

# Digital Social Care Records Rapid Evaluation (DiSCRE)



**Project team:** Dr Juliette Malley, Prof Joanne Westwood, Dr Nicola Farrelly, Dr Cate Henderson, Prof Cath Larkins, Dr Wagner Silva-Ribeiro, Martha Snow, Dr Nicole Steils

**Aim:** To better understand digital care record implementation in order to help adult social care providers address the challenges to success and maximise their benefits for the most people

**Timeline:** 23 October 2023 – 31 March 2025

## Methods

**Co-created with our Evaluation Advisory Network (EAN)**

- Comprised of care professionals & experts by lived experience

### Rapid scoping review

- Showed a lack of evidence on benefits & disbenefits of digital records

### Phase 1:

- Interviews with 30 care provider managers in 4 sites across England
- Interviews with 3 technology suppliers

### Phase 2:

- Interviews with 30 care workers & 23 people drawing on care/relatives across 10 providers selected from phase 1
- Economic analysis



## Key findings: Care managers

### Benefits

- Faster documentation that is more efficient
- Real-time, accurate records are safer, e.g. they enable faster reactions to incidents

### Disbenefits

- Suppliers promised features that did not work
- Digital changes recording culture, e.g. emojis & icons are used to document serious aspects such as palliative care

"If you've been totally icon driven, are you going to be able to stand up [in court]? [...] You'd be ashamed. You have to be very, very careful with the notes that you're taking."



## Care workers

### Benefits

- Offline working was helpful given unpredictable internet connectivity
- Time savings meant staff could spend more time with care home residents

### Disbenefits

- A translation feature would help non-native English speakers who could struggle to understand digital records
- Less 'tech savvy' staff struggled to learn & found bespoke training useful

## People drawing on care/relatives

### Benefits

- Where used, the (patient &) family portal facilitated communication between relatives & care workers
- Clients liked the idea of accessing & personalising digital records, whereas care providers often thought they were uninterested

### Disbenefits

- People were rarely informed of implementation & didn't always feel they could ask
- People were often unsure about what was stored on digital records
- Older people are often unaware of online safety & data security

"I would do [the patient & family portal] so parents can, if they want to, see the negative stuff. [...] Because I feel if mum saw [something I didn't feel able to tell her], she would then ring me and be like [...] are you okay?"

"They don't record anything personal. [...] I don't suppose they've got your address on those things"

