

Your local NHS library and knowledge service can support the digital, information and health literacy of the healthcare workforce to signpost to high-quality electronic patient information.

NHS librarians support NHS organisations to meet The Information Standard for health and social care information, by providing evidence for high-quality content. NHS knowledge services work in partnership with public libraries and voluntary organisations, ensuring access to inclusive digital resources.

Voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations are important partners in digital inclusion support. Voluntary/independent organisations who signed up to the Digital Inclusion Strategy in 2014 include AbilityNet, Carnegie UK Trust, Citizens Online, Digital Unite, Good Things Foundation, Go ON UK, NCVO, Nominet Trust, Oxford Internet Institute, Salvation Army and Shelter.
Many local Online Centres are located with, or involve, voluntary organisations.

Age UK South Tyneside is an Online Centre based in South Shields. They support older people in the area, aiming to inspire them to improve their health and wellbeing through different methods - including the use of technology. Click on the image to read their case study.

**Online Centres**

Brought together by the Good Things Foundation, the [Online Centres Network](#) is made up of over 5,000 local organisations working to tackle digital exclusion by providing people with the skills and confidence they need to use digital technologies.

Some operate in libraries, community venues, leisure centres or shopping centres, as well as some in more unusual locations like pubs and cafes. Many centres also run outreach sessions, in places like care homes or tenants’ associations.

You can find your local Online Centre and talk to them about support available for local people by using the [Online Centre search](#).

View a video on the work of Online Centres - [This is the Online Centres Network](#)

**Commercial organisations**

In some parts of the country local organisations have developed partnerships with commercial organisations to support digital inclusion.

[Barclays Digital Eagles](#) is a digital champions programme which includes both face-to-face support in branch with bank staff, and online training modules. Digital Eagles have worked with the [Patient Online programme](#) and local CCGs to use Tea and Teach sessions to teach patients to book GP appointments online. Barclays Digital Eagles have also been providing free digital skills training to all 2,000 [Marie Curie](#) nurses. Tablets used in the scheme were funded through the [NHS England Nursing Technology Fund](#).
Video - Barclays Digital Eagles in their local community

Lloyds Bank has been training its staff as digital champions, and in 2017 entered a strategic partnership with Good Things Foundation to create and fund a network of 100 centres that will support learners to improve their digital and financial literacy skills.

Video - Lloyds Banking Group Digital Champions

Google Digital Garage is a digital skills training programme targeted initially at small and medium sized enterprises than individual citizens. However there are now courses on First Steps Online in partnership with Good Things Foundation, and Stay Safe Online in partnership with Which.

Video - Digital Garage from Google

Specialist digital inclusion partners

Good Things Foundation is a national digital inclusion charity, and NHS Digital’s delivery partner in the Widening Digital Participation programme. Good Things coordinates the Online Centres Network, provides the online learning platform Learn My Way, carries out research into which digital solutions really make a difference to people’s lives, and delivers major digital inclusion projects including Widening Digital Participation for NHS Digital.

Video - Delivering digital skills with Learn My Way

There are two Learn My Way modules covering health topics:

NHS Choices how to guide

NHS Choices: a how to guide

In this course you will learn how to make the most of the NHS Choices website. The course will show you how to use the website to find health advice online and find your local health services like GPs and hospitals.

The NHS Choices website is a great way to find health information online, provide feedback and hear about other people’s experiences. There’s lots of advice about medicine and symptoms for different things. The website can also help you make other important decisions about your health.
Citizens Online is a national charity set up to tackle the issues of digital exclusion. Their evidence based Switch approach is designed to help organisations ensure the switch to digital doesn’t exclude people - increasing online service uptake, supporting people to get the benefits of being online, and building skills and sustainable partnerships in local communities.

Digital Unite specialises in supporting staff, residents and volunteers to become effective digital champions. Their Digital Champions Network is a training and support system which has trained digital champions across the UK. This video explains more about the Digital Champions Network.

The Big Lottery funded One Digital partnership includes Age UK, Citizens Online, Clarion Futures (part of Clarion Housing Group), Digital Unite and SCVO. They are developing a collaborative approach to training and supporting digital champions so they can help people learn digital skills. The One Digital toolkit shares different approaches to training and supporting Digital Champions.

Nominet Trust is the UK’s largest funder of social tech initiatives, with over £17m made in grants since 2009. Currently funded projects include Digital Reach which is funding six local projects supporting digital skills for hardest to reach young people, working with Action for Children, Carers Trust, Children’s Society, Good Things Foundation, HomeStart, TechMums, and UK Youth.

Corsham Institute is an independent think tank, focusing on education and research to promote lifelong learning in the digital age. Publications include Digital’s role in health and care and work programmes include digital skills training for Armed Forces service leavers and digital media apprenticeships.

AbilityNet is working to build a more digitally accessible world, through accessibility audits, user testing, and expert advice to deliver more accessible websites and apps. Their network of AbilityNet IT can help volunteers visit disabled and elderly people in their own homes to fix IT problems. Factsheets and other resources are published.

Doteveryone is an independent think tank, set up by Martha Lane Fox, that focuses on three areas of work: digital understanding, digital society and responsible technology. Doteveryone has carried out several projects in health and social care including on shared values for better digital commissioning and end of life care.
mHabitat is hosted by Leeds and York Foundation NHS Trust, and supports digital innovation in health and social care by enabling co-design and people driven health. mHabitat was an NHS Widening Digital Participation Pathfinder in phase one and has produced a report on the impact of providing wi-fi and digital support in older people’s mental health wards. mHabitat has been leading work on Developing Digital Practitioners - helping health and care practitioners develop digital skills and confidence so they can make things better for people who access their services.
6. Case studies: How digital inclusion transforms lives

Getting online and building digital skills and confidence can transform people’s lives. These case studies show how.

Learners at Online Centres talk about how they’ve been supported in using digital health information and services.

Amy, a volunteer at Inspire Communities in Hull, talks about how she gained digital skills to help her as a carer and with her own health.

Betty, who is living with post-polio syndrome, talks about getting online and using NHS Choices to understand her condition better.

Ron was homeless but found a home and took control of his health through learning online skills.

Ken went online and learned more about to support his wife Val with dementia.

Bertram got his life back on track after breakdown and is now a digital champion in Manchester.

Neel improved her mental wellbeing by getting involved in her local Online Centre.
7. Links and resources

Data on digital inclusion

Digital inclusion dashboard datasets - GOV.UK
Internet access: households and individual - Office for National Statistics
Communications market report 2017 - OFCOM
Adults media use and attitudes 2017 - OFCOM
Tech tracker report 2017 - Ipsos MORI
Oxford internet surveys - Oxford Internet Institute
Consumer digital index 2017 - Lloyds Bank
The real digital divide: understanding the demographics of non-users and limited users of the Internet. 2017 - Good Things Foundation
Digitally savvy citizens: data from across UK and Ireland on how we manage information, security and privacy online 2017 - Carnegie UK Trust

Policy context

Five Year Forward View - NHS England
Next steps on the Five Year Forward View - NHS England
Personalised Health and Care 2020 - National Information Board
Empower the person: roadmap for digital health and care services - NHS England
UK Digital Strategy - GOV.UK

NHS service transformation

Local partnerships to improve health and care - NHS England
View sustainability and transformation partnerships - NHS England
NHS test beds - NHS England
Healthy new towns - NHS England
NHS digital technology - NHS England
Guidance on Local Digital Roadmaps - NHS England
View Local Digital Roadmaps - NHS England
Digital primary care - NHS England
General Practice Development Programme - NHS England

Making the business case for digital inclusion

Valuing digital inclusion - BT
Digital participation and social justice - Carnegie UK Trust
Making the case for information - Patient Information Forum
Making the case for information: briefing for commissioners - Patient Information Forum

**Tools for commissioning digital inclusion**

Digital exclusion heatmap - Tech Partnership
Online Centre finder - Good Things Foundation
Digital training and support procurement framework - Government Digital Service
Digital inclusion evaluation toolkit - Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Patient activation measure - NHS England

**Enablers for digital inclusion**

Making sense of social prescribing - Social Prescribing Network
What could STPs learn from social prescribing? - NHS England
Social prescribing at a glance - Health Education England
NHS wi-fi guidance - NHS Digital
How we’re supporting the roll out of NHS wi-fi - NHS Digital
Building a digital ready workforce - Health Education England
Digital literacy - Health Education England
Digital literacy: existing educational resource mapping and analysis - Health Education England
Developing digital practitioners - mHabitat
Special interest group for health literacy - Society for Academic Primary Care
Health literacy - Health Education England
Does health literacy matter? - NHS England

**Providing accessible online services**

Digital service manual - Government Digital Service
Digital service standard - Government Digital Service
Checklist for digital inclusion - Government Digital Service
Making your service accessible - Government Digital Service
Designing for different browsers and devices - Government Digital Service
We’re making accessibility clearer and easier - Government Digital Service
Web accessibility content checklist - WebAIM
Web accessibility evaluation tool - WAVE
Accessible Information Standard - NHS England
Make technology work for everyone - Citizens Online
NHS Widening Digital Participation programme

NHS Widening Digital Participation programme phase one microsite - Good Things Foundation
Overview of NHS Widening Digital Participation phase one - Good Things Foundation video
Doing digital inclusion: health handbook - Good Things Foundation
Leeds digitally-enabled older people’s mental health wards (Widening Digital Participation phase one pathfinder) - mHabitat
Creating a happy, healthy population - Helen Milner, Good Things Foundation
How the NHS is working to widen digital uptake - Nicola Gill, NHS Digital
Moving digital inclusion from the margins to the mainstream - Bob Gann, NHS Digital
Digital inclusion and homelessness: new research - NHS Digital
Blogs on progress with Widening Digital Participation phase two - Good Things Foundation
Widening Digital Participation pathfinders map - Good Things Foundation
Follow progress on NHS Widening Digital Participation on Twitter #nhswdp

Partners for digital inclusion

This is the Online Centres Network - Good Things Foundation video
Doing digital inclusion: libraries handbook - Good Things Foundation
Libraries Task Force - Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Libraries and digital inclusion - Good Things Foundation video
Library digital inclusion action research project evaluation - Good Things Foundation
Healthcare library and knowledge services - Health Education England
Lloyds Banking Group supporting Get Online Week - Libraries Taskforce blog
Lloyds Bank Digital Champions - video
Barclays Digital Eagles - video
Google Digital Garage – LearnMyWay video
Digital inclusion for social housing resources - Good Things Foundation
Doing digital inclusion: social housing handbook - Good Things Foundation
One Digital Toolkit - One Digital

Case studies

Digital health: the customer experience – using NHS Choices - Good Things Foundation video
A digital health journey – Amy Hutson, volunteer at Inspire Communities, Hull - Good Things Foundation video
Managing your health online - Betty - Good Things Foundation video
Digital inclusion guide for health and social care

Sloane Medical Centre and Heeley Development Trust, Sheffield – Dr Ollie Hart - Good Things Foundation

Homeless man in Hull – Ron - Good Things Foundation

Living with dementia in Hull – Ken and Val Brown - Good Things Foundation

Age UK supporting people with dementia in Tyneside - Good Things Foundation

Mental health/digital champion in Manchester – Bertram - Good Things Foundation

Mental health in Sheffield - Neel - Good Things Foundation

Support for atrial fibrillation using Facebook - Digital Health Stoke video

Support for AF using Facebook: patient’s perspective - Digital Health Stoke video

Using Skype to connect to care homes - Digital Health Stoke video

Using Skype with care homes: a doctor's perspective - Digital Health Stoke video

Facebook in general practice: a service evaluation in one health economy - BJGP Open

Making technology enabled health care work in general practice - British Journal of General Practice

Digital health Stoke on Trent resources

Digital champion stories - Digital Unite

Embedded digital champion case studies - One Digital

We Are Digital - case studies

Digital health

NHS Choices

Migrating our NHS Choices content to provide a better experience for users - NHS Digital

NHS Choices content: what we’ve learned from user needs - NHS Digital

NHS Digital apps library - NHS Digital

Patient Online: toolkits, patient guides and promotional materials - NHS England

Digital attitudes survey 2017 - ORCHA for North West London CCGs

Personal health records: learning from the voices of experience - Patient Information Forum

Perfect patient information journey - Patient Information Forum

People driven health and wellbeing - mHabitat

Organisations and networks

Abilitynet

Age UK

Barclays Digital Eagles

Carnegie UK Trust

Citizens Online

Corsham Institute
Digital Health and Care Alliance
Digital Unite
Doteveryone
Good Things Foundation
Google Digital Garage
Lloyds Bank
Local Government Association
mHabitat
NHS England
NHS Digital
Nominet Trust
OneDigital
One Voice for Accessible ICT Coalition
Patient Information Forum
Public Health England
Social Prescribing Network
Tech Partnership