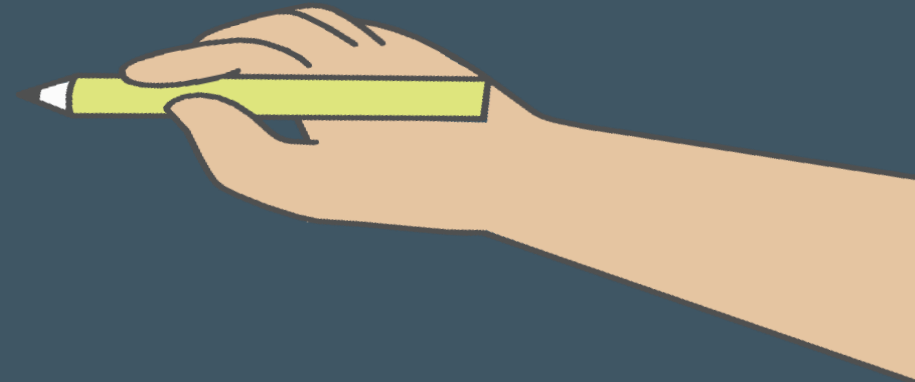




Optimising digital first primary care across GM

GM Health and Care Digital Transformation Board

June 2022

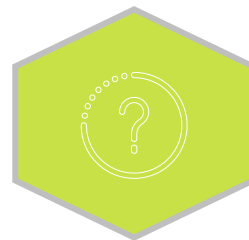




Digital is a major driver of transformation for general practice to meet increase demand

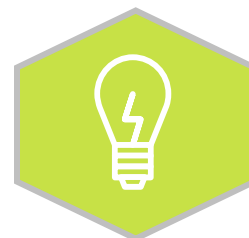
- In response to covid-19 pandemic practices rapidly deployed virtual consultation and triage solutions to deliver digital services. This was backed by a co-produced outcomes framework between GPs, practice managers and patients.
- Digital technology is a major lever of transformational change, but practices need more support to deliver the maximum benefits, drive efficiency and improve patient outcomes.
- Localities, GP providers and digital teams are working together on a joint £3m programme to deliver a blueprint to drive improvement and design digitally inclusive GP services for citizens

GM digital first primary care 3 stage programme:



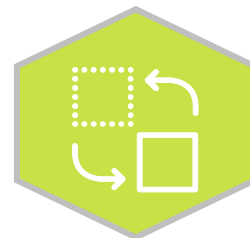
Phase 1: Understand

- Diagnostic of key drivers impacting demand, deep insights from primary care
- Understanding patient perspective and pain points
- Public useability testing of tools



Phase 2: Reimagine

- Design a GM blueprint and implementation
- Build core patient profiles into the design and blueprint to support inclusion
- Coproduce with patient cohorts



Phase 3: Implement

- Build a delivery plan and implement improvements in each practice
- Public facing campaign to build trust in digital
- Deploy digital facilitators



GPs and practice staff provided valuable insights into daily pressures and challenges impacting digital optimisation



Practices are facing more aggregate demand

Monthly volume of requests through all channels increased from ~25% of practice list size in January 2020 to ~35% in January 2021. Following a quantum leap in adoption of digital at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the channel mix has remained fairly constant, with a gradual shift to offline channels observed in recent months. The types of request have remained constant.



Some practices are reverting back to old processes due to increased demand

GP practices are increasingly switching off digital channels: the average “openness” score for AskMyGP practices in GM fell 25% from June 2020 to September 2021.



A key driver of demand is likely recovery from COVID-19 backlog

Given the mix of how citizens make appointments has not changed dramatically, it does not appear likely that increased demand can be explained solely by reference to easier access through digital channels. Therefore, the likely drivers of demand are (i) spill over effects from backlogs in other settings of care (e.g., patients chasing up their referrals) and (ii) COVID-19 induced primary care demand.



Practices have not adapted their ways of working to meet this increased demand

Few practices have adapted staff working patterns and/or matched capacity with demand data; only half of practices use digital template responses; and 28% of practice have never reviewed demand data extracted from the online consultation tool.



Practices are facing an increase in non-patient-facing workload

Practices identified two primary drivers of this increase: (i) an increase in Secondary Care generated work such as follow-up bloods at GP or chasing results and (ii) managing the large inflow of letters which arrive at the practice – some by mail, some electronic, and some by patient themselves. Lack of standardisation adds substantial burden to admin workloads and GPs can spend up to ~1-2 hours reviewing letters per day.



Digital first primary care blueprint



Key recommendations:

1. Improving practice operations and ways of working, particularly with more effective triaging at point of initial patient engagement
2. Enhancing digital skills and capabilities of practice staff and patients to effectively use digital tools
3. Reducing the burden of non-patient-facing workload
4. Supporting patient education about when to present at the GP practice and appropriate care pathways
5. Ensuring digital inclusion and improved patient access by providing IT support and alternative channels of engagement

Practice ways of working

- 1 Develop consistent front-end template
- 2 "Soft relaunch" digital for specific cohorts
- 3 Establish centralised Hub across PCNs for high-volume, low-complexity tasks
- 4 Improve GMCR functionality
- 5 Build interoperable systems to route demand to other settings of care

Capability building

- 6 Develop and maintain standardised training programmes and library of resources
- 7 Establish a sustainable network of Digital Champions to deliver digital change
- 8 Build best practice forum

Non-patient-facing workload

- 9 Establish GM-wide standards for non-patient-facing workload
- 10 Embed new, clear electronic letter templates
- 11 Explore role for OCR and RPA solutions

Patient comms & expectations

- 12 Embed standardised templates for practice websites
- 13 Improve OC platform user interface
- 14 Roll out GM-wide patient communications campaign
- 15 Coordinate patient training materials distributed via network of Patient Champions

Digital inclusion and patient access

- 16 Establish central call centre
- 17 Establish patient IT support / service desk



Digital first primary care implementation plan



Deployment of Digital First Facilitators

Enable and support business change in each PCN

- 5 localities recruiting locally
- 5 localities recruiting centrally



Public comms campaign

Support access, focusing on building trust and enabling traditionally disadvantaged groups & encouraging best use of all (digital and non-digital) channels



Digital First Academy

Surfacing resources and training through 6 modules for individuals & teams to adopt locally

Supported by GM GP Excellence and for use by:

- Digital First Facilitators
- Digital Champions - locally identified practice / PCN staff (clinical & non-clinical) & patients

Lighthouse projects



Improving access

including implementation of design principles for GP websites & influence of GP EPR platforms & online consultation platforms



Centralised PCN Hub

Proof of value – to optimise management of administrative and high-volume / low complexity tasks



Influencing on-line consultation platform

User interfaces & workflows
Improve accessibility



Digital First Primary Care Practice Manual

Patient engagement insights and guidance on how to use each tool to optimise capacity management and the support on offer at the GM, locality and PCN levels, will be produced for practices to benefit from a physical copy.



Extra slide on patient usability study





Patients understand the benefits digital can bring, but there is a lack of trust and confidence in digital GP services

Public insights and experiences

Making things better

Patients are willing to change and adopt new behaviour if they see the benefits. Some have seen the positive impact digital tools can have

Impact on patients

Some feel forced to use the digital system, anxious if unable to speak to someone, too many steps to do something simple, frustration about being turned off – leading to more calls.

Digital Fragmentation

Confusion between GP websites, 3rd-party tools and NHS App. Lack of awareness & poor user experience for some tools/websites. Unsure of logins & who to contact for help

Barriers to access

Patients struggled due to complicated instructions. Lack of easy way for carers to access services. Those without English as a first language struggled with poor online translations.

Communications and awareness

Poor awareness of online services and how to use them. Confusion caused by technical or complex language. Suspicious about directed to 3rd party sites with adverts & text messages.

Accessibility audit

Accessibility errors were found across all of those reviewed, meaning none of those sampled were compliant with NHS standards. These problems were often serious and prevented patients from accessing the sites.



Content issues:

- Missing titles
- Language of webpage not identified
- Links to inaccessible problems resizing texts
- Images of text
- Insufficient colour contrast
- Language and jargon
- Cluttered content



Navigation issues:

- Inconsistent navigation
- No option to skip repeated content
- No headings/ unclear heading descriptions
- Auto-playing content
- Video without captions/transcriptions



Forms issues:

- Missing form labels
- Not enough support or information to help users correct form entries
- Processes not keyboard friendly