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**The Impact of Digital Technology on Communication and Patient
Engagement in Health and Social Care Settings in the UK**

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1 Introduction

Digital technology, in health and social care, is expected to revolutionize communication practices and improve patient engagement throughout the United Kingdom. Digital interventions, such as telehealth, patient portals, and mobile applications, will enhance accessibility, efficiency, and patient satisfaction (Bradwell et al., 2022; Griffiths et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the different uptake of digital tools and the different degrees of digital literacy among both employees and patients are a challenge that needs to be tackled. This study will examine the anticipated effects of digital technologies in enhancing communication and engagement with patients in health and social care with a secondary qualitative research approach to determine the main themes, challenges, and opportunities.

2 Task 1: Research Topic Identification

2.1 Issue Description

The growing use of digital technologies in UK health and social care has reshaped service delivery and patient interaction. Telehealth, patient portals, mobile applications, and remote monitoring devices (e.g., FitBit, Apple Watch, connected glucose monitors) are redefining the relationships between patients, professionals, and organisations (Parliament.uk, 2022; Lennon et al., 2017). Digital therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy using automated software and Sleepio, an insomnia using artificial intelligence, showcase the increasing role of applying technology to health outcomes. Moreover, the NHS strives to incorporate whole genome sequencing into routine care to enhance the outcome of diagnosis and treatment. The growing digital social care records (DSCRs) as part of the Digitising Social Care programme of £150 million are illustrative of similar trends in social care (Ainsworth, 2023). Even with these advances, there are still challenges. Digital literacy is both inter-patient, inter-staff and inter-organisational, presenting obstacles to successful engagement and uptake (Healey et al., 2024; Whitfield et al., 2025). There are still concerns regarding accessibility, especially to older adults, people with cognitive problems, and those who do not have access to devices or do not have a stable connection to the internet. Issues of privacy and data security are key, as there are rising intersections of DSCRs with GP records and the NHS Digital infrastructure (Ainsworth, 2023). Moreover, adoption and training of the staff is essential because the efficient use of these technologies demands skills and confidence, as well as workflow adoptions (Griffiths et al., 2018).

2.2 Population Affected

The patients are influenced directly by their access to care, their rights to participate in treatment choices, and their capacity to communicate with health and social care practitioners (Hutchings and Sherlaw-Johnson, 2022). Research indicates that the majority of patients experience positive changes when using video consultations, as they feel heard and

understood, but older patients encounter more problems with entering virtual consultations (Bradwell et al., 2022). The professionals in health and social care are affected by the alterations to communication practices, their workload, and efficiency, with many describing it as positive along with time savings and carbon footprints (Bradwell et al., 2022). Service delivery, compliance, and patient satisfaction are some of the challenges that organisations encounter in the sector especially because digital systems are common in the sector (Healey et al., 2024). The adult social care workforce includes about 1.56 million individuals in 18,500 organisations, which reveals the magnitude of the implementation that needs to be made.

2.3 *Rationale for Research*

The effectiveness of digital interventions in enhancing patient engagement, communication, and the quality of the care process is in dire need of an evaluation. Though government initiatives like the NHS Digital Strategy (2023) and the Digitising Social Care programme seek to speed up adoption, adoption is not evenly distributed, especially between the smallest and the largest providers, and across regions (Ainsworth, 2023; Parliament.uk, 2022). There is an indication that digital systems at homecare are still heterogeneous, and usability of software, integration, and support systems determine staff and patient satisfaction (Healey et al., 2024). Through a secondary qualitative review, the study will highlight gaps in the literature, determine barriers and facilitators to digital adoption, and influence policy and practice in UK health and social care.

2.4 Review of Three Key Sources

Table 1. Sources Review

Author(s)	Year	Source Type	Aim / Focus	Key Findings	Relevance to Study
Bradwell et al.	2022	Peer-reviewed journal article	To explore patient and staff experiences with video consultations (VCs) during COVID-19 in English outpatient care	High patient satisfaction (93.2%), barriers related to technology, older adults had more difficulties but high satisfaction, staff overestimated patient dissatisfaction	Provides insight into digital communication and patient engagement in outpatient care; demonstrates practical implications for health and social care digitalisation
Ainsworth	2023	Government website / report	To reflect on the progress of the Digitising Social Care programme and DSCR adoption	60% of providers using DSCRs, integration with GP Connect underway, regional variations, workforce and resource challenges identified	Offers policy context, sector-wide adoption data, and insights into workforce and technological integration in social care
Parliament.uk	2022	Government report	To review government efforts and challenges in NHS digital transformation	Slow and uneven progress, challenges include legacy IT, workforce skills, and inclusion, funding and clear strategy needed for success	Provides understanding of national policy, funding strategies, and barriers that influence successful digital implementation

3 Task 2: Research Methodologies

3.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches.

Quantitative research is usually concerned with numerical data and statistical analysis, which make it possible to measure the results and make generalisations between populations (Pathak et al., 2013). Conversely, qualitative research focuses on descriptive and thematic analysis of experiences, perceptions and behaviours and provides a more comprehensive understanding of social and organisational phenomena (Fossey et al., 2002; Irwin, 2013).

3.2 Chosen Methodology

The research design in this study will be the secondary qualitative research design based on the thematic analysis. The method is appropriate in the synthesising of the previous research and reports regarding digital technology in health and social care (Heaton, 1998). It is assumed that thematic analysis will help to reveal patterns, difficulties, and opportunities to improve the communication and engagement with patients (Lochmiller, 2021). The Level 4 assessment requires secondary qualitative research because of resource constraints and the availability of peer-reviewed and government sources and centered on findings that are relevant in the workplace. Primary data collection will be in the form of surveys, interviews or observations whereas secondary data will be based on the available datasets, reports and publications (Heaton, 1998). In this study, the secondary data will be conducted, based on peer-reviewed articles, government reports, and books. The technique allows a thematic evidence review without the need to involve the participants.

4 Task 3: Data Collection

4.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria to Secondary Data Collection.

Table 2. Selection Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Type of Study	Peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, books	Non-peer-reviewed sources, editorials, opinion pieces
Language	English	Non-English publications
Publication Date	2015–2025	Before 2015
Relevance	Focused on digital health, social care technology, patient engagement, communication	Irrelevant topics not addressing digitalisation in health or social care
Data Quality	Sufficient methodological and analytical detail for thematic analysis	Insufficient data, low-quality reporting

The search words will also be guided by SPIDER Framework to compare with the research objectives, including such keywords as digital health, patient engagement, video consultations, telehealth, and social care technology. Searches will be narrowed down using the operators of Boolean (AND, OR, NOT).

4.2 Database Selection and Sampling

Google Scholar, Scopus, and JSTOR will be added to the list of databases since they provide exhaustive coverage of the healthcare and social care literature (Ørngreen and Levinsen, 2017). The preliminary searches will be used to find approximately 450 articles; only high-quality studies will be left after the removal of duplicates and irrelevant research. Screening will be carried out in accordance with the PRISMA framework in order to facilitate transparency and rigour (Moher et al., 2009).

4.3 Thematic Analysis

Secondary qualitative data will be synthesised through thematic analysis that will be performed manually (Lochmiller, 2021). The method is appropriate to assess intricate interactions of technology and personnel as well as patients within different environments.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

Careful selection of secondary data and proper reporting will be used as ethical principles. No direct participants will be engaged; the use of data is in accordance with the copyright and referencing regulations. All the sources will be properly cited according to UWTSD Harvard standards. Clear reporting and interpretation of findings will be conducted according to ethical standards (Heaton, 1998; Irwin, 2013).

5 Conclusion

Hence, This research expects to demonstrate that digital technology can enhance communication and patient engagement in UK health and social care. Digital therapeutics, video and DSCRs are expected to enhance efficiency, access, and patient satisfaction (Ainsworth, 2023; Bradwell et al., 2022). Issues such as the digital literacy of the workforce, regional inequalities, and the connection with the old systems are anticipated to drive the results (Parliament.uk, 2022; Whitfield et al., 2025). The secondary data will be analyzed thematically to give information on the best practices, barriers, and opportunities to adopting the technology to informed policy and practice choices. The findings will be used to continue the digital transformation efforts and develop the design of interventions to maximize communication and interaction with patients in health and social care environments.

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