

Focus group feedback report: How can the Royal Devon use digital technology to make patient care better?

1 Background

- 1.1 The Trust is using digital technology to help us use resources more effectively and improve patient care. Examples include the Epic electronic patient record and MY CARE, which is the patient-facing part of the medical record, the virtual ward, and video appointments.
- 1.2 At our Members' Event on Wednesday 17 May 2023, we held two focus groups (total 5 people) to discuss their views on use of digital technology in the NHS.
- 1.3 We asked members of our focus groups:
 1. What opportunities can you see for using digital technology? What would be better if it was done digitally?
 2. When we're thinking about how we use digital technology, what do you think we need to bear in mind?
 3. Are you happy to access patient information leaflets via our website? Are you happy to receive appointment information by email or MY CARE patient portal/app?
- 1.6 This report provides a summary of the feedback shared with us in our two focus groups. For full comments, see appendix A.

2 Key feedback

The top three themes across our focus groups were:

- **Digital can make services more accessible and helps patients feel better connected with clinicians**
- **Duplication is an unintended consequence that some patients are experiencing e.g. repeating a procedure, receiving communications via multiple channels**
- **We need to build trust in technology. Ideas were shared for a patient user group and ways to build digital confidence.**

3 Next steps

Understanding how people perceive and experience our services is an important factor in developing future plans, helping us to learn and improve. We do this in a number of ways: through direct feedback, through our patient experience metrics, through engaging with staff, patients and our communities, and through specific events such as this. The feedback gathered at the member event will be shared with the following groups to inform our future planning:



**Royal Devon
University Healthcare**
NHS Foundation Trust

- Our Board of Directors
- Our Council of Governors
- Our digital and clinical transformation leads

We will continue to keep members updated regularly about what's happening at the Royal Devon.

ENDS

Appendix A – Comments in more detail

1. What opportunities can you see for using digital technology? What would be better if it was done digitally?

Useful to access remotely for disabled community.

Environmental benefits

Avoid parking headaches

Keeping in touch with consultant from a distance.

Can include a more holistic picture of people's health

Better coordination between trusts/clinicians

I have a remote monitoring device which enables my consultant to monitor my health from a distance (London). Also includes overnight monitoring.

Primary secondary care interface improvement. Quick communication straightaway. Used to pick up telephone back in the day. What ICB should be looking at. When is the collaboration going to happen.

2. When we're thinking about how we use digital technology, what do you think we need to bear in mind?

Sometimes IT knowledge is required, ie logging into a video appointment. Tech failing can leave the patient feeling frustrated without a way of being able to contact the clinician.

Sound/audio of hybrid meetings; keeping the meeting accessible for all (transcripts/captions etc).

Can be distracting/overwhelming for neurodiversity patients.

Problem: Blood test taken at Exeter, required to be sent to London for meds to be prescribed. Patient told there was no way within MY CARE for that to be transferred. (Letter-headed paper?) Pt had to return to GP and have blood test repeated in order that GP could email the result to London. Extra clause in shared care process?

Digital community hubs with libraries. But not confidential and not built for healthcare.

GP surgeries most obvious place to help people who have digital challenges. A computer that's usable and someone can help – trusted help.

Patient user group – to test and inform so we know that we're doing it right.

3. Are you happy to access patient information leaflets via our website? Are you happy to receive appointment information by email or MY CARE patient portal/app?

Very happy. Organised person, but reminders are helpful and important. It is good to 'check in' remotely, not to queue at a reception desk, but can go straight through to waiting room.

Access leaflets online is straight forward and can sign post me to relevant information.



Benefit of being able to update my meds online has been more efficient and saves time at the consultant appointment.

Text messages are helpful.

Feedback surveys offer an opportunity to feedback and have my voice heard after appointments. This has positively changed my experience.

As a climate activist, the app has saved time and money booking transport if an appt is cancelled at short notice. More immediate than waiting for a postal letter. Saving fuel and carbon impact. I still receive paper letters, which I would like to opt out of as this duplicates information.

How can we encourage public who are not currently online, to begin using online resources? Can libraries support with this?

Can see the benefit of MY CARE but couldn't see it reflected what I've experienced.