Discover Digital: Inclusion and Participation Grant Scheme
Enabler Grant Learning Report
August 2024

Background

The Enabler Grants funded three projects to work with groups of people experiencing digital exclusion as part of our Discover Digital: Inclusion and Participation Grant scheme. Over an18-month period they strived to tackle previously identified barriers, with the aim of supporting digital inclusion and adoption of digital health and care solutions amongst targeted populations.

The Enabler Grant programme supported MySelf-Management (MSM), formerly Let's Get On With It Together (LGOWIT), Networking Key Services (NKS) and the Tailor Ed Foundation. The delivery of these programmes achieved several positive outcomes by promoting digital inclusivity and identified areas for further improvement.

Each organisation chose to deliver their programme in a way they felt best suited to their community's needs. NKS delivered educational workshops to grassroots Asian communities, both in small groups and through one-to-one delivery. Their aim was to promote digital inclusion and access to digital services. MSM expanded on their previously piloted project and delivered workshops across the Highlands to increase confidence and skills capacity to self-manage their health and wellbeing through digital technology. These workshops were co-produced, and peer led with input from their existing stakeholder groups. Tailor Ed Foundation offered remote support services to autistic children and their families. The delivery of this service followed on from previously identified barriers to using digital services that were brought to light during the COVID-19 pandemic.

All the participating organisations embedded our **Human Rights Principles for Digital Health and Social Care** within their engagement activity to ensure the promotion of good practice and person centre outcomes.

Outcomes achieved

Greater access to a variety of services

By enhancing confidence and capability with digital skills, this allowed individuals access to opportunities to improve their health and wellbeing through access to health information, identification of health services within local areas, and digital tools such as ordering repeat prescriptions and setting medication reminders. Increasing confidence with digital skills also provided opportunity to use a variety of digital services and apps to self-manage health and wellbeing, as well as long term conditions. Improving digital literacy led to the promotion of public transport, expanding access to an individual's community of choosing. Remote service delivery created flexibility and allowed greater access for those who's needs are better suited to digital delivery, resulting in substantial increase in engagement.

Digital inclusion leads to societal inclusion

Ensuring people are digitally included can lead to greater societal inclusion through ability to join group activities and to book online tickets for events. Individuals were also able to develop skills in online shopping and by becoming more confident in their digital skills, individuals reported that their life had become easier.

Enhancing digital skills increases independence

By empowering people to access and build on digital literacy and confidence, individuals reported less reliance on family members for digital support.

Choice remains at the heart of going digital

Lingering digital fatigue is still present following the COVID-19 pandemic with some people expressing a desire for only face-to-face contact. Organisations acknowledged that there will be preferences for what digital services are accessed and there are certain services that are more appropriate to be delivered face-to-face.

Areas of further development

Fear of digital remains an issue

An integrated approach amongst services could help overcome fears around digital by promoting digital tools and services. This was observed in some workshops which were less well attended than others, despite being well advertised. Educational and motivational strategies could improve familiarity and confidence with digital tools.

Delivery and frequency of support matters

One-to-one support produced greater reported satisfaction amongst attendees, with higher levels of knowledge retained. Equally, shorter sessions resulted in staff feeling they were unable to deliver on all identified issues. Those who were unable to access regular support to practice skills found that they struggled to retain the digital literacy they had obtained, calling for regular support to be available.

Knowledge sharing as a catalyst for enhancing digital support

Staff reported benefits in knowledge sharing amongst services, allowing them to signpost people to relevant digital tools/services in the future. Organisations suggested hosting joint workshops in the future, with emphasis on the importance of ensuring staff have local knowledge.

Language remains a barrier in digital

Individuals reported difficulty with using digital tools in their native language. Even when people were shown how to access translation services, the translation produced was not always accurate.

Digital postcode lottery

Challenges were reported with inconsistency on what digital services are available depending on where people are living. This creates inequalities in access, limiting individual choice in digital services.

Our Enabler Grant findings (organisational reports can be found here) demonstrate the positive outcomes that can be achieved through addressing identified barriers around digital health and care, with the aim of supporting digital inclusion and adoption of digital health and care solutions. With that said, these projects have identified key challenges that need to be addressed and areas for further improvement in order optimise digital inclusion.

Ongoing Discover Digital Support

Our **Discover Digital project** is committed to working together to inform digital service providers of these ongoing barriers and assist them in improvement of digital services, improve staff and individuals' knowledge and awareness of digital tools, and to help people understand and navigate health, care and wellbeing tools and services.

Discover Digital offers two learning opportunities for organisations and communities roadshows- which bring free and simple digital tools to community events and workshops which offer tailored training to community third sector organisations/ groups of citizens, promoting and increasing the knowledge of the third sector and communities.

We have also our SSSC Open Badges for Digital Human Rights Principles and Discover Digital, rewarding learning for care staff, creating a more informed workforce, with increased digital skills/ confidence. The Discover Digital guide is now available via OpenLearn Create and the Go Digital Highland Website- increasing scope and opportunity for citizens to access this learning.

About the ALLIANCE

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector intermediary for health and social care, bringing together a diverse range of people and organisations who share our vision, which is a Scotland where everyone has a strong voice and enjoys their right to live well with dignity and respect.

We are a strategic partner of the Scottish Government and have close working relationships with many NHS Boards, academic institutions and key organisations spanning health, social care, housing and digital technology.

Our purpose is to improve the wellbeing of people and communities across Scotland. We bring together the expertise of people with lived experience, the third sector, and organisations across health and social care to inform policy, practice and service delivery. Together our voice is stronger and we use it to make meaningful change at the local and national level.

The ALLIANCE has a strong and diverse membership of over 3,500 organisations and individuals. Our broad range of programmes and activities deliver support, research and policy development, digital innovation and knowledge sharing. We manage funding and spotlight innovative projects; working with our members and partners to ensure lived experience and third sector expertise is listened to and acted upon

by informing national policy and campaigns, and putting people at the centre of designing support and services.

We aim to:

- Ensure disabled people, people with long term conditions and unpaid carers voices, expertise and rights drive policy and sit at the heart of design, delivery and improvement of support and services.
- Support transformational change that works with individual and community assets, helping people to live 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 cross-sector understanding and partnership.

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