

Background to the Digitising Social Care (DiSC) Programme and overview of governance

Patricia Coker, Senior Responsible Officer for
the Digitising Social Care programme

System-wide challenges

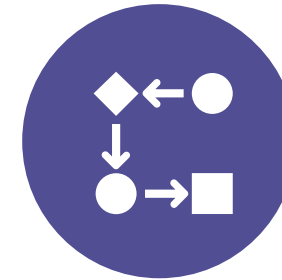
A number of challenges have been raised in the adult social care sector:



Staff shortages
– lack of time for
training and
development



**Limited sharing of
data** between
health and social
care organisations



**Different tools and
ways of working**
across health and
care organisations



**Limited use of
learning** from the
COVID-19
pandemic



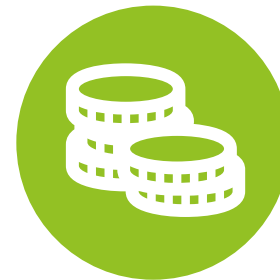
Current digital tools
are **not embedded**
**in the care
pathways**



**Perception that
digital tools are
complicated** and
difficult to use



Lack of knowledge
about what digital
tools are available



Lack of funding to
buy digital products
and services.

Background

Digital transformation of health and social care is a top priority for the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England. The main tools for driving progress to date have been published across many existing strategies and guidance publications.

The **NHS Long Term Plan** sets out the aspiration to make digitally-enabled care mainstream across the NHS, and **Data Saves Lives: Reshaping Health and Social Care with Data** – along with **What Good Looks Like, Who Pays for What** and the **Unified Tech Fund** – provides the guidance and support Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) need to make this a reality.

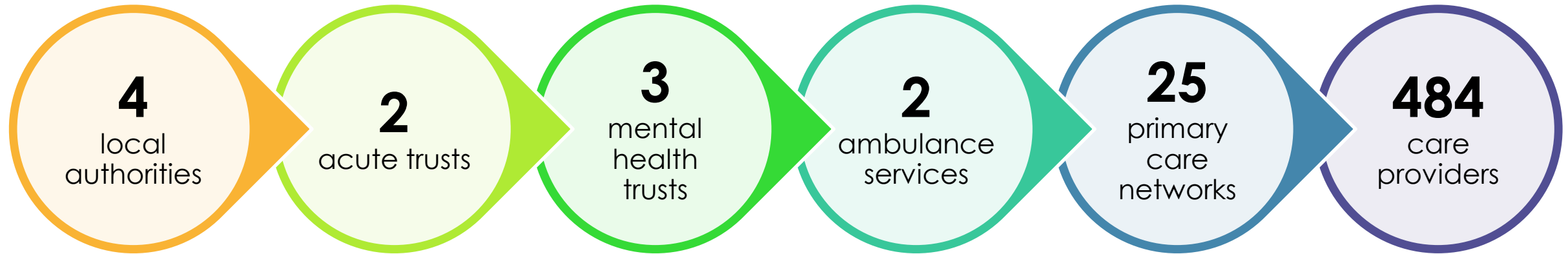
ICSs enable the NHS to work closely with local government and other local partners to **build on existing local efforts**; and **strengthen and implement preventative interventions** that will **close the local health and wellbeing gap**.

We are committed to:

- significantly increasing digitisation in social care
- supporting the adoption of care technologies
- building an evidence base
- developing implementation guidance for care providers
- assuring supplier solutions.

Our partners

One Integrated Care System:



Three unique features:

- System-wide **relationships supported by a dedicated team**
- Highly effective **partnership working** based on **true co-design**
- **Significant benefits** for our **residents** and our **care providers**.

Containing

89
GP practices

121
care homes

127
LD/MH homes

236
domiciliary/
home care

Our journey



2020: Concept

Partners gathered informally to discuss challenges and the need for a system-wide programme



Coming together / initiation

- Primary care funding
- Posts filled
- Governance established
- MOUs signed and contracts agreed



Developing a team

- Adult social care digital agenda
- Supporting the care sector
- Seeking funding opportunities



Research and promotion

- Identifying tools and technologies
- Encouraging signup and rollout



Today: Business as usual

- Ongoing support
- Continuous development and reviewing of processes

The Digitising Social Care (DiSC) programme

The DiSC programme is dedicated to **revolutionising healthcare** through digital innovation, **harnessing the power of technology** to **enhance the health and wellbeing** of the communities we serve through essential digital, data, and technology services.

Our three key areas of focus:



Digital records



Falls prevention



Remote monitoring and supporting independent living

Our vision is to **promote independence, choice and quality of life** for our residents and **support a higher number of people in their own home**. We want to help **prevent the problems that lead to serious health issues and stays in hospital**. We want to **give care home staff more time** to focus on caring for their residents.

Our approach

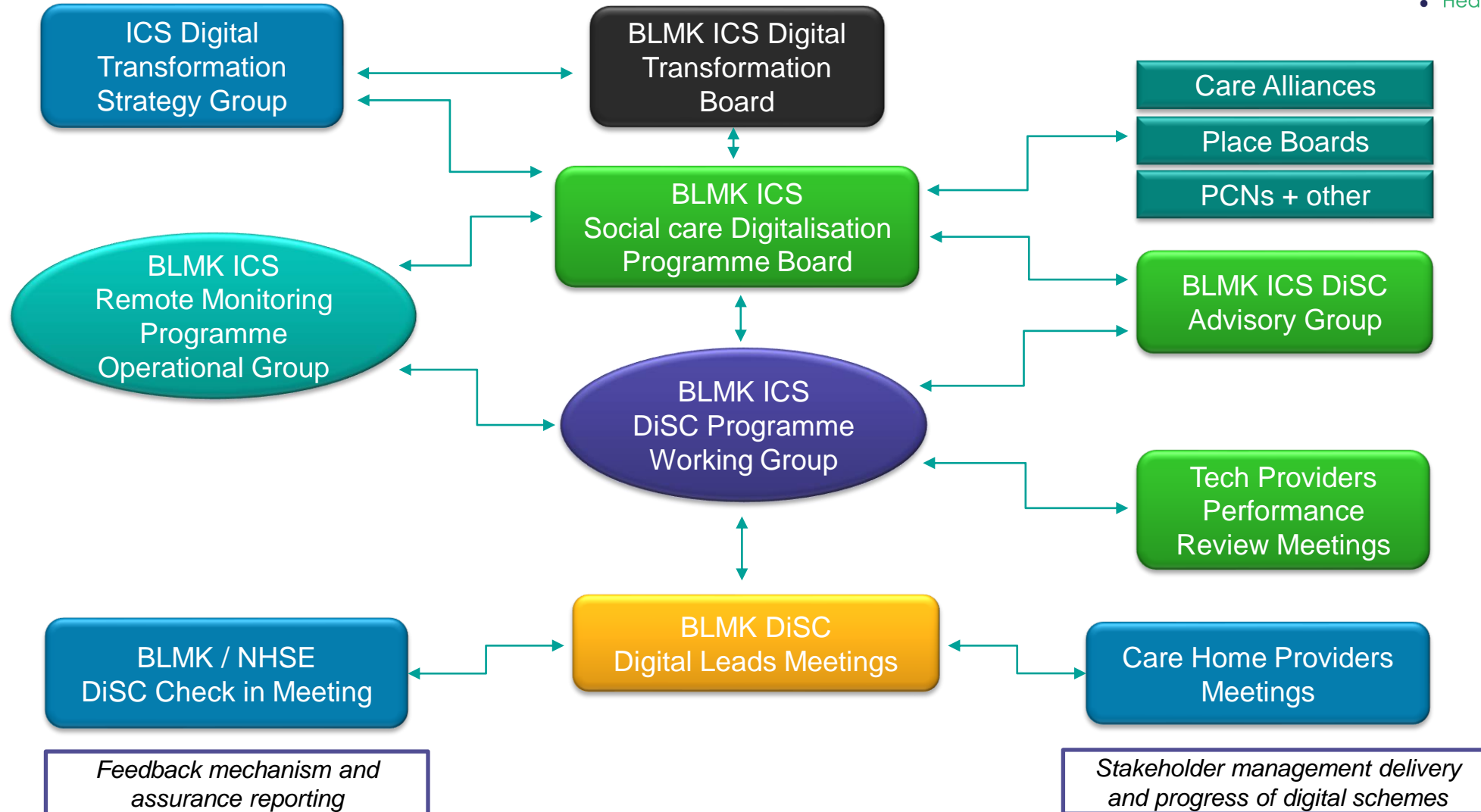
The Digitising Social Care (DiSC) Board has been responsible for **bringing together thinking** from across the footprint. This **collaborative leadership** has enabled partners to develop and agree the local digital ambitions and roadmap for delivery.

The Board is supported by a **Steering Group, Local Authority Boards, and a dedicated team** responsible for developing plans for digital transformation.

The DiSC programme has been developed in stages [see right] – consolidating various projects, activities, processes and governance structure which **align with national and local priorities**.

1. **Understanding the current state** – establishing baseline data, digital requirements including capabilities
2. **Future visioning** – collaborating with stakeholders to develop partnership, process and a shared vision
3. **Strategic and operational planning** – establishing governance, process, systems and a communications plan
4. **Drafting** – initiating proposals and seeking agreement of stakeholders
5. **Alignment and refining** – continuously learning, developing, refreshing, and collaborating to align local, regional and national priorities
6. **Focus** – learning to develop a focused, targeted and impactful programme

Programme governance



Delivery of the Digitising Social Care (DiSC) Programme and overview of achievements

Clare Steward, Digitising Social Care Programme Director

A model of integrated working

Our successes over the past three years:

- ✓ **Co-designed and co-produced** an ICS-wide digital transformation programme for adult social care
- ✓ Established clear and pragmatic **governance arrangements** – setting out decision-making and accountability structures, with shared leadership at strategic, place, political and executive levels
- ✓ Hosted **dedicated digital leads** who have built reputation, trust and strong working relationships between care providers and local authorities
- ✓ Set out the building blocks of various **strategies to supporting digital transformation** across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes
- ✓ **Tracked performance measures** by system and place, and shared them with respective governing bodies and place-based committees
- ✓ Continued to **build a shared understanding** among leaders, staff, partners and people – encouraging each partner to influence the risks and benefits and work together to drive **collaborative working**
- ✓ Secured around £4 million for **investing in digitising social care**.

We still need to:

- Move away from short term, last-minute non-recurrent **funding arrangements**
- **Integrate ambitions** across health and social care from the top
- **Respond to the What Good Looks Like ‘People at the Heart of Care’ reform white paper** (well-led, ensure smart foundations, safe practice, support workforce, empower people, improve care, and healthy populations).

Alignment with the system

Programme hosted by Central Bedfordshire Council



Digital Project
Manager



Digital Project
Manager

Luton

Digital Project
Manager



Digital Project
Manager



Our place



BLMK total	484 providers
Residential social care	222
Community-based adult social	261
Approx 1.8 million population	

Bedford	140 providers
Residential social care	80
Community-based adult social	60
185,300 population	1 in 6 people aged 65+

Milton Keynes	147 providers
Residential social care	47
Community-based adult social	100
287,000 population	1 in 7 people aged 65+



Central Bedfordshire	139 providers
Care homes (residential and nursing)	40
Learning disabilities/mental health homes	28
Domiciliary/home care provider	71
294,200 population	almost 1 in 6 people aged 65+

Luton	91 providers
Residential social care	34
Community-based adult social	57
225,300 population	1 in 9 people aged 65+



Delivery and achievements



Raizer II: a chair that care home staff can build around a person after a fall to safely lift them when an ambulance isn't needed

162
chairs at
139 sites



- 58 fewer emergency admissions (**£81k saving**)
- Reduced ambulance call-outs and conveyances

"Possibly the best piece of equipment to come into the care sector for years." – Manager, Chase House



MiiCare: remote monitoring system with a 'virtual assistant' to check a person's wellbeing and daily routines to help them stay safe and well in their own home

30
installed



- 25% reduction in number of routine site contacts
- Reduced pressure on care homes

"This little box has taken away some of the worry, without removing Mum's independence." – family of MiiCare user



Acoustic monitoring: a device alerts night-time care home staff to investigate unusual sounds and movements – preventing falls

370
residents in
13 homes



- 44% reduction of night-time checks over 8 months
- 25% reduction in night-time unwitnessed falls
- Increased resident privacy and reduced disruption
- 6% drop in A&E attendance



Whzan Blue Box: a kit for care home staff to record vital signs to monitor the condition of residents and catch problems early

6,308
residents
1,486 users



- Earlier detection and treatment of conditions
- 66.7% fewer NHS111 calls, 6.6% fewer A&E attendances

"It gives us the help we need for our residents much more quickly." – Senior Carer, Oasis House Residential Home

Delivery and achievements



DSCR: funding of up to £3,511 to help CQC-registered care providers set up a digital social care record – secure, digital recording of a person's care records

78%
uptake



- Improves care outcomes, quality and safety
- Saves care homes time and money

"It's safer, it's more robust and we wouldn't go back any other way now." – Registered Manager, The Limes



Proxy Access: a safer, easier and quicker way for care home staff to order repeat prescriptions online on behalf of their residents

35%
full access



- Saved approx **1,034** days of staff time (**£217k value**)
- Better audit trail, improved safety, reduced admin

"It makes a lot of things more seamless and trouble-free." – GP, the De Parys Group



NHSmail: preferred secure email for Proxy Access and for hospitals to safely share patient information with social care

107
active
users



- Safer and more secure handling of resident data
- Supports Digital Social Care Records & Proxy Access
- The preferred secure mail system for the health sector



DSPT: free, expert advice on completing the Data Security and Protection Toolkit – a self-assessment ensure care homes keep their data safe

66%
uptake



- Exceeded 50% national target
- Enables compliance with various legal requirements

"This has helped us to strengthen our IT system and begin our digitalisation journey." – Manager, Burlington Hall

Outcomes

Return on investment

Acoustic Monitoring



- Reduction in number of routine night-time physical checks = **non-cash releasing benefit of approx £19,424 a year per care home (assuming 5 mins per check)**
- Reduction in alters checks = **non-cash releasing benefit of approx £48,921 a year per care home (assuming 10 mins per check)**

MiiCare



- **25%** reduction in routine site contacts = **732 visits** a year and **£57,096 of time to invest**
- Allows re-investment of **277 weeks** of residents remaining at home rather than in a care home = **£229,608**
- **60% ROI; £4.7m investment expected to provide £2.8m net system gain over 3 years**

Whzan



- Reduction of A&E attendances = **£8,136**
- Reduction of overnight stays = **£8,664**
- **£89k (67.6%) ROI in Year 1, projected to be 155% in Year 2 and Year 3**

Benefits

- ✓ **Increased digital maturity** and knowledge about what digital tools are available
- ✓ **Supporting care providers** through increased funding and efficiencies to reduce impact of staff shortages
- ✓ **Reducing pressures on health and care** through different tools and ways of working
- ✓ **Improved integration and connectivity** through better sharing of data between organisations
- ✓ **Increased resident care and supporting independent living** as staff are empowered to use the digital tools.

Raising the profile of the programme

BLMK Digitising Social Care Conference

At our second annual conference in July 2023, around 80 attendees from the adult social care sector gathered to learn about our programme and the technology on offer. Feedback was highly complimentary, and the 2024 conference (planned for September 2024) will focus on our offer to domiciliary care providers.

HSJ Digital Awards 2023

The DiSC programme was shortlisted in the 'Connecting health and social care through Digital' category.

While we did not win, this has raised the profile of our work and generated a great deal of positive interest for the ICS, the programme team and our care providers.

Videos and case studies

Videos of local care home managers and GPs sharing their experiences of using various tools and systems have received 100s of views and helped encourage others to sign up.



Next steps / forward view

Scaling up remote monitoring

With £250,000 from the **Health Technology Adoption and Acceleration Fund**, we are scaling up remote monitoring to include Discharge to Assess beds. Work includes developing the clinical assessment form and integration with SystemOne in collaboration with a number GP practices.

Enhanced Wellbeing through Digital programme

We were 1 of 3 ICSs to be awarded £1.1m from NHSE's **Adult Social Care Technology Fund**, which we are using to evaluate **Robopets** and **PainChek** for adults living with or experiencing behaviour that challenges, cognitive impairment, dementia, or communication difficulty.

Securing the long-term sustainability of the core programme team

An **outline business case** was produced with local authority partners.

This looked at moving the core DiSC programme team to be **funded as business as usual** in 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Thank you

[www.blmkhealthandcarepartnership.org/
digitising-social-care-disc-programme](http://www.blmkhealthandcarepartnership.org/digitising-social-care-disc-programme)