**Cornerstone Discovery Grant: Engagement Findings Report**

**Background:** Cornerstone is a national organisation with Care and Support Teams across Scotland, supporting people with learning disabilities, autism and complex care needs. We were awarded a £3000 Discovery Grant from the ALLIANCE, Digital Health and Social Care Team. The aim of the small grant scheme was for organisations to engage with people with lived experience to find out the barriers to accessing digital health and social care tools and services.

**Aim:** When Cornerstone applied, we were in the midst of digitalising traditionally paper-based resources which are used daily by the people we support and their Care and Support Teams across Scotland. This software will make a huge impact on the care and support we can deliver by making vital information available to Frontline workers remotely on their digital devices. The people we support, where possible, have always had full ownership of these documents. Making Personal Plans digital will have an impact on how the people we support can interact with their personal plans, so we aimed to engage with people to establish a baseline to where individuals were in relation to accessing/ using digital for both care, support and managing plans.

Cornerstone staff were to engage with their service users in World Café Sessions to explore how digital could be utilised to support their health and care, what barriers exist and how digital technologies could be to digitalise personal plans, and what impact this would have on service delivery.

**Method:** Hosted World Café sessions and brought in tech to give participants an opportunity to experience what the tech could do and give them a chance to try them out. There were tablets, ‘Alexas’ and phones and the group played music and tried out using the devices to connect with friends and family. Staff also explored their skill levels and confidence in supporting people with utilising digital means.

**Key Findings:**

* Not all staff have the confidence and skills to effectively be able to operate a digital personal plan system at this moment, or be able to support service users on this journey so across the board staff training needs to be addressed before this aspiration can continue
* Staff have limited time and capacity to learn this new skill set so organisational investment and support to begin this process is paramount.
* Cornerstone believe digital skills are an integral part of life, to achieve equality and are a life skill just like making a cup of tea.
* Accessing easy read and sensory support programmes with digital can be a huge barrier, no device seems to come with this ‘built in’ or this as the norm so individuals are reliant on other people downloading programmes leading to issues around data protection, security and personal details.
* Many people do not have established email addresses or bank cards so this limits what they can access or use digital devices for
* Affordability- devices are often cheaper in supermarkets/ offer buys. With this there is no tech support or point of contact so this can result in people having devices they are unable to use and no external support from a specific tech shop- devices become redundant
* Motivation- there is varied motivation to learn digital skills but there needs to be a hook to capture interest to get people engaged into learning digital skills and continuing the journey, this differs from person to person e.g. TikTok, Facebook etc