

Digital, health and wellbeing



a conversation support
guide from
the mPower
Ayrshire and Arran
legacy project



May 2022

What is it?

Due to technology playing an increasingly big part in our day to day lives, there are now many new ways in which we can use digital tools to look after our health and wellbeing.

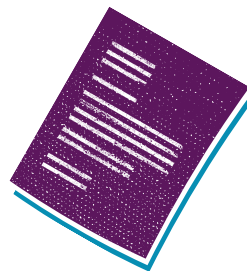
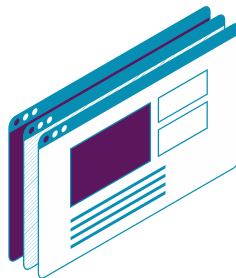
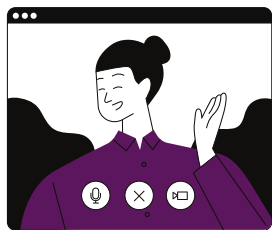
By digital tools, we mean:

- devices, such as phones, laptops and computers
- websites, apps and other online tools
- online NHS or social care services and support



For example:

- Many people nowadays use step counting apps on their phones to motivate them to be more active. Using your phone to listen to a meditation app, or even an audiobook or podcast, can also increase your wellbeing and count as a digital wellbeing practice.
- Getting the right information is important. Websites like NHS inform (www.nhsinform.scot) offer trusted guidance on a range of health issues. Charities also have hugely informative websites which offer advice for specific conditions, such as the British Heart Foundation, Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland, Long COVID Scotland and many others.
- Digital solutions can help connect you to support. For example, Near Me (www.nearme.scot) is a secure video-consultation service which you can use to speak to a GP, health consultant or even social services in some cases. Some social care providers also have their own apps, such as the CleverCogs system offered by Blackwood Care (www.blackwoodgroup.org.uk/clevercogs), which lets their clients access local information, entertainment, health services and much more from an accessible tablet.



The Discover Digital Guide, developed by the ALLIANCE (www.alliance-scotland.org.uk), explains this in much more detail. It is available as an online course or as a booklet which you can view online (www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/resources/discover-digital-guide) or order a copy for free by emailing DHCscot@alliance-scotland.org.uk.

Why is this important?

Digital tools can help people in certain circumstances. Not by replacing the personal interactions that we have with health, social care and other support staff, but by offering an alternative when seeing someone in person is not necessary, practical or convenient.



Knowing where to find these tools and how to use them can help individuals save on travel costs, time and effort by not having to always meet someone in person for support, particularly if it is just a routine appointment or a quick question that they need answered. It can also help them understand their health better, by keeping an eye and taking note of their symptoms over time.

It is also important to know where to find trusted information related to health and wellbeing online. There is an increasing amount of misinformation so knowing what the reputable sources of advice are can help people get the right support.

What if people don't have devices to access digital tools?

If your library offers computer access, you could highlight to them that they can use these computers to access relevant information through websites such as NHS inform (www.nhsinform.scot), ALISS (www.aliss.org) or any local sources of information available to you.

You could even help signpost them to the most relevant website using our guide below, however this is not an exhaustive list. The best recommendations are those that stem from personal relationships and understanding, so you should trust your own judgement and intuition as well when advising individuals. Plus, you are much more likely to know local resources that are available in your area (or you can use ALISS to find out about them).



If you want to go one step further, you could look at identifying a private room in your library to offer to individuals to book for more sensitive issues. This could be used to give them some privacy to research sensitive issues, or it could even be used for Near Me appointments. You can discuss how this might work and hear about similar examples across Scotland by getting in touch with the Near Me team: nss.nearme@nhs.scot.



Funding for devices

On occasion, there may be opportunities available for those who don't have the means to afford to buy their own devices.

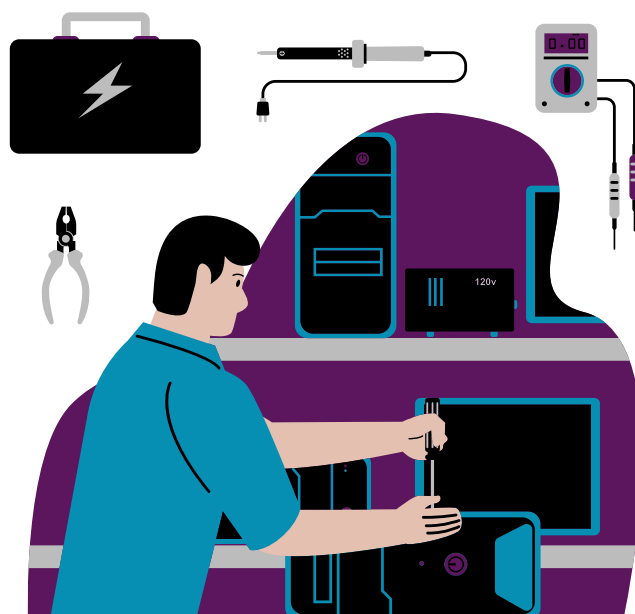
In the past, **Connecting Scotland** worked with various organisations to distribute digital devices, internet connectivity and training for staff and volunteers to become 'digital champions' to support people to use the internet confidently and safely. The future of this programme is currently under development.



You can keep an eye on their website for updates: connecting.scot/organisations

They also recommend other avenues for finding free support, such as refurbishment initiatives, including **Reusing It** who operate nationally. They invite enquiries from charities in Scotland, as well as individuals or groups needing computers for educational purposes.

Find out more at: www.reusingit.org



What if people have a device but don't know how to use it?



AbilityNet runs a national network of volunteers who provide free IT support to older people and disabled people of any age. They are all disclosure-checked and can help with all sorts of challenges, from setting up new equipment, fixing technical issues, helping individuals stay connected to family and use online services.



Individuals can request support themselves by filling in a form or by calling their helpline on 0800 048 7642 during UK office hours. You could also help individuals by filling in their referral form for them, with their permission.

abilitynet.org.uk/at-home/request-free-it-support-home

Connecting Scotland also have advice aimed specifically at citizens. This includes advice on how to choose a device and internet package, how to set these up and use them safely, as well as information on how to browse the internet, make video calls, use email and so on.

connecting.scot/citizens



Learn My Way

The **Learn My Way** website, from the Good Things Foundation, offers free courses to teach digital skills to stay safe and connected.

www.goodthingsfoundation.org/learn/learn-my-way

There may also be other Digital Champions or digital support initiatives available locally. You may be able to find these by searching ALISS or another local directory.



What if people don't know what devices or technologies to try for themselves?



If the individuals you are supporting have the means and skills to use technology but they are not sure where to start, you can signpost them to a couple of useful information libraries.

ADAM (About Digital and Me) is a platform provided by Alzheimer Scotland. It can help individuals find the right pieces of technology depending on their personal circumstances and abilities. It is intended for families and carers who would like to try using digital products and services to look after their health and wellbeing.

www.meetadam.co.uk



The Carers UK Ask Sara platform aims to offer advice, support and products to make daily living easier. It is an online self-help guide for carers, disabled people and older people. It provides advice and information on products and equipment.

carersuk.livingmadeeasy.org.uk



Parkinson's UK have a collection of resources specifically aimed at helping individuals with Parkinson's use computers and other devices more easily. They also suggest various apps and technologies that can help with daily living.

www.parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/equipment-living-aids-and-technology



Barriers to digital inclusion

We have covered some of the barriers to digital inclusion in this document, such as lack of access to digital tools and a lack of confidence and skills. If you would like to learn more about these barriers, and other barriers, you read can read the **Barriers to digital inclusion** document (contact the ALLIANCE for a copy).

What if I want to know more?

There is a growing movement in Scotland that recognises the vital role that library staff play in supporting the health and wellbeing of those who access library services.

[The Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing](#) is a collaboration between the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC), the ALLIANCE, the Digital Health & Care Innovation Centre (DHI), and the Scottish Government Self Management and Health Literacy team. It aims to support the movement to a health and wellbeing service model co-designed with citizens, with a focus on self-management and preventing ill-health. scottishlibraries.org/advice-guidance/frameworks/a-collective-force-for-health-wellbeing

SLIC also run a [libraries' Digital Champions network](#) to help promote digital participation in public libraries. The network includes representatives from all of Scotland's 32 local authorities who meet four times a year throughout Scotland. The aim of the group is to share the latest digital innovations in public library services and give their Champions the chance to discuss their ongoing projects and ideas. scottishlibraries.org/staff-development/digital-champions

Signposting to useful websites and information

ALISS

www.aliss.org

Search for services, groups and activities in Scotland by entering a postcode or your nearest town.

Alzheimer Scotland

www.alzscot.org

Scotland's national dementia charity. They provide support and information to people with dementia, their carers and families.

Asthma and Lung UK

www.blf.org.uk

Asthma + Lung UK are dedicated to supporting people affected by lung conditions.

British Heart Foundation

www.bhf.org.uk

BHF provide information you can trust about heart or circulatory conditions, tests or treatments.

Carers UK

www.carersuk.org

Carers UK give expert advice, information and support to unpaid carers across the UK.

Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland

www.chss.org.uk

CHSS support people and their families across Scotland with chest, heart and stroke conditions to make sure life living with a chest or heart condition or after a stroke is a life lived to the full.

Connect Me

tec.scot/programme-areas/connect-me-remote-health-pathways/connect-me

Connect Me is a national initiative, made up of several NHS services that people can access to monitor and manage their conditions at home, in partnership with their health professionals.

Connect Me is currently available for:

- COVID-19
- Asthma Secondary Care
- Florence Blood Pressure Service
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Heart Failure

COPE Scotland

www.cope-scotland.org

COPEscotland offers a variety of tools for people to use themselves, including self management videos, wellbeing tips, courses, useful documents etc.

Health in Mind

www.health-in-mind.org.uk

Health in Mind are working flexibly with people and can offer mental health support in a range of ways.

Long COVID Scotland

www.longcovid.scot

Long Covid Scotland are collaborating with partners and researchers to find solutions for people living with Long Covid.

MS Society

www.mssociety.org.uk

Provide support to people living with MS and have local groups and online support.

NHS inform

www.nhsinform.scot

NHS inform is Scotland's national health information service.

Scottish Association for Mental Health

www.samh.org.uk

SAMH work in over 60 communities with adults and young people providing mental health social care support, services in primary care, schools and further education, among others.

Scotland's National Wellbeing Hub

wellbeinghub.scot

Scotland's National Wellbeing Hub includes advices on family and work, self care, financial advice, alcohol advice, grieving.

Other free support, available to Health and Social Care staff and unpaid carers through the National Wellbeing Hub

- **Daylight:** Daylight's digital, science-backed anxiety improvement programme can help you control feelings of worry and anxiety, using proven evidence-based techniques.
www.trydaylight.com/healthandcare-scot
- **Feeling Good:** Free audio programme that combines relaxation with sports coaching to help you develop a positive mindset.
wellbeinghub.scot/resource/quick-guide-for-accessing-feeling-good
- **Lifelines Scotland** have developed a Staying Well Road Trip for Emergency Responders, which might be helpful to all those providing care to others.
lifelinesroadtrip.co.uk/ambulance.html
- **Living Life to the Full:** Free online courses covering low mood, stress and resiliency.
littf.com
- **Silvercloud:** A structured programme based on CBT that focuses on supporting your wellbeing, including managing your mental health, resilience, stress and sleep. Use code: Wellhubscot.
wellbeinghubscot.silvercloudhealth.com/signup
- **Sleepio:** An evidence-based sleep improvement programme.
www.sleepio.com/healthandcare-scot

About

The **mPower Ayrshire and Arran Legacy Project** aims to support people to use digital to stay well. The ALLIANCE worked with mPower, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, libraries and Integration Authorities across North, East and South Ayrshire.

The mPower project vision was to support people to improve their wellbeing, or that of their community. It aimed to help prevent people becoming ill by enabling them to access early support in a way that suits them. It also intended to address inequalities around access to services and healthcare outcomes by helping people understand how to use digital to manage their health and wellbeing.

To find out more:

www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/mpower-ayrshire-and-arran-legacy-project



the mPower Ayrshire and Arran legacy project



The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector intermediary for a range of health and social care organisations. We have a growing membership of over 3,000 national and local third sector organisations, associates in the statutory and private sectors, disabled people, people living with long term conditions and unpaid carers. Many NHS Boards, Health and Social Care Partnerships, Medical Practices, Third Sector Interfaces, Libraries and Access Panels are also members.

The ALLIANCE is a strategic partner of the Scottish Government and has close working relationships, several of which are underpinned by Memorandum of Understanding, with many national NHS Boards, academic institutions and key organisations spanning health, social care, housing and digital technology.

Our vision is for a Scotland where people of all ages who are disabled or living with long term conditions, and unpaid carers, have a strong voice and enjoy their right to live well, as equal and active citizens, free from discrimination, with support and services that put them at the centre.

The ALLIANCE has three core aims; we seek to:

- Ensure people are at the centre, that their voices, expertise and rights drive policy and sit at the heart of design, delivery and improvement of support and services.
- Support transformational change, towards approaches that work with individual and community assets, helping people to stay well, supporting human rights, self management, co-production and independent living.
- Champion and support the third sector as a vital strategic and delivery partner and foster better cross-sector understanding and partnership.

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