



**Wirral Community
Health and Care**
NHS Foundation Trust

Digital Strategy

2022 - 2025

SHAPING
OUR
FUTURE

Introduction

A digital strategy is as much about business transformation as it is adopting new technology, with the ultimate aims of:

- supporting teams to deliver efficient, safe, high quality care
- helping people access services easily and manage their own health and wellbeing
- improving wider population health
- improving the working environment for our workforce

Our Vision is...

to drive the highest standards of digital maturity so we can provide a workplace that enables our staff to deliver the safest and best possible care to our population and improve health outcomes throughout the communities we serve.

WCHC already invests over 5% of its annual turnover in digital infrastructure, contracts, and workforce. Therefore, this strategy is about building on our existing commitment and expertise, aligning with local, regional, and national plans and best practice.

While creating a digital organisation requires investment, this investment can lead to reduced running costs through reducing duplication, building capacity to meet increasing demands, improving the working environment for employees, and most importantly enabling the delivery of safer care, reducing errors and variation.

A mature digital environment should also be where people want to work. With the competition for health and social care workers so high, those organisations and systems with a great digital first experience will be able to attract the brightest talent.

Learning from Covid

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to achieve a high level of digital maturity across the health and social care system.

During these challenging times, the Trust has mobilised and accelerated a digital work plan associated with the stabilisation of core ICT infrastructure, assets and workforce.

Crucially, this has mitigated risks in service continuity whilst enabling different ways of working, eg, staff





A new way of working

This strategy complements other Trust strategies and plans to deliver safe, high quality care to our population and create an inspiring workplace for employees.

To achieve our aspirations, all our Trust employees will need to embrace a digital first approach that enables people in the communities we serve to lead this change.

This will require significant courage and resilience but will also lead to huge benefits. Delivering a digital first strategy and sustained digital transformation at all levels will enable the

organisation to better meet its objectives and improve the safety and quality of care.

This Digital Strategy's ambition is that we will transform our health service through the integration of digital technologies across WCHC through collaboration with our partners, delivering high quality care using innovative care models, supported by cutting edge technology.

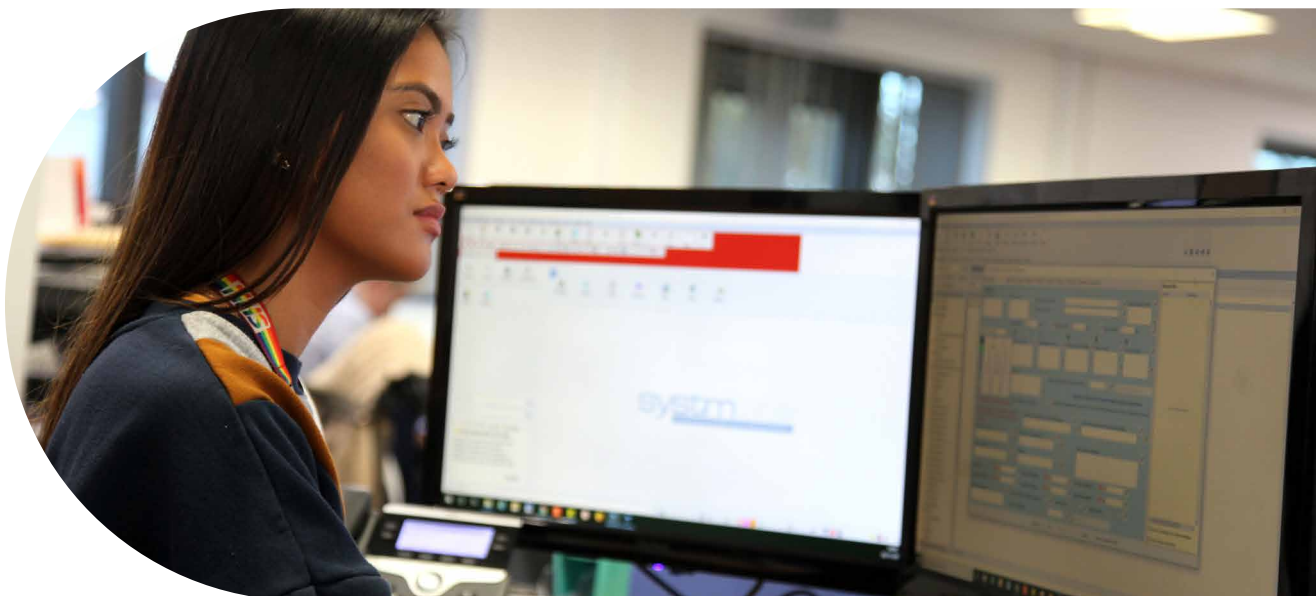
We will achieve this through the power of teamwork of our workforce at all levels and their drive for excellence.

working from home, virtual meetings, virtual consultations etc. It has put in place solid foundations upon which to build the future state of our digital landscape and take the next steps in our journey of digitally enabled healthcare.

A positive effect of Covid-19 is the acceleration of collaboration and system wide working. This cultural shift has been championed by leaders in the healthcare sector and these opportunities must continue to be capitalised.

Narrowing digital inequality

The pandemic has also highlighted how health inequalities and inequality of access to health and care services can be affected by new technologies. Supporting people to become digitally skilled will be important, alongside ensuring that digital inclusion is considered at every step, to deliver the benefits that digital usage can achieve on a broader scale.



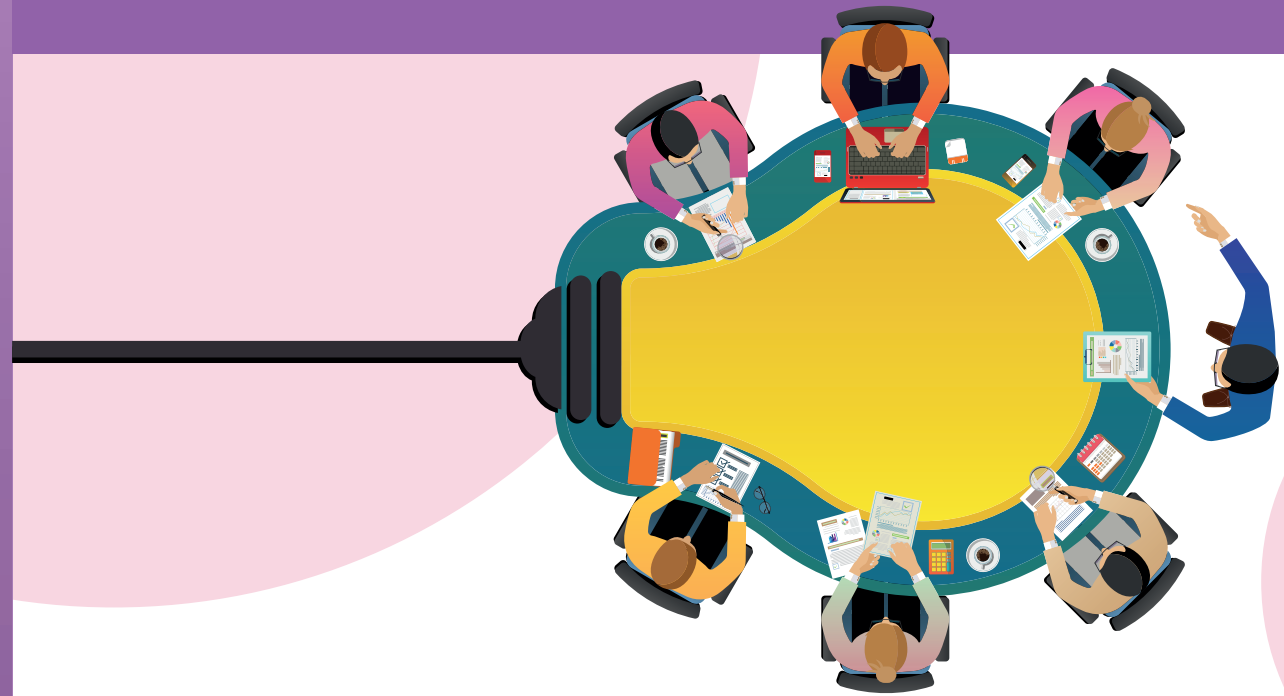
Engagement

A cross section of staff from within WCHC and wider local region participated in the development of this strategy to ensure it reflects the thoughts, needs and ambitions of those it will serve.

We gathered input through a series of engagement activities and facilitated virtual workshops. Feedback was invited from clinical and corporate services across WCHC, as well as representation from community organisations, regional local authorities, and ICS representatives.

Engagement with Trust staff highlighted an overwhelming desire for a clear focus on quality and safety in the provision of care.

People recognised the role digital could play in achieving this, as well as a need to modernise the Trust's digital foundations and empower staff to explore new ways of working and doing things.



People told us that any digital tools and systems introduced or reviewed need to:

- Be reliable and effective
- Support systems Integration and joined up clinical workflow
- Support efficient and collaborative working and
- Empower service users to better self-manage their wellbeing needs

Alignment

This strategy aligns with and fully supports those across the Cheshire and Mersey Healthcare Partnership whilst aligning with deliverables being set by NHS England / Improvement and NHSX plans.

These documents were reviewed to ensure alignment and are listed in the reference section of this strategy.

There are common threads across all these plans and strategies:

- Digital decisions must be made so that access to information for care providers and citizens is as seamless and as easy as possible
- A digital first mind-set from leadership and governance must underpin future planning that improves on the health and care outcomes for people

- Our engagement and focus groups outlined a desire to embrace and use digital solutions and technologies in a spirit of **doing things differently** and not being shy of innovation
- Build on the collaborative spirit that currently exists and leverage system solutions where many can benefit

There are many service developments identified in our own organisational strategies that rely upon effective digital developments.

In WCHC, as described in our Organisational Strategy, we will soon deliver operational services in Wirral through a locality model that supports more coordinated working with primary and community care partners.

Part of these teams' remit will be the proactive implementation of population health management, based on understanding which people benefit from proactive, holistic assessment and care planning will most.

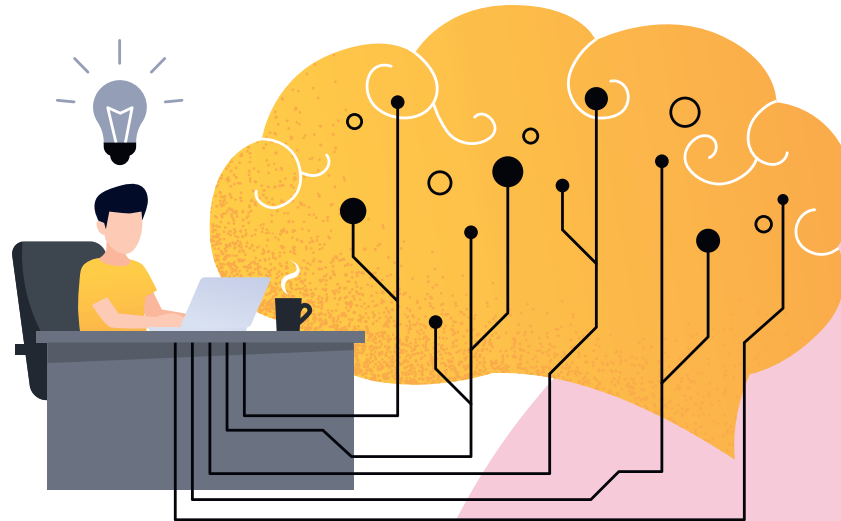
This model will also enable us to respond to the Core20 PLUS 5 approach to addressing Health Inequalities and create better connections between teams and communities, essential to deliver our Inclusion & Health Inequalities strategy.

These priorities rely on more effective information sharing across electronic systems and use of data analysis and risk stratification, all dependent on digital and operational pathway developments.

Similarly, both locally and nationally, an increase in Virtual Ward models will depend on having accessible information for mobile teams plus remote monitoring, to keep people at home and independent for as long as possible.

In Cheshire and Merseyside ICS, the digital strategy is likely to lead to the development of a combined Shared Cared Record, Person Held Record and Population Health platform across the ICS.

Regardless of the specific tools identified, WCHC supports and will influence the introduction and development of these tools, which offer so many benefits in providing joined up care and proactive population health planning.



Five core principles of our digital journey

People first

While a digital strategy is about the business, it is equally about patients, staff and culture. We recognise this and will ensure our workforce is empowered to lead and model the behaviours of a **digitally enabled healthcare environment** to improve patient confidence and outcomes and the working environment for staff.

Solutions will be explored from the human perspective first, then prototype, learn, and iterate. We will aim to make life easy!

Inclusion and engagement

We will work to better understand people's digital literacy, and attitude towards digital readiness. This will help ways to educate and help people, where appropriate, to use digital tools to support the management of their health and wellness journey. This requires a collaborative approach among all sectors, e.g., health and care partners, local authority, private and charitable enterprise.

Quality and safe care

We will ensure that technological developments improve the safety and quality of care for service users. This will span the design of systems and the overarching consideration of system appropriateness.

Sustainability

Leading healthcare providers that have embraced technology are realising efficiencies in administrative processes, safer care delivery and improved quality of care and outcomes for service users.

We will gain efficiency by not duplicating processes and making best use of shared service platforms. We will be clear on what digital tools WCHC will use and what will be enabled with digital. This will be done together with the right people to manage, not avoid, risk.

Innovation and collaboration

With enabling infrastructure works nearing completion, we can introduce innovative solutions such as Artificial Intelligence and robotic automation, and recommend apps that provide more personalised choice and access to health and care information. By driving a shift to work more collaboratively across organisations this will support teams to capitalise on shared funding opportunities, and to share successes, innovation, and best practice across Cheshire and Merseyside.



Digitally enabled care, ten steps for the next 3 years

Investment in infrastructure and systems
A sustainable and continued investment to improve existing digital infrastructure will ensure staff have the right tools and equipment for the job wherever they are, improving decision-making, and so quality and safety of care.

This will include new hardware and devices that enable working **on the go**, updated networks, improved remote working capabilities, and effective document management systems.

We will rationalise systems to improve efficiency and decommission systems that are not able to meet current operating standards for security and interoperability.



1. Real time, accessible information

Moving to a **system of systems**, where health and care information can be accessed across a range of health and care provider settings will support collaborative working and care delivery.

Collaborative working and access to **one person one record** will reduce duplication and improve communication thereby reduce untoward incidents. This means someone only has to tell their story once and is able to view and contribute to their own health record.

We will create secure access to real-time information with a single source of truth will enable a seamless digital health record with pathways for people from birth to end of life care.

2. Digital records and interoperability

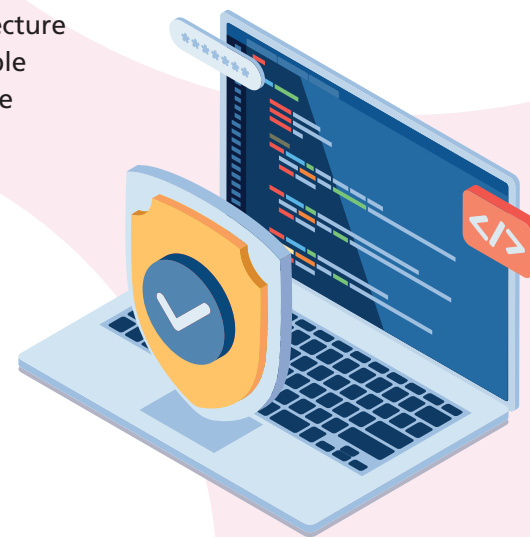
Having all information in paperless digital format which can be easily located in one place will streamline processes and reduce duplication. Providers will be able to access clinical records stored across multiple health service providers to provide better, safer, faster care. This will require an enterprise information platform that allows capturing and managing clinical and business documents and connecting them to core applications to streamline access and work flows.

We will use cloud services where appropriate, moving architecture toward Application Processing Interfaces (APIs) that will enable interfacing with a network of providers and gain access to the data that is in legacy systems.

3. Reliability and security

As the organisation is becoming more dependent on technology, it will become even more important that the technology used is reliable, resilient, and robust.

We will maintain our Data Security and Protection Toolkit Standards (DSPT), continuing to protect our infrastructure against a constantly evolving security threat.



Digital tools for access and independence

Realising the benefit of digital communication and technology-enabled care offers the ability for step-change improvement in people's care and ability to manage independently, both in their own homes within the community or in specialist settings.



4. Easier digital communication

Easier digital communication will allow people to make and track healthcare requests, including appointment bookings and reminders, prescriptions requests, and test results.



We will expand the availability of digital communication channels and enable other virtual care tools such as secure messaging and electronic reminders.

5. More virtual care options

Video consultations and remote monitoring devices will enable remote care delivery and broader reach within the community as part of virtual wards. Wearable technologies for self-monitoring, will reduce the need for service users to visit hospital and provider sites.



We will develop technologically enabled virtual ward models.

6. Empowering service users to manage their own health

Giving patients access to their own health record will create a two-way relationship in managing individual health care, alongside improved access to verified apps, online services and wellbeing information.

We will enable access to records for service users and develop a library of wellbeing apps and online services.



Data and predictive analytics

Vast amounts of data are currently collected within WCHC and the wider health and care system. By harnessing technology, this data can provide insight-driven information. Providers will face fewer barriers to integrating and using secure health information to manage health resources and improve patient care.



7. Data integration and predictive analytics

Earlier intervention and better management of chronic disease through using clinical and sub-clinical data (eg, from telecare) enables people at higher risk to be offered tailored interventions and care designed to minimise the impact of severe disease in the future.

We will develop digital and operational models that make effective use of population health data to target proactive and holistic care for those who will most benefit.

8. Using 'big data' to reduce health inequalities

Alongside using data to improve care for individuals, using data effectively at service and population level will support planning and quality improvement methodology and projects. This will enable us to identify health inequalities and improve health outcomes.

We will develop accurate real-time information and predictive algorithms to identify and address health inequalities.



A digital first culture as... 'Business as Usual'

Developing a digital first culture within the Trust will ensure that staff are supported to develop the necessary digital skills and are empowered to lead innovation.



9. Digital workforce

Digital leadership through a Chief Information Officer (CIO) / Chief Nursing Information Officer (CNIO) will help with targeting where digital skills need to be focused for employees and will support embedding of digital literacy within the organisation.

This includes education and training to increase the digital literacy across the organisation and within the community.

We will upskill current staff in digital skills and build a digitally literate workforce able to champion innovation and drive through digital initiatives, as well as attracting digital talent.



10. Innovation

Digital initiatives championed and owned by clinicians will be identified and implemented to create a more user-friendly experience. This will help care providers better manage patient pathways and improve quality of work life for employees.

We will ensure that digital initiatives are supported by dedicated implementation and change management teams.

Digital strategic roadmap

High Level Objectives		Year 1 - 2022/23	Year 2 - 2023/24	Year 3 - 2024/25
Innovation	Interface with Quality Strategy deliverables	Supporting and enabling innovation to explore new ways of working.		
Building the IT Core	Interface with Quality Strategy deliverables	Move to cloud, network infrastructure LAN, WAN and WiFi		
Telehealth/Telemonitoring	Provision of convenient and effective solutions to support different models of care	Evaluate current tactical solutions	Define and embed strategic model	
Promote and enable digital culture	Adopt a digital first approach to optimising workflow, driving adoption and meaningful use	Adopt a digital first approach to the optimisation of work flow, driving adoption and meaningful use.		
Developing the Electronic Patient Record	Full digitisation/optimisation of clinical workflow, inc. systems integration, interoperability at local and place level	Current state diagnostic; procurement	Future state design and implementation	Assessment, benchmarking, accreditation
Single Source of the Truth	Developing Business Intelligence and data analytics at place level	Use cases, review existing resources / tools	Collaborate to scale up offer	
Population Health - addressing health inequalities	Working with system and internal colleagues to develop data to support strategic transformation and delivery of services and reduce health inequalities	Review against Health Inequalities strategy	Support NHSE Anticipatory care model	
Digital Maturity	Striving for the highest standards of digital maturity, underpinned by benchmarking and accreditation	Ongoing development, adoption of HiMSS model where relevant to Community and Social Care		
Cyber Security	Maintaining the highest standards of cyber security and compliance in accordance with relevant standards	Continuous improvement		