



Connecting People Connecting Services

Digital Approaches in Care Homes Action Plan


December 2020

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The Action Plan for Digital Approaches in Care Homes

The Action Plan responds to the current and emerging needs of care home providers and their residents and to realise the benefits of digital technologies. The Plan supports delivery of the [Digital Health & Care Strategy](#) and is aligned and informed by a wide range of national strategies, plans and programmes, most immediately the [Adult Social Care – winter preparedness plan: 2020-2021](#). Specifically, the Plan is:

- For all care homes, all sectors, all care groups
 - Supporting delivery of wider Scottish Government work on care homes
 - Meeting immediate priorities arising from Covid-19 and setting out a longer term agenda
 - Shaped by and consistent with the national Health and Care Standards
- 
- Recognising the range and variety of care homes and providers and their varying needs
 - Taking account of emerging priorities and pressures on care home teams and providers
 - Is being co designed with the care home community and stakeholders
 - Person centred, informed by needs and with equality of access for different residents

The context for digital approaches in care homes

Enabling citizens to access and use digital services is a national priority with established principles

Scotland's Digital Health & Care Strategy 2018	Health and Social Care Standards 2017
<p>As a citizen of Scotland: 'I have access to the digital information, tools and services I need to help maintain and improve my health and wellbeing. I expect my health and social care information to be captured electronically, integrated and shared securely to assist service staff and carers that need to see it...and that digital technology and data will be used appropriately and innovatively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to help plan and improve health and care services • enable research and economic development • and ultimately improve outcomes for everyone.' 	<p>1.22 I can be independent and have more control of my own health and wellbeing by using technology and other specialist equipment</p> <p>1.55 My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.</p> <p>2.7 My rights are protected by ensuring that any surveillance or monitoring device that I or the organisation use is necessary and proportionate, and I am involved in deciding how it is used.</p> <p>2.10 I can access translation services and communication tools where necessary and I am supported to use these</p> <p>5.10 If I experience 24-hour care, I am connected, including access to a telephone, radio, TV and the internet.</p> <p>5.12 If I live in a care home, I can control the lighting, ventilation, heating and security of my bedroom.</p>

Covid-19 has further highlighted the importance of digital connectivity

Technology: Emerging insights

What are we learning about the role and use of technology across social care during COVID-19?



1 Technology has played a central role in supporting connection and communication in a range of ways and contexts:



By enabling connection between care home residents and their loved ones during lockdown through video technologies. Social media has enabled connection to be maintained with the community and provided an opportunity to share the continuation of care home life.

"I would superspread the use of social media, [...] because it's just, it's brought people together in a way that even face to face they haven't been before"

- Care Home Perspective



By providing reassurance to families and building trust between families and staff through means of sharing information and updates.

"It's [technology] played a role in keeping them [family] calm about everything, and helped to develop trust ... doing things like video calling and frequent emails and phone calls ... the trust improved quite dramatically"

- Care Home Perspective



By supporting collaboration with wider health and social care partners to enable virtual assessments and consultations, communication among staff and access to information and support.

"I think the benefits [of technology] definitely outweigh the challenges in terms of how you are actually able to hear everybody's voice and I think it changes the dynamics which has been quite refreshing"

- Partner Perspective

2 Access to devices has been important in supporting connection and communication.



Many services have experienced donations of devices and access to resources through local or national initiatives. Further support is required to provide access to devices. Connectivity continues to be a challenge across many areas of Scotland. Investment is required with infrastructure, training and support to ensure equality of access and suitability of devices.

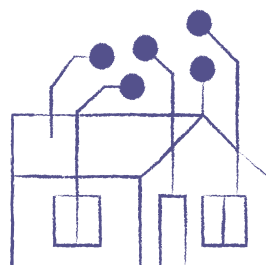
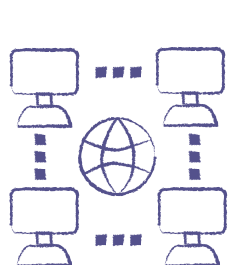
3 Technology has impacted ways of working across the social care sector.

In everyday care practice, forms and frequency of communication have been supported using technology (such as Teams, Zoom, Facetime). There are also specific examples of ways technology has enabled real time access to information about services, through virtual tours (within care homes) and recruitment processes through virtual interviews and induction. Where digital care planning has already been in place (predominantly in care at home), this has been beneficial in supporting the sharing of information among staff, relatives and people supported. There is motivation to develop this, particularly in ways that enhance sharing of data and information with different groups and organisations to reduce duplication of data requests and to enable different forms of information to be shared as appropriate.

4 The use of technology has supported the sector to be flexible and responsive with direct impacts on productivity.

Meetings have taken place virtually which has been more focused and inclusive and have supported relationship building across different organisations. This has also reduced the need to travel which has been positively received. However, this has led to higher intensity and demand in working patterns and requires balance especially in environments that are not exclusively desk based. Virtual forms of communication may not be appropriate for all settings and meeting conditions in different contexts.

5 There are also specific examples of ways in which technology is supporting wellbeing of both staff, through the use of online resources and additional opportunities to connect with colleagues and wider networks of support, and care home residents through activities and online entertainment.



6 The pandemic has 'pushed' people towards technology and this has required everyone to embrace this change at an unprecedented pace.

Previous cultural and attitudinal barriers and resistance have been largely overcome which has led to increased confidence and a willingness to learn. The potential of technology across the sector has been recognised through this experience and there is enthusiasm to continue to use technology and further explore innovative application. This requires a similar shift in mindset across the wider health and social care system with a shared commitment to effective and sustainable partnership. In addition, individual choice must be respected as technology is not a substitute for face to face or suitable for all people and situations.

"I'm surprised at how user friendly it is [technology] and I'm surprised at how well I coped and now I'm very much for it so you're speaking to the converted"

- Care at Home Perspective

7 Going forward, technology needs to provide flexibility and options within social care settings to allow for consistency and choice.

Across the sector, people are using a vast range of technology for many different purposes. There is a desire for further support and direction around evaluating technology options to understand their appropriateness and longevity within specific social care environments and services, and for individual needs (enabling personalisation and choice). There is an imperative to facilitate access to funding and dedicated innovation opportunities for the sector.

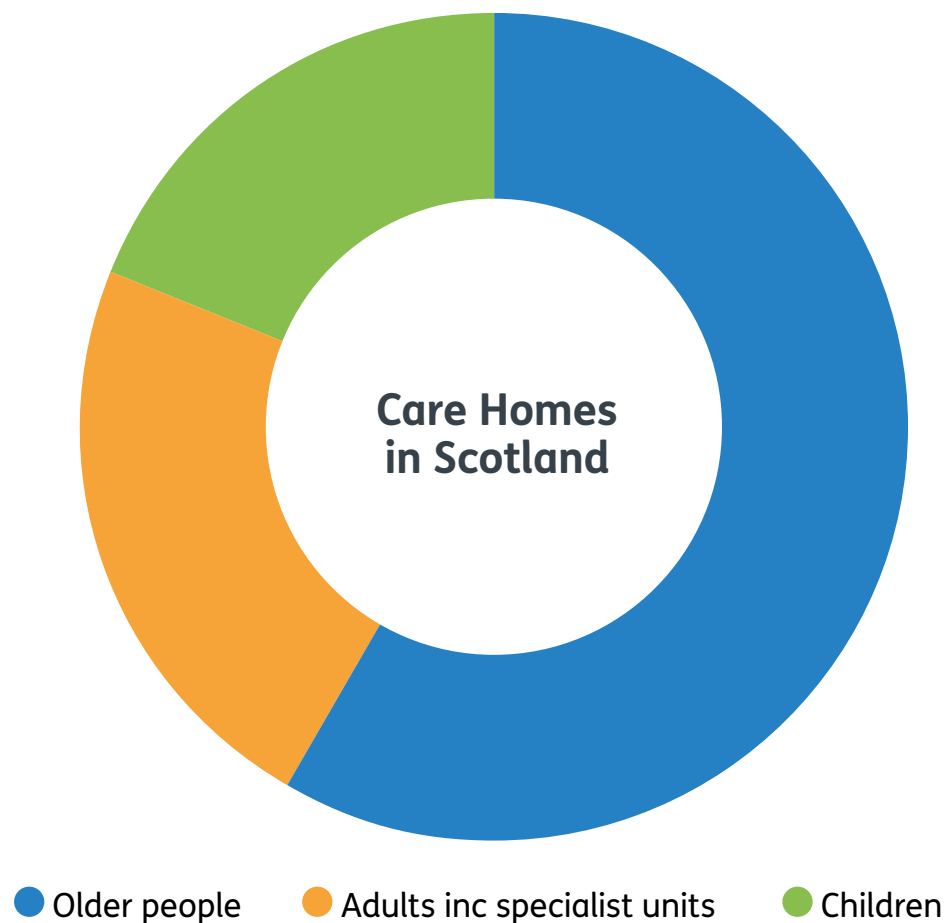
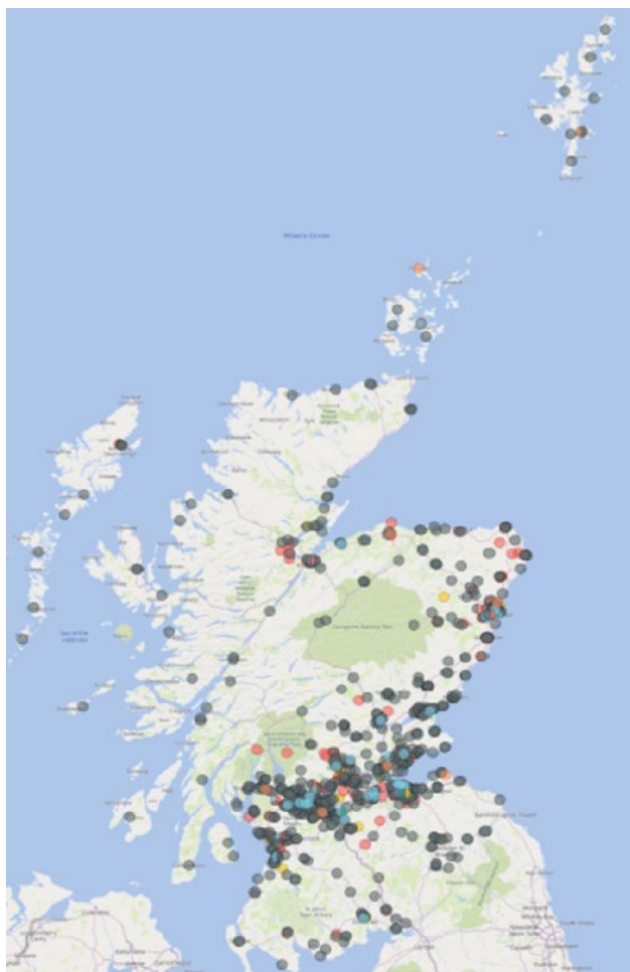
Acknowledgement:

Thank you to all our participants for sharing their experiences on the theme of technology as part of our Collective Care Future Programme.

These insights are emerging themes from our findings to date. These will be further explored and refined on completion of this phase of the project.

A large and diverse community of care homes across Scotland

With 1,400 care homes providing a home to over 50,000 residents of all ages with varying needs and care plans a range of solutions are needed to meet the potential range of health, social and wellbeing needs that could be met digitally.



A digitally enabled care home

Our aim is that all care homes in Scotland become 'digitally enabled' and have all of the features set out below.

DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS

- There is superfast broadband connectivity, or the equivalent, into and within all areas of the care home.
- Devices and technical support are available for all residents to support their health and wellbeing and for staff to provide quality care to support the needs of individuals
- Relevant data about care home residents and services is collected, held and shared digitally; data and systems are secure; and reporting requirements are standardised.

DIGITAL SERVICES

- A range of digital services to support the health, wellbeing and independence of residents are available.
- Residents are supported to choose how and when to use these.
- New services are designed with residents, their families and staff.

DIGITAL LEADERSHIP & SKILLS

- Sector leaders support adoption of digital solutions and building capabilities.
- Staff have digital skills to provide the care and support needed by residents.
- Residents have the skills and confidence to benefit from the digital services that are available

Priorities for change and improvement

DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 1**
Ensure the underpinning connectivity and devices in care homes can support digital technologies for person centred services and wellbeing for residents and staff
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 2**
Identify needs and develop approaches for data gathering that supports better individual care planning, the provision of services, supports and activities, and reduces the reporting burden of care homes

DIGITAL SERVICES

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3**
Improve access for residents to integrated health & care services, and ensure appropriate response to Covid-19 and recovery
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 4**
Support social connections and emotional & physical wellbeing for residents to be developed and maintained, and particularly in the context of Covid-19
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 5**
Enable staff and residents to maintain their emotional wellbeing, particularly in the context of Covid-19

DIGITAL LEADERSHIP & SKILLS

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 6**
Develop the skills and confidence of residents so that they can use and benefit from digital technologies
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 7**
Support staff to develop skills so that they can use digital technologies and procure technologies and services that support effective delivery

The Actions

DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS

Connectivity to, and within, the home

1. **Connection capability:** Identify care homes that currently lack capability of superfast connection. Support providers to identify solutions so that care homes have connection throughout every care home
2. **Financial support options:** Explore application of existing grant/voucher/infrastructure schemes for potential to address connectivity issues in care homes (Reaching 100; USO; Voucher Scheme)
3. **Devices:** Develop a sustainable and flexible approach that ensures that devices that meet their needs are available for residents, with an initiative launched in November 2020 to use the Connecting Scotland approach to providing devices, access and skills. Support and promote local initiatives to provide devices on a volunteer, charitable basis.
4. **NHS email:** up to 3 email addresses made available and used for each care home
5. **Office 365:** Identify opportunities for adopting Office 365 across the care home sector

DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS

Data collection, data sharing & security

6. **Turas Care Management Tool:** Support the adoption and use of the Tool as required and maintain connection with future developments
7. **Digital care planning:** Identify options that can improve individual care and support planning, including co-managed Anticipatory Care Plans, supporting local initiatives that can inform wider application
8. **Data collection and data sharing:** Scope options for improving collection, holding and sharing of information about residents and care home operations, including electronic health records (recommendations of the Independent Review of Primary Care Out of Hours Services), sharing Key Information Summaries. Develop an associated action plan.
9. **Data security:** Explore and identify actions to support effective information governance and cyber-security.
10. **Knowledge exchange:** Facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience of different systems and services that can support care home providers in making investment decisions

DIGITAL SERVICES

Access to digital services

1. **Near Me** Support adoption and effective use of Near Me in care homes
2. **Care Homes Assessment Tool (CHAT)** Rapidly develop and test a tool to improve local operational decision-making in Care Homes, aid communication in situations where external clinical support from NHS Scotland is required and provide early notification of a potential viral outbreak.
3. **Remote health pathways** Review options for vital signs monitoring and other appropriate care pathways within care homes
4. **Telecare** Identify how best to support care homes to optimise the use of telecare (including the use of bed, chair, enuresis and universal sensors) to enable and enhance care and support.
5. **Other relevant initiatives.** Maintain a watching brief on any national or local initiative that offers learning and potential for adoption across Scotland

DIGITAL SERVICES

Social connections and activities for residents

6. **vCreate:** test the benefits in improving wellbeing for residents and families, by providing the opportunity to use a secure video messaging technology
7. **Existing social media tools** Support care homes to help residents to use existing digital tools, such as Skype, Luminato to maintain social contact and communications with families, friends, spiritual care
8. **Residents' activities** Identify opportunities to offer activities (physical and emotional) for residents using digital tools

Wellbeing support for staff

9. **Promis website:** Review content and adapt to ensure relevance to the needs of care home staff, promoting and supporting use
10. **Digital therapies:** Support wellbeing for staff in care homes by offering a range of online cCBT treatment and wellbeing programs
11. **Other relevant initiatives.** Maintain a watching brief on any national or local initiative that offers learning and potential for adoption across Scotland

DIGITAL LEADERSHIP AND SKILLS

Skills and confidence of residents, staff and providers

1. **Residents:** test, develop and roll out an approach building on that used in the Connecting Scotland programme to build the confidence and skills of residents
2. **Staff:** Collaborate with SSSC in the application and modification of digital learning tools for care home staff, including as part of the Initiative to address digital exclusion being developed with Connecting Scotland
3. **Knowledge exchange:** Facilitate the sharing and exchange of experience to raise awareness of use of technology allow outcomes and impact, and practice and financial implications to be understood.

The Digital Approaches in Care Homes Group

The Action Plan has been developed, and will be delivered, with a wide of range of partners meeting regularly and connecting with other national groups and programmes

- The Care Inspectorate
- COSLA
- Community Care Providers Scotland (CCPS)
- Local Government Digital Office
- Digital Health & Care Innovation Centre (DHI)
- Health & Social Care Partnership Chief Officers
- NHS Education for Scotland (NES)
- Scottish Government
- Nursing Depute Directors
- Scottish Care
- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

The Group forms part of the governance arrangements for Digital Health & Care, Scottish Government and reports to the Digital Citizen Delivery Board

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Further information on the consultation

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