



Run by social care providers
for social care providers.

Everyday Tech, Hidden Risks: Cyber security & data protection when using everyday tech in social care

15th October 2026

House Keeping

- This webinar is being recorded
- Attendees **are on mute and can't be seen**
- **Please put your name and organisation in the chat**
- Please use the **Q&A** function to ask questions, not the chat
- You will get access to the recording and the presentation



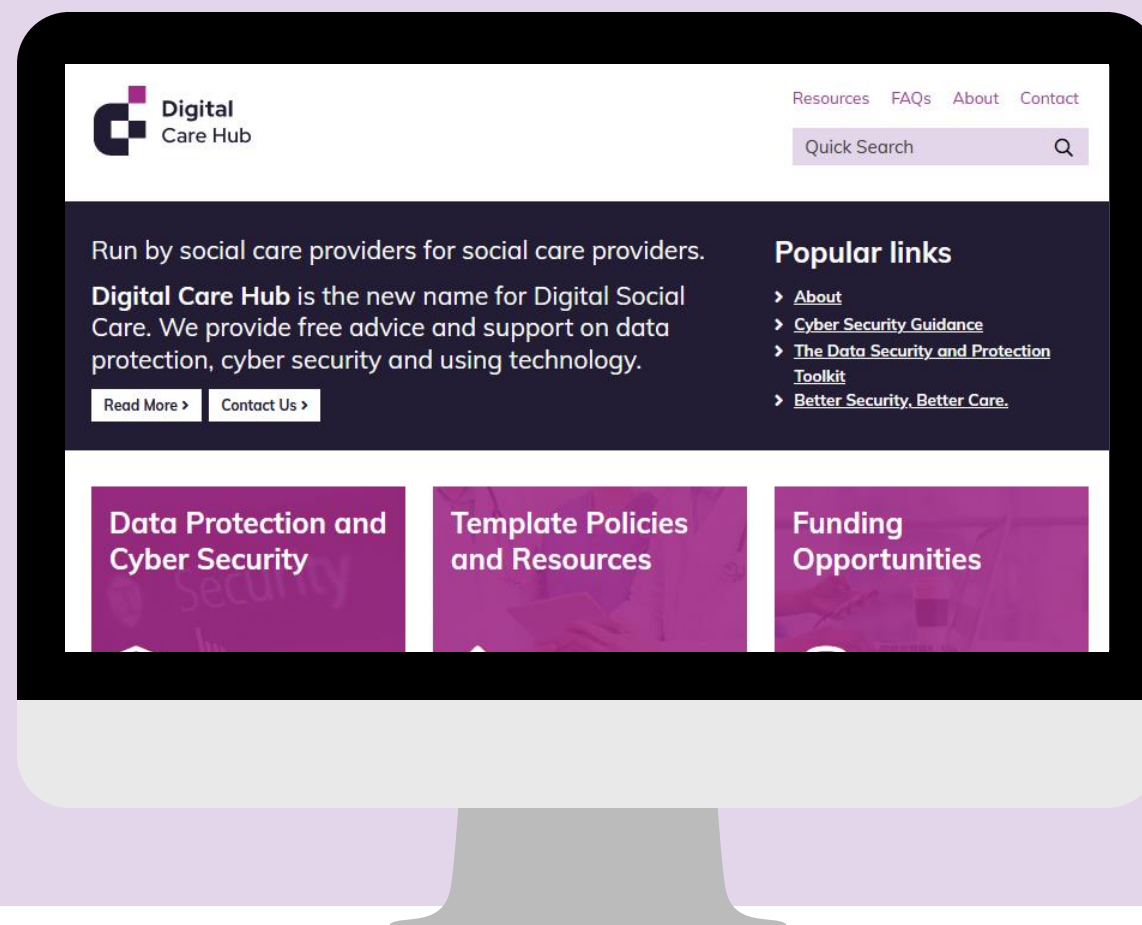
Photo by [Valeriia Svitlini](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Digital Care Hub – who are we?

Digital Care Hub is a **not-for-profit organisation**.

We help care organisations use **digital technology confidently and safely** through **practical guidance, resources, and tools on data protection, cybersecurity, and digital transformation**.

Our work supports over 20,000 care providers across England to adopt digital tools securely, improve quality of care, and build digital confidence across the sector.



Agenda

Time	Name	Organisation	Topic
13:40 – 13:55	Emma Nichols	ECN Consulting	Personalised Tech Assessments – Consent, confidentiality and passwords
13:55 – 14:10	Christopher Ede	Care Technologist, Brandon Trust	What could have happened ... a real-life experience WhatsApp – balancing risk and reward in care services
14:10 – 14:25	Alice Dunning	Research Fellow, University of Sheffield	Academic insights
14:25 – 14:40	Sam Cattell	Technical Cyber Lead, Digital Care Hub	Top tips!
14:40 – 14:55	Katie & Panel	Panel	Panel discussion/Q&A

Introduction & scene setting



Emma Nichols

ECN Consulting

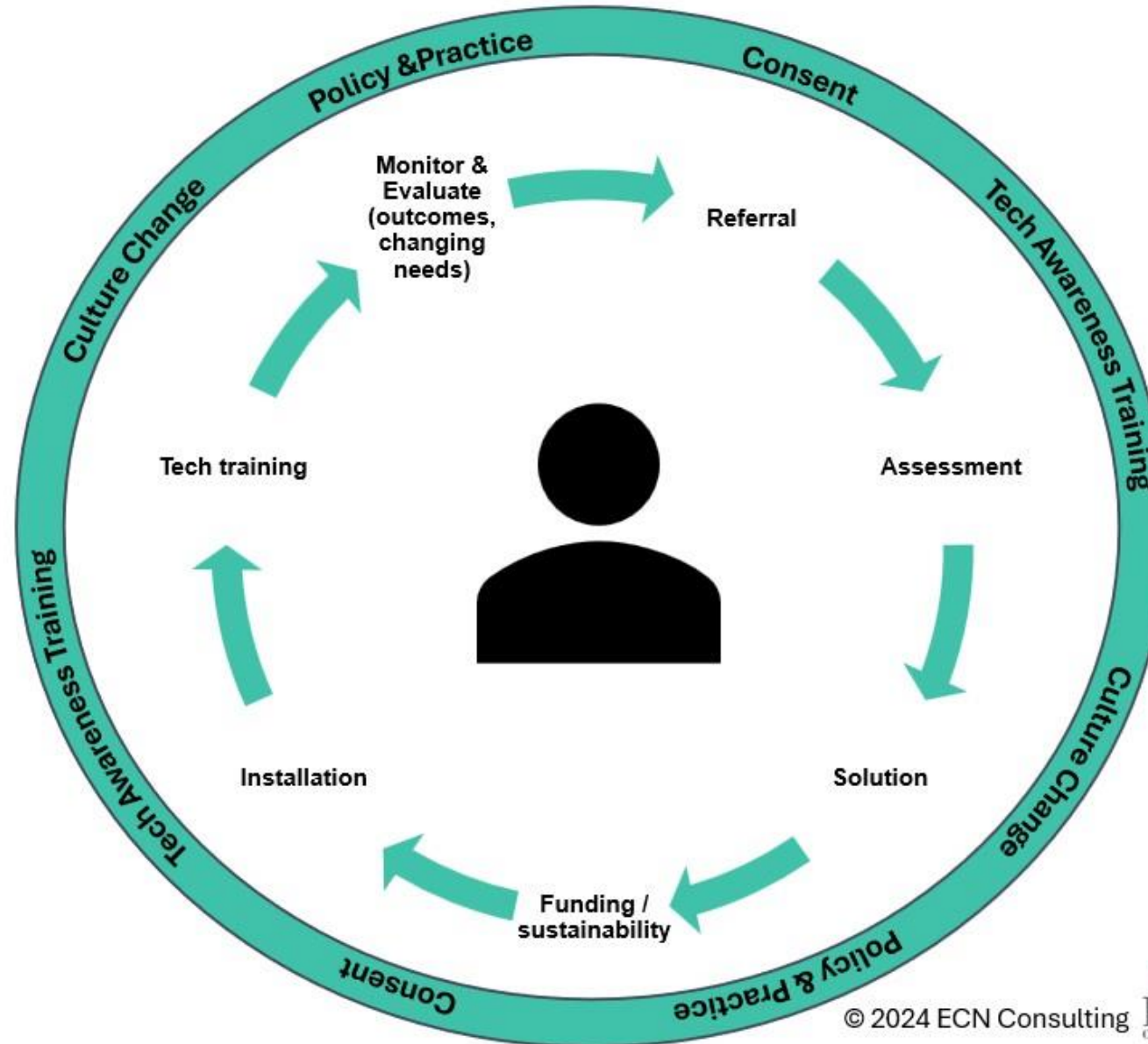


supporting tech development and innovation to improve lives

Implementing Technology to Enhance Lives

Emma Nichols

Care Technology Implementation Model



What does it take to implement tech well?



It's about the person NOT the technology!



Sam: One of her goals is to answer her own front door. She gets very anxious
She lacks confidence.

A Smart Doorbell is one possible solution, but it needs to be assessed, selected and implemented appropriately

Assessment - understand the person

- Person centred – what matters to Sam?
- Strength based – what can Sam already do?
- Holistic – all areas of Sam's life
- Barriers / risks Sam faces
- Co-produced – involve family, advocates, staff
- Outcomes focussed

**Sometimes the assessment may show that technology
isn't the right solution**

Choose the right solution

- Accessibility
- Reliability
- Cost
- Connectivity
- Compatibility
- Tech Support
- Set realistic expectations
- Personalised
- Restrictions



Consent, choice and transparency



- Involve the person
- Support staff and family knowledge
- Accessible communication methods
- Capacity
- Privacy & data sharing
- Impact on others (housemates, landlords)
- Ongoing review

Make implementation work in practice



- Support plans
- Risk assessments
- Technology health checks
- Existing policies and procedures

- Who sets up the device and supports it's use?
- What happens if it fails?
- How are risks managed?
- Who reviews it?

Review the outcome

- Does the person want it?
- Is it being used appropriately?
- Is it meeting the person's need?
- What outcomes have been achieved?

Success isn't installing the technology. It's making a meaningful difference to someone's life

Christopher Ede

Brandon Trust



Brandon
Live free
the learning disability charity

Alice Dunning

University of Sheffield



Using mainstream technologies with people with learning disabilities: **A moral, legal and ethical framework for social care**

Dr Alice Dunning

With thanks to TEC-LD team Prof Liz Croot, Dr
Grace Whitfield, Elsie Ledger, Mari-Liis Tamm



About TEC-LD

Scope: everyday technology

- Off the shelf devices and platforms e.g. smartphones, tablets, SMART devices, fitness trackers, social media, generative AI
- Asking: what is used, for what purpose, with what benefits and risks?

Evidence

- UK scoping review of 38 sources
- Synthesised academic research, legal cases/ sources, grey literature (including local and national policy perspective)
- Co-designed Moral, Ethical and Legal Framework

TEC-LD works with a Knowledge User network

Adults with a learning disability

Family carers

Support providers

Policy landscape

- Broad ambitions, limited specificity
- Inconsistent local implementation
- Protection vs rights
- Limited practical support

Scoping review: How is technology being used?

Connection and identity

- WhatsApp, video calls and social media help maintain friendships and family bonds.
- Online communities and dating spaces can support self-expression, sexuality and identity beyond disability.

Routines

- Smart speakers, calendars and apps can prompt medication, travel, appointments and household routines.
- Music, relaxation and reminders can make a home feel more manageable and predictable.

Participation and safety

- GPS and sensors may support navigation and reassurance but can also introduce surveillance.
- Tablets and emerging AI tools can support learning, rights information and work-related tasks.

Access does not equal inclusion. Inclusion depends on accessibility, digital literacy, tailored support, positive risk-taking and real choice.

The Framework

The framework makes tensions visible: keeping someone safe from harm while respecting their right to make choices.

MORAL

What I believe is right

Personal values and conscience

ETHICAL

What we do as professionals

Professional codes, organisational standards and duties of care

LEGAL

What the law requires

Statutory duties, rights and regulatory obligations

SEVEN DOMAINS

Privacy

Data and dignity

Liability

Accountability and safety

Transparency

Explainability and accessibility

Relationships

Human connection

Equality

Digital inclusion

Sustainability

Long-term viability

Personalisation

Tailored choice

Privacy

What the evidence highlights:

- Balance rights and protection
- Recognise individual choices
- Support, don't restrict
- Protect personal information

Key message: Focus on *supporting informed choice and positive risk-taking*, rather than allowing protection to become unnecessary restriction or surveillance.

Knowledge User experience:

- Shared access to devices and data protection concern
- Consent to record

Liability

What the evidence highlights:

- Fear drives restriction
- Confidence matters
- Enable learning
- Take a positive approach to risk

Key message: Build supporters' confidence to enable digital inclusion, rather than restrict access out of fear.

Knowledge User experience:

- Provider concerns of being held responsible
- Family carer: *'It's okay to make mistakes'*

Transparency and explainability

What the evidence highlights:

- Build supporter skills
- Make learning meaningful.
- Communicate accessibly
- Enable informed consent

Key message: People need accessible information and tailored support to make informed choices and exercise their rights.

Knowledge User experience:

- Family carer: *'Transparency is more than handing someone a technical leaflet.'*

Relationships

What the evidence highlights:

- Enable connection
- Recognise risks
- Technology complements support
- Provide hands-on support

Key message: Use technology to enhance relationships and independence, not replace human connection or restrict choice.

Knowledge User experience:

- Carers described distress when devices or Wi-Fi failed, particularly where the person relied on them for routine and reassurance.
- Providers cautioned that “back-up” human support remains essential, whatever the device is meant to do.

Equality

What the evidence highlights:

- Remove barriers
- Recognise the impact
- Challenge gatekeeping
- Embed digital inclusion

Key message: Digital inclusion requires accessible technology and the right support to enable meaningful access, choice and participation.

Knowledge User experience:

- “When you ask for help but don’t get it, you feel trapped.” adult with a learning disability

Sustainability

What the evidence highlights:

- Enhance, don't replace
- Promote ownership
- Invest in digital skills
- Resource support teams

Key message: Sustainable digital inclusion requires investment in people, skills and support, not just technology.

Knowledge User experience:

- A provider described “Alexas in drawers”: pandemic grants distributed smart speakers, but no follow-up budget covered breakages or maintenance.

Personalisation

What the evidence highlights:

- Start with the individual
- Support learning over time
- Take a positive approach to risk
- Respect the right to choose

Key message: Personalised support and positive risk-taking enable choice, confidence and meaningful digital inclusion

Knowledge User experience:

- Adults with a learning disability argued that decisions about technology should belong to the person, not the provider; group-home rules were seen as overriding individual choice.

Initial recommendations

- Start with the person
- Take a positive approach to risk
- Make support accessible:
- Build skills and confidence
- Review restrictive practices
- Invest in staff

We want to hear about your experiences...

Help us understand the benefits and challenges of everyday technology in social care.

Take part in our survey

 20 minutes

 Prize draw: Win one of three £50 vouchers

 Prefer to talk? Complete the survey with us over the phone.



Thank you

This project is funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) School for Social Care Research (SSCR) (Grant Reference Number 207100). The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR SSCR, NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.

Contact email: a.dunning@sheffield.ac.uk

sscr.nihr.ac.uk



Sam Cattell

Technical Cyber Lead



Zoom Polls

**Apply our knowledge to
real-life scenarios**

01

Read the scenario

It will appear on your screen.

02

Choose an answer

Take your best guess from the multiple-choice options.

03

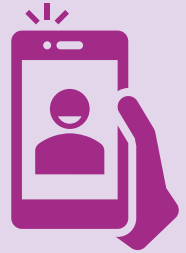
Discuss together

We will discuss each answer in turn.

Top Tips

Risk Assess: Complete a risk assessment before introducing technology, and review it regularly

Everyday tech introduced by care providers



People first, choice, and dignity

- ✓ Start with the person, not the technology
- ✓ Value the person's choices and involve them in decisions
- ✓ Respect the person's privacy and dignity

Secure by design

- ✓ Check privacy settings before use
- ✓ Change default passwords and control access
- ✓ Keep devices and software updated

Privacy and consent

- ✓ Assess privacy and security risks before use
- ✓ Consider what information is shared, with whom, and why

Ongoing care

- ✓ Review risks and help staff manage them
- ✓ Plan for incidents, failures, and safe decommissioning

Top Tips

Risk Assess: Include everyday tech, such as IoT devices, in risk assessments, and ensure staff know how to manage the risks

Everyday tech owned by the people you support



Respect people's choices

- ❖ Talk openly and respectfully with the person
- ❖ Consider everyone's rights and privacy
- ❖ Understand the tech without taking control

Confidentiality

- ❖ Conversations and activities may be recorded - treat smart tech like another person in the room
- ❖ Protect confidentiality and professional boundaries

Care worker confidence

- ❖ Have clear policies and procedures
- ❖ Ensure staff understand the risks and how to manage them
- ❖ Train staff and provide ongoing guidance and support

Learn → Adapt → Improve

- ❖ Include everyday technology in risk assessments
- ❖ Listen to staff, learn, and adapt. New tech? New review!

Q&A

Feedback Poll



Digital Care Hub

hello@digitalcarehub.co.uk

[@DigitalCareHub](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

0808 196 4848