

Digital Strategy



2021/22
to 2023/24



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Our vision for digital transformation

With a digital first option allowing for longer and richer face-to-face consultations with clinicians where patients want or need it – advances in digital technology are continually opening up new possibilities for the prevention of ill-health and the care and treatment of our patients.

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) is proud of the leadership role we have played in the Kent and Medway system in terms of digital innovation in the past couple of years. All our strategies recognise the importance of providing high-quality, dynamic and digital services, but this strategy sets out an ambitious three-year vision of how digital will support us to achieve our mission and vision.

It details how we will empower patients in their own care, support decision making, use artificial intelligence to help clinicians apply best practice, eliminate variation and support self-management. The result will be more patient-facing time for frontline colleagues, increased efficiency for support staff and making it easier for everyone to do their job.

As outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan (2019) digitally-enabled care will become the mainstream across the NHS. Priorities include:

- making sure clinicians can access and interact with patient records and care plans wherever they are
- using predictive techniques to support local health systems to plan care for populations
- using intuitive tools to capture data as a by-product of care to empower clinicians and reduce the administrative burden
- encouraging a world leading health IT industry in England with a supportive environment for software developers and innovators.

If the COVID-19 pandemic taught us one thing – it's that we can go further, faster using digital technology to transform and improve care for our patients.

'This strategy sets out an ambitious three-year vision of how digital will support us to achieve our mission and vision.'

Through our experienced Board and leadership team, we are building stronger relationships with commissioning and provider leaders in the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System (ICS), strengthening the technology capability of KCHFT and driving the integration of services across the local health economy.

Our Digital Strategy underpins this by substantial investment in new digital tools, for example, the deployment of our new electronic patient record system, RiO, which integrates with the Kent and Medway Care Record. Over the next three years we will continue to deliver using our Covid-19 working practices and use these experiences to develop methodologies that are sustainable for the future.

We will focus on developing our digital capability to support the creation and delivery of high-quality services and build on our shared leadership role within the Kent and Medway ICS.

It is our technical colleagues, working closely with clinicians and other team members, who will make sure we deliver our digital aims through their skill, commitment and imagination.

Gordon Flack
Director of Finance and Deputy
Chief Executive

Our digital drivers will be to:

- promote and support the use of data to enhance clinical care and patient safety
- reduce unnecessary complexity for staff across our systems
- empower our staff and patients with data while maintaining digital security
- provide rapid access to clinical information.



About our strategy

This Digital Strategy lays out our approach for how digital services will support KCHFT's vision for providing systems and services to support our staff in their mission to provide first class, innovative patient care across the community.

We want to align to central NHS strategic thinking, while also allowing ourselves the opportunity to achieve our digital ambitions. These are to:

Our digital ambitions

- have accessible and integrated technology; giving our staff the digital tools to achieve their ambitions for excellence
- create a digital space that is capable of becoming an integral part of collaborative, shared public health IT services
- create highly secure, innovative and sustainable digital services
- achieve an outward-facing mentality, focused on the digital needs of our patients and staff
- gain better returns on the financial investments we've made in our digital technologies
- have a highly motivated and highly skilled IT workforce.

Our aim is to provide end-user-centric, secure, digital services that are innovative to the benefit of the local health system while being agile enough to evolve with the way that technology is changing. Our organisation will embrace partnerships with other like-minded organisations, learning from each other to achieve success and improve the lives of our patients.



Context and background

Our organisation

We provide wide-ranging NHS care for people in the community, in a range of settings including people's own homes; nursing homes; health clinics; community hospitals; minor injury units and increasingly urgent treatment centres and in mobile units.

We are one of the largest NHS community health providers in England, serving a population of about 1.4 million across Kent and 600,000 in East Sussex and London.

We employ more than 5,000 staff, including doctors, community nurses, physiotherapists, dietitians and many other healthcare and administrative professionals.

Our mission and vision

Our vision

A community that **supports each other to live well.**

Our mission

To **empower adults and children** to live well, to be the **best employer** and **work with our partners** as one.

Our goals

- Prevent ill health
- Deliver high-quality care at home and in the community
- Integrate services
- Develop sustainable services

Our enablers for 2021/22

- **Digital** – having accessible and integrated technology.
- **People** – engaging, developing and valuing our people.
- **Environmental sustainability** – improving our environmental impact.
- **System leadership** – improving population health and wellbeing.

Our values



Our challenges

Nationally

The challenges facing the NHS are evolving. Not only are we having to live with COVID-19 we also have an ageing population, many living with multiple long-term conditions. The way we are living our lives is also changing, meaning that younger members of the population are accessing health services. All of this is putting increased demand on the NHS.

In response to this, the NHS published the NHS Long Term Plan in 2019, which sets out the priorities for NHS for the next 10 years. Much of this relies on re-designing care pathways and delivering care in different ways, such as:

- integrated local care systems
- stronger network of GPs and community services
- radically transformed outpatient services
- avoiding hospital admittance
- specific commitments relating to a range of priority areas such as cancer, stroke, children's services, and maternity.

The NHS Long Term Plan also states that in 10 years' time, the NHS in England will offer a 'digital first' option for most, allowing for longer and richer face-to-face consultations with clinicians where patients want or need it. NHS England has pledged that digitally-enabled care will become 'mainstream' across the NHS over the next decade, and, specifically for digital transformation, set a number of objectives and milestones on the way to that goal:

- In 2021, people will have access to their care plan and communications from their care professionals.
- By 2023/24 every patient in England will be able to access a digital first primary care offer.
- By 2024, secondary care providers in England, including acute, community and mental health care settings, will be fully digitised, including clinical and operational processes across all settings, locations and departments.
- Data will be captured, stored and transmitted electronically, supported by robust IT infrastructure and cyber security, and LHCRs (Local Health Care Records) will cover the whole country.
- Use decision support and artificial intelligence (AI) to help clinicians in applying best practice.
- Use intuitive tools to capture data as a by-product of care in ways that empower clinicians and reduce the administrative burden
- Protect patients' privacy and give them control over their medical record
- Encourage a world leading health IT industry in England with a supportive environment for software developers and innovators.

It is our responsibility to align our objectives in support of the NHS Long Term Plan and be an integral part of digital change to improve the care of our patients.



Locally

There are approximately 1.8 million people living in Kent and Medway. The population of Kent and Medway is rapidly growing and the number of people living in Kent and Medway is predicted to rise by almost a quarter by 2031. This increase is higher than the average across England. This is because local people are living for longer and because people are moving into the area. We are very unlikely to see any more significant increases in health and social care budgets in the near future. Our budgets are not rising at the same pace as costs and demand. Across Kent, all NHS providers face significant financial challenges. Funding for council-provided services is reducing due to budget pressures.

KCHFT is now part of the newly-established Kent and Medway Integrated Care System. The system is made up of GP practices working together in primary care networks, four new and developing integrated care partnerships, drawing together all the NHS organisations in a given area and working more closely with health improvement services and social care, and a single commissioner, NHS Kent and Medway, which takes a bird's eye view of health priorities for local people and looks at shared challenges.

East Sussex has a varied and diverse population and is home to around 555,110 people. The county is seeing many of the same challenges as Kent, in terms of the proportion of people over 65 and over 85 being higher than the national average. The numbers of young people are expected to increase by three per cent in the next three years and there is also a growth in the numbers of children with statements of SEND or Education Health Care Plan, some of whom will have complex medical and care needs.

Across Sussex, the NHS and local councils that look after social care and public health are working together to improve health and care. The Sussex Health and Care Partnership brings together 13 organisations into an integrated care system.

North East London has a population of almost two million. It has the highest population growth in London – equivalent to a new borough in the next 15 years, as well as significant health inequalities.

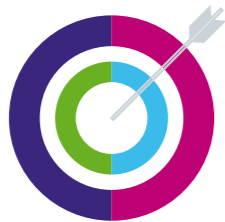
All of the above requires more innovative, efficient, digitally focused services that are enablers to allow the trust to continue to deliver first class healthcare not just to our patients, but also in collaboration across the ICS area.



'This requires more innovative, efficient, digitally focused services that are enablers to allow KCHFT to continue to deliver first class healthcare...'



Our aims



Our Digital Strategy is an enabler to the achievement of KCHFT's mission. It involves prioritising innovation, transformation, productivity, leadership and partnership working to deliver sustainable and ethical services and support all organisational goals while maintaining alignment to NHS national strategies.

Applied appropriately, digital technology has the capability to enhance many areas of clinical care, as well as providing an environment where patient safety is paramount. This will underpin our reputation for the delivery of high-quality and safe patient care while also enhancing KCHFT's ability to pursue additional business opportunities.

Our Digital Strategy defines an outward looking approach towards digital, creating new ways of working to enable existing services to continue whilst allowing a platform for new solutions to be deployed. Roadmaps will be created, underpinned by strategy to allow new, innovative designs to support our organisational objectives – while also having the flexibility to evolve and make use of emerging technologies as they appear.

We will focus on conception, design and delivery, underpinned by proven and robust frameworks, that collaborate and combine the goals and objectives from across KCHFT.

Our goals:

1. Empower people in their own care.

2. Integrate services.

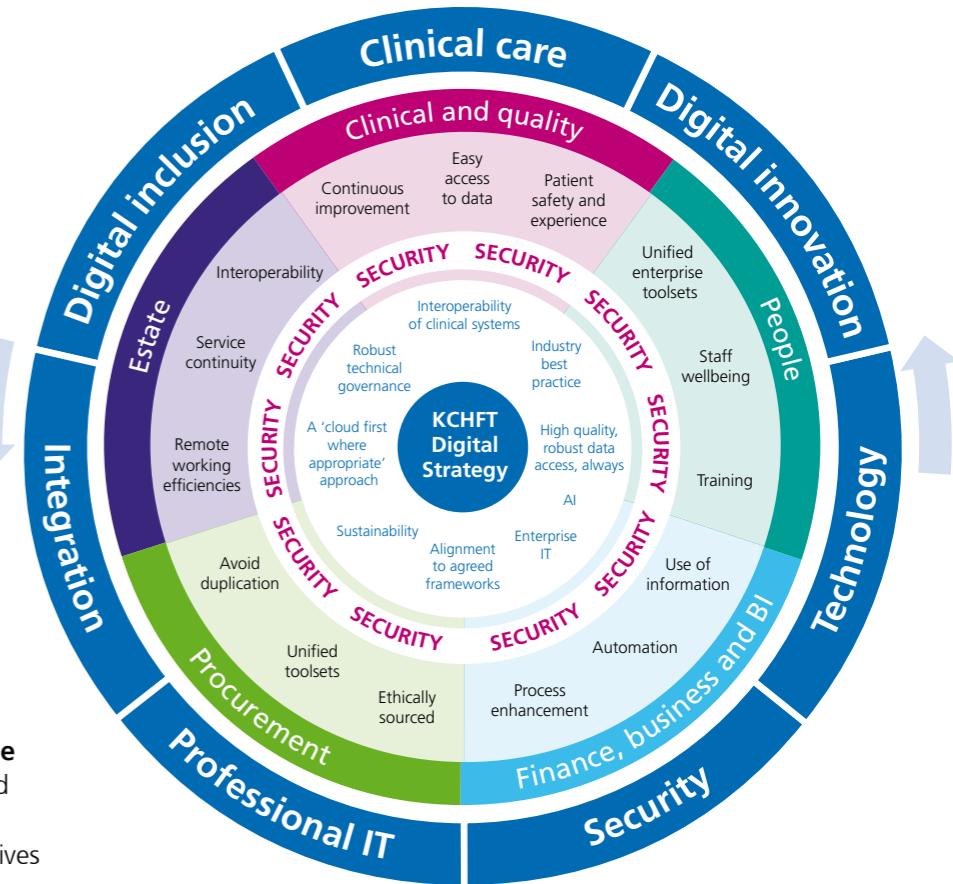
3. Deliver high quality care at home and in the community.

4. Develop sustainable services.



Developing services that align to our organisational goals will make sure KCHFT has processes in place for sustainable development and delivery of digital solutions that continue to support the great work our staff do. We aim to achieve this by implementing solutions that are:

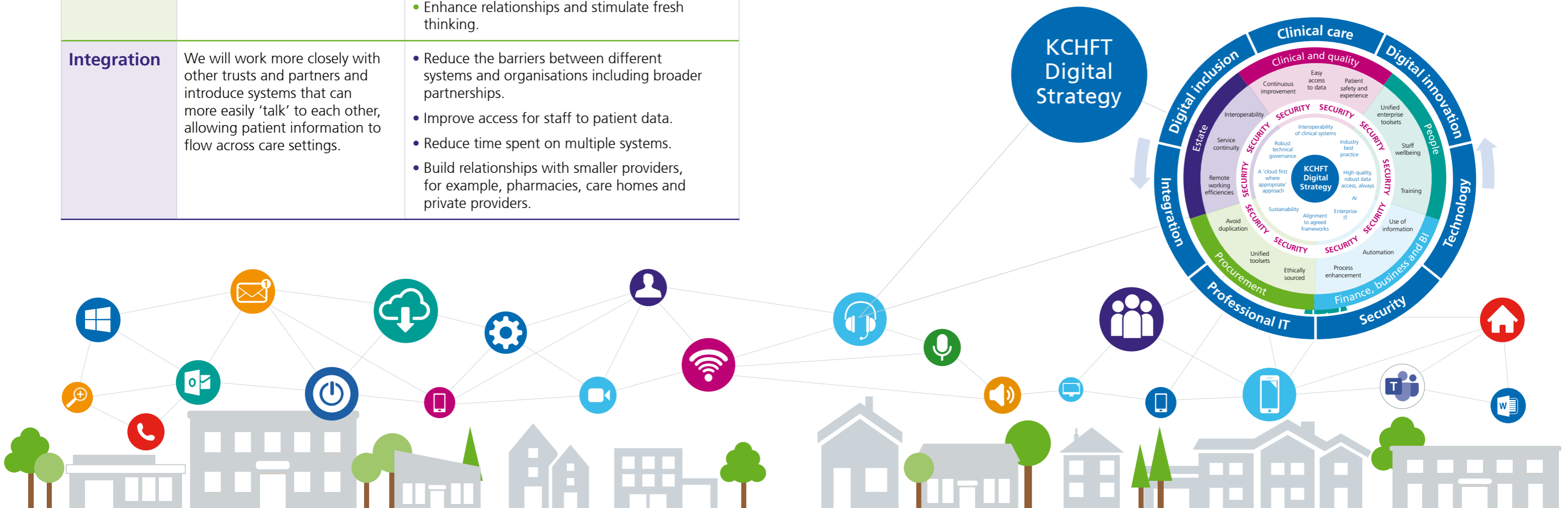
- **Easy to use and accessible** – focusing on how staff and patients use technology to support and improve their lives and daily activities.
- **Innovative** – taking development ideas from end-users and combining these with our knowledge of evolving technologies to deliver new digital solutions.
- **Outward facing** – delivering tangible benefits to the end user which supports care delivery.
- **Dynamic** – solutions that offer flexibility over how they are used with the ability to switch focus depending on requirements.
- **Financially sustainable** – making sure that investments made in solutions deliver the identified benefits for our staff and patients.
- **Conscientious** – promoting the use of ethically sourced and sustainable third-party goods and services.
- **Technically secure** – maintaining high levels of protection of our digital assets and information



The digital strategy

Aim	Ambition	Digital focus
Clinical and care	We will adopt a user first approach to create simple, efficient and user-friendly digital solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing systems with the end-user in mind. • Make digital solutions easy to use, efficient and effective.
Digital inclusion	We will design new services that are digitally inclusive, aligning our digital inclusion standards with national ones, so staff and patients can access digital solutions when and where they need to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT to be digitally inclusive for all from development to use by the end-user. • Design IT systems that align with organisational requirements and the needs of staff and patients.
Digital innovation	We will support digital innovation that benefits patient care and service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ideas between our services and other NHS organisations. • Improve internal communication on strategies and ideas for current and future needs. • Use of automation to improve efficiency and security of design and rollout of systems. • Reduce duplication and unnecessary processes. • Enhance relationships and stimulate fresh thinking.
Integration	We will work more closely with other trusts and partners and introduce systems that can more easily 'talk' to each other, allowing patient information to flow across care settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the barriers between different systems and organisations including broader partnerships. • Improve access for staff to patient data. • Reduce time spent on multiple systems. • Build relationships with smaller providers, for example, pharmacies, care homes and private providers.

Aim	Ambition	Digital focus
Professional IT	We will use best practice to inform our approach to implement and support digital solutions and technology that makes a tangible, positive difference to the experiences of staff and patients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce frameworks to bring together service design and delivery into a joined-up, repeatable and achievable pattern. • Adopt industry standards and best practice for the delivery and management of digital solutions and support services.
Security	We will continue to make sure digital solutions and technologies that we manage, as well as the data and information that they hold, are secure from threats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run the most up-to-date versions of systems so security patches and updates are supported and effective. • User-authentication is secure. • Our digital infrastructure is fully protected.
Technology	We will have an 'internet-first' approach; where possible, digital service design options will be cloud-based.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems can be scaled-up if needed. • Systems and services can interact. • Accessible from anywhere. • Make use of industry best practice to improve third party support and warranty.





Clinical and care



- Make RiO available to staff on tablet devices.
- Introduce a RiO user forum to support the on-going review and development of the system.
- Expand the use of voice recognition software across KCHFT to reduce the need for manual data entry.
- Start work on giving patients access to their health records through My Care Record Kent and Medway.
- Implement an electronic prescribing and medicines administration system.
- Trial a bed management and patient flow solution.
- Start work on a solution for online clinical appointment booking for patients.
- Review the systems used for virtual consultations to make sure patients and staff are getting the best experience from them.
- Build 'user first' priority thinking into all projects.
- Improve communication and information flows to frontline staff.
- Support business transformation and cultural changes as an outcome of digital developments.



- Recruit Chief Information Officers for clinical directorates.
- Implement remote diagnostic technologies to monitor patients in real-time.
- Introduce technologies that support patients to manage their own care more effectively.
- Develop our website and intranet to be our main platform for digital access.
- Align our support service with users to offer technical and access support as services move to deliver 24/7 care.

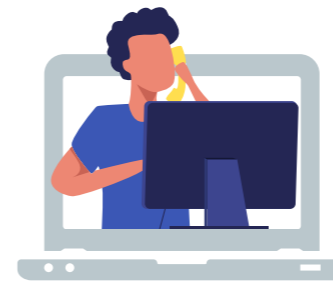


- Develop full use of systems and networks to support the flow of patient data and service delivery.
- Adopt a consistent approach to data management and access.

We will know we have it right when:



- Staff will be able to access systems from a device that is right for their role.
- Patients will be able to book and manage their appointments online.
- Staff will be able to monitor and review their patients' medications and vital signs remotely.
- Patients will be able to access their health records online.
- Staff will be able to propose changes and developments to the RiO system.
- Chief Information Officers have been appointed in each clinical directorate.



Digital inclusion



- Create focus and engagement groups (including staff, patients and volunteers) to improve how we develop and use our digital solutions.
- Introduce digital champions to support staff and patients in accessing digital solutions.
- Develop the digital competency and confidence of our staff through training and support, for example, digital drop-in clinics; bite-size videos on how to use RiO, MS Teams, MS Word; modular digital training sessions to build basic skills and confidence.
- Review the use of virtual consultations so all patient groups can access services in the way they need.
- Align service design to national guidance for digital inclusion.
- Create a culture of inclusive thinking for service design and delivery.
- Introduce staff and patient surveys to measure and learn from end-users' experience of digital solutions.



- Build on digital access for hard-to-reach and vulnerable groups, for example, disability or translation requirements.
- Work with partner organisations to provide patients with access to digital equipment.
- Introduce patient forums for digital services to help us shape how we deliver digital solutions in the future.
- Service shift to providing patients with direct access to their own information.
- Offer a choice of digital solutions to patients for how they can access our services, for example, video calls, web-chats, SMS messaging, voice recognition.



- Partner with other agencies, for example, pharmacies, local authorities, voluntary sector, so people can get online easily and with support.
- Identify further ways to help people access digital services.

We will know we have it right when:



- Staff will have received the right training for their role and will feel confident to use digital systems.
- Increased digital inclusion for people who might not normally be able to access it.
- A year on year increase in uptake in use of digital solutions in hard-to-reach and vulnerable groups.
- Implemented an approach for monitoring digital inclusion for our patients and staff and set targets to increase.
- Partnered with local councils and the voluntary sector to issue our patients with digital technology.
- Digital champions have been appointed to support patients and staff to increase their confidence in using digital technology.
- 90 per cent of end-users are satisfied with their experience of using digital solutions.



Digital innovation



- Expand the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to speed-up processes.
- Explore the opportunities for having remote triaging available in our minor injury units/ urgent treatment centres.
- Introduce apps from the NHS App Library.
- Continue knowledge sharing between clinical and digital teams to understand new developments and improve the end-user experience.
- Horizon scanning and forward view to identify and pilot emerging technologies.
- Use of data to enable better patient care.



- Develop in-house apps and digital solutions.
- Work with partner health and social care providers to maximise the benefits from digital solutions.
- Explore the use of virtual reality and AI to support the delivery of clinical care and decision making.



- Partner with digital industry providers to jointly develop and support our digital services.
- Work with partner NHS and social care organisations to introduce digital innovation hubs across the county.

We will know we have it right when:



- All services will be represented on regular digital innovation forums to bring forward new ideas.
- 20 per cent of current administrative processes to be undertaken by AI.
- Apps developed in-house or approved for use across the NHS are made available to our services and patients.
- Partnering agreements are in place with leading digital industry providers.
- Reduced steps in trialling and on-boarding new technologies.



Integration



- Access to the Kent and Medway Care Record system from within RiO.
- Start linking RiO to other KCHFT clinical systems.
- Work with partner NHS organisations to implement a Kent and Medway solution for clinicians to order blood tests and x-rays and view results.
- Develop forms within the Kent and Medway Care Record to allow clinicians to record clinical information.
- Align RiO to the clinical systems used in partner organisations.



- Access to the Kent and Medway Care Record system from all KCHFT clinical systems.
- RiO linked to all KCHFT clinical systems.
- Work with other providers, such as pharmacies and care homes, to facilitate quick and effective care through access to the Kent and Medway Care Record.
- Review data flows to cut down duplication of data entry and reporting.



- Wider Kent and Medway Care Record system access and integration.
- Reduce unnecessary time spent switching between systems to ensure consistent access to data, with a focus on accuracy, relevance and quality.

We will know we have it right when:



- Clinical staff will be able to access patient information from a range of care providers when they need it.
- Clinical staff working in multi-disciplinary teams will be able to update online forms about their patients' care.
- Clinical staff will be able to order diagnostic tests and view results for their patients.
- Reduce the time service users spend changing between systems.



Professional IT



- Enhance our technical processes and standards.
- Develop the way we purchase technology to make sure our suppliers can demonstrate their products and components, are sustainable and ethically sourced.
- Create an 'Enterprise' (whole system) mindset through adoption and integration of proven frameworks and process to enhance digital service delivery.
- Build best practice into our culture.



- Service desk to deliver against industry standards and be accredited by the Service Desk Institute.
- Start accreditation to industry standards for all IT services.
- 'As a service' approach to creation and delivery of digital tools and assets.
- Development of full and matured change management programme.
- Implementation of industry standards and best practice for the delivery of digital support services.



- Digital support services accredited to industry standards.
- Reduce reliance on capital financing.
- Streamlined revenue costs for digital services.

We will know we have it right when:



- Enterprise frameworks in relation to service delivery, service design and governance have been adopted.
- Digital support services have been accredited against industry standards.
- Processes are in place for inter-departmental communication covering service design, specification, delivery, procurement, security and resource management.



Security



- Update our security processes to meet all compliance-based requirements including the Data Security and Protection Toolkit, Cyber Essentials Plus, IT Health Check.
- All staff to understand how security supports the digital services they use in their day-to-day roles.



- Security architecture development to support shift in service delivery to 'internet first'.
- All technical staff to have achieved cyber security certification that is appropriate to their role.



- Review and maximise security in all digital systems through understanding and familiarity.
- Provide staff with a suite of strong and useful security tools on all platforms.
- Integrate our existing cyber security products to meet our needs.

We will know we have it right when:



- Staff understand what cyber security threats are and what they need to do if they encounter one.
- Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation has been achieved.
- Compliance with the standards in the Data Security and Protection Toolkit has been achieved.
- Recommendations from our IT Health Check have been implemented.
- Staff understand that security is not a barrier but a tool to support safe service delivery.



Technology



- Review the apps that form Office 365 and plan for the deployment of those that would benefit our staff and services.
- Map the digital equipment and system needs for all roles within KCHFT issuing equipment as required.
- Implement an 'always on' solution, allowing devices to remain connected to KCHFT's network.
- Trial the use of roaming data SIMs in mobile devices to make sure staff can stay connected when working in the community.
- Work jointly with the Estates Team to make sure technology supports the changing uses of KCHFT's buildings.
- Deliver telephony solutions that allow staff to be contacted from wherever they are working.
- Implement 'internet first' solutions where appropriate.
- Produce a technical roadmap that will detail the steps required to deliver the 'internet first' solutions.



- Maximise the use of Office 365 across KCHFT.
- Consolidate existing digital services to support migration to 'internet first' technologies.
- Continuous alignment and engagement with the wider NHS, learning from technical innovations and deployments in other organisations.



- Unification of digital and technological assets across KCHFT.

We will know we have it right when:



- Staff have access to the right devices to enable them to do their job.
- Devices can connect to the network automatically.
- Office 365 apps are used widely across KCHFT.
- Staff are able to make telephone calls from a range of digital devices.
- Our buildings have the right levels of technology available within them to support new ways of working.
- Created a culture of 'user first' thinking for all technical deployments.
- Adopted of an 'internet first' approach where possible.

