



Digital Technologies to  
support social wellbeing

## Public Summary

DiTSoW stands for *Digital Technologies to support Social Wellbeing of community dwelling older adults in receipt of social care and their carers*.

Researchers from the University of Hertfordshire, University of Kent and King's College London have been studying if and how digital technologies are used to support the social wellbeing of older adults and their carers.

The original DiTSoW study set out to explore how digital technologies were being used by older adults and people in social care, and to see if and how this was supporting social wellbeing.

Here is more about the original work: [DiTSoW](#)

DiTSoW II builds on DiTSoW findings. We learnt that there is a role for technology to support people with vision loss and people living with dementia live independent and connected lives but both groups have unique support needs to successfully adopt technologies and are at increasing risk of digital exclusion. Additionally, we learnt that for successful

implementation of technologies there is a need for a better evidence base and research capacity within social care.

DiTSoW II will have two workstreams. The first will work with the Vision Loss community and professionals in this field to better understanding of the challenges and facilitators of digital technology use for older adult with vision loss and conduct a priority setting for research, policy and practice. The second workstream will work with a local authority using technologies to support people with dementia and run workshops with their social workers to build capacity in the collection and use of evidence.



## Public and Community Involvement

Community organisations facilitated recruitment of older adult public contributors (initially 6, now 8) with a range of experience in social care, digital technologies and social isolation to a 'Research Advisory Group' supporting and guiding all aspects research and dissemination.

39 older adults and 24 professionals were involved as research participants through interviews and focus groups of our original work. 59 stakeholders attended knowledge mobilisation events by to sense check findings and co-develop recommendations for policy and practice.

Workshops are currently being held in conjunction with vision loss organisations and their members to better understand digital technology use and access and a wider network of community involvement is supporting the dissemination of a survey.

## Dissemination

- BSG conference 2024
- ESSN conference 2024
- Nordic Conference of Gerontology 2024
- International Conference on Welfare Technology in Old Age Care, Shanghai, China 2025
- A number of local dissemination talks
- [FOSS event Nov 2024](#)

Creative dissemination activities include podcasts, blogs, graphic illustrations and audio descriptions.

## Impact and Implementation

Evidence from original DiTSoW work provides an understanding about the adoption of technology by older adults to support social wellbeing including the challenges and facilitators to this and how digital technologies are being considered within social care. Findings, and co-produced recommendations to support design, evaluation and implementation of digital technologies, will be shared to inform policy and practice in this field.

DiTSoW II has been designed to meaningfully support more successful implementation of DT for people with vision loss and dementia and lessen need of ASC intervention to support social wellbeing.

Our work will building necessary evidence base to inform practice and Action Learning sets will be used to build staff capacity.

## Publications

- Briefing 1: [Summary of findings from interviews with professionals working in this field.](#)
- Briefing 2: [Summary of findings from interviews and focus groups with older adults.](#)
- Briefing 3: [Summary of findings from knowledge mobilisation events with recommendations for policy and practice.](#)

## Next steps

Complete DiTSoW II, with continued dissemination activities.