



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

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Component 2: Component 2: Written Assignment (Poster and Pitch)

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1. Innovation Overview

A secure NHS-integrated digital tool that provides real-time access to personalised patient information, improving communication for people with learning disabilities.

Key Features

- Personalised information
- NHS App / QR code access
- Usable across all care settings

Why it is innovative

- Standardised across services
- Reduces repetition and errors
- Improves safety and efficiency
- Supports coordinated care



3. Target Audience & Impact

Who benefits

- Adults with learning disabilities
- Autistic adults
- Family carers
- NHS staff



Impact on health and wellbeing

- Reduces anxiety and distress
- Improves safety and prevents errors
- Enhances communication and care quality
- Saves NHS time and resources

Common good

Promotes equity, dignity, and inclusion by ensuring **safe, person-centred care for vulnerable groups** (Department of Health and Social Care, 2022).

4. Implementation

Where : GP surgeries, hospitals, ambulance services, and social care settings

Who

NHS England
In partnership with Mencap and the National Autistic Society

How

- Passport created (with support if needed)
- Information stored securely
- Shared via NHS App or QR code
- Accessed before appointments

Considerations

Staff training for consistent use
Alternative formats to reduce digital exclusion



5. Timeline

Phase	Duration	Activity
1	Months 1-3	User-clinician co-design
2	Months 4-6	Prototype development
3	Months 7-9	Pilot testing (GP hospital)
4	Months 10-12	Evaluation & refinement
5	Months 13-18	Regional rollout
6	Months 19-24	National rollout (NHS England)

6. Regulations & Standards

Equality Act 2010 – Reasonable adjustments required (Great Britain, 2010)

Accessible Information Standard (2016) –

Communication needs recorded and shared (NHS England, 2016)



Mental Capacity Act 2005 – Supports best-interest decisions

Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR – Ensures secure data handling

7. Technology Integration

- NHS-compliant secure cloud storage
- QR code access for non-smartphone users
- Integration with NHS App

Accessible interface (large text, symbols, voice support)

Benefits

- Immediate access to critical information
- Reduces duplication and improves efficiency
- Enhances patient safety and care coordination



8. Dissemination

- Partnerships with Mencap, National Autistic Society and local carers
- Easy-read materials in GP surgeries and hospitals
- Social media campaign: #MyHealthMyVoice
- NHS training sessions and professional development (CPD)
- Briefings to Integrated Care Boards and local authorities



9. Conclusion

The AccessAbility Digital Passport addresses a clear gap between healthcare policy and practice. By improving communication, reducing risk, and promoting dignity, it offers a feasible and scalable solution to reduce health inequalities for people with learning disabilities within the NHS.



2. The Problem

People with learning disabilities experience severe health inequalities, including a **20-25 year lower life expectancy** and high levels of avoidable deaths (Heslop et al., 2014; LeDeR Programme, 2023).

Key Issues

- Poor communication
- Needs not consistently recorded
- Increased risk of misdiagnosis and delays



Policies exist but are not consistently applied (NHS England, 2016), leaving individuals 'invisible' within healthcare systems (Care Quality Commission, 2020).

Introduction

The AccessAbility Digital Passport is a digital communication tool designed to address persistent communication barriers experienced by individuals with learning disabilities within healthcare settings. Despite existing policies aimed at improving accessibility, many patients continue to face difficulties in expressing their needs, which contributes to poorer health outcomes and avoidable harm (Heslop et al., 2014; NHS England, 2016).

This innovation enables healthcare professionals to access personalised patient information in real time, thereby improving safety, continuity of care, and overall patient experience. It is designed to benefit individuals with learning disabilities, autistic adults, carers, and healthcare professionals. By promoting inclusive and person-centred care, this innovation addresses a significant gap between policy and practice and contributes to addressing health inequalities within the UK.

Background

Individuals with learning disabilities experience significant and ongoing health inequalities in the UK. Research indicates that this population has a life expectancy that is 20–25 years shorter than the general population, and a high proportion of deaths are considered avoidable (Heslop et al., 2014; LeDeR Programme, 2023). These inequalities are closely linked to systemic issues within healthcare, including poor communication, limited use of reasonable adjustments, and a lack of recognition of individual needs (Public Health England, 2018; World Health Organization, 2021).

Although policies such as the Accessible Information Standard require healthcare providers to identify and meet communication needs, their implementation remains inconsistent across services (NHS England, 2016). As a result, many individuals continue to experience barriers when accessing care. The Care Quality Commission (2020) also reports that people with learning disabilities are often overlooked within healthcare systems, which can lead to poorer quality care and negative experiences (Care Quality Commission, 2022).

In addition, the Equality Act 2010 places a legal responsibility on healthcare providers to make reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access to services (Great Britain, 2010). However, these adjustments are not always applied in practice, and this

continues to contribute to health inequalities (Department of Health and Social Care, 2022).

Therefore, there remains a clear gap between policy and practice, which highlights the need for innovative and person-centred solutions that improve communication and support safe, inclusive healthcare.

Innovation Description

The AccessAbility Digital Passport is a secure, NHS-integrated digital communication tool that stores and shares personalised patient information across healthcare settings. It includes important details such as communication preferences, sensory sensitivities, medical history, and care needs. These details can be accessed by healthcare professionals in real time through the NHS App or a QR code, ensuring that essential information is available before and during appointments.

Unlike traditional hospital passports or paper-based records, which are often not regularly updated or consistently used, this digital system allows information to be shared easily across multiple services, including GP surgeries, hospitals, ambulance services, and social care settings. As a result, it improves continuity of care and reduces the need for patients or carers to repeatedly explain their needs, which can often cause stress and delays, while also reducing reliance on fragmented communication methods and supporting more consistent and coordinated care delivery.

In addition, the innovation is designed to be accessible and inclusive, as it includes features such as simple language, visual symbols, and alternative formats to support individuals with different communication needs (NICE, 2016). It is also co-designed with service users and healthcare professionals, which ensures that it reflects real-life experiences and practical requirements.

Overall, the AccessAbility Digital Passport provides a more efficient, reliable, and person-centred approach compared to existing systems, as it improves communication, enhances patient safety, and supports higher quality care.

Impact on Health and Social Care

The AccessAbility Digital Passport has the potential to create a positive impact on both service users and healthcare professionals. It primarily benefits individuals with learning disabilities and autistic adults, as it supports them in communicating their needs more effectively. As a result, it reduces anxiety, enhances confidence, and ensures that their voices are heard during healthcare interactions.

In addition, the innovation strengthens patient safety and overall quality of care. By providing healthcare professionals with immediate access to personalised information, it reduces the risk of misdiagnosis, inappropriate treatment, and delays in care. This is particularly important in high-pressure settings such as hospitals and emergency services, where clear and accurate communication is essential.

Furthermore, the digital passport supports healthcare staff by saving time and increasing efficiency. Instead of relying on repeated explanations from patients or carers, professionals can quickly access relevant information, which enables them to make more informed decisions and deliver more effective care, thereby enhancing both clinical outcomes and patient experience.

Importantly, this innovation contributes to the common good, as it promotes equity, dignity, and inclusion within healthcare systems. It ensures that vulnerable individuals receive appropriate support and equal access to services and therefore helps to reduce existing health inequalities (Department of Health and Social Care, 2022).

Public and Stakeholder Involvement

Public and stakeholder involvement is essential to ensure that the AccessAbility Digital Passport is effective, inclusive, and responsive to real needs. The innovation will be co-produced with individuals with learning disabilities, autistic adults, and their carers, so that their experiences and preferences directly inform its design and development.

This approach promotes empowerment and supports the delivery of person-centred care (NHS England, 2016), while also increasing user trust and engagement with healthcare services.

In addition, healthcare professionals, including nurses, doctors, and social workers, will be actively involved in testing and refining the system. Their input will support practical implementation and ensure that the passport can be used efficiently in different healthcare settings, thereby improving its usability and long-term sustainability.

Furthermore, collaboration with organisations such as Mencap and the National Autistic Society will support advocacy, awareness, and wider engagement. These partnerships will help to build trust, encourage uptake, and ensure that the innovation reflects the needs of diverse communities, strengthening its impact across different populations.

Policies, Services, and Professional Links

The AccessAbility Digital Passport aligns with key UK legislation and healthcare policies that promote equitable and person-centred care. The Equality Act 2010 requires healthcare providers to make reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access to services (Great Britain, 2010). In addition, the Accessible Information Standard mandates that communication needs are identified, recorded, and shared across services (NHS England, 2016), although implementation remains inconsistent in practice, which highlights the need for more effective and consistent approaches to communication support.

The innovation also supports integrated care delivery by working alongside existing services such as GP practices, hospitals, and social care teams. Furthermore, collaboration with voluntary organisations enhances support for service users and improves access to resources, thereby strengthening coordination across different areas of care.

Healthcare professionals, including nurses, doctors, and social workers, play a key role in implementing the digital passport. Their responsibilities include using the system effectively, supporting patients, and ensuring that care is delivered in a safe, inclusive, and person-centred way, which contributes to improved care outcomes and patient experiences.

Conclusion

The AccessAbility Digital Passport addresses a clear gap in healthcare by improving communication for individuals with learning disabilities. It offers a practical and person-centred solution that enhances patient safety, supports healthcare professionals, and improves overall care quality. In addition, it aligns with existing healthcare policies and frameworks while addressing limitations in their implementation. Therefore, this innovation represents a realistic and sustainable approach to reducing health inequalities and promoting inclusive healthcare within the UK, while also supporting long-term improvements in healthcare accessibility and patient outcomes.

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