

Digital front door technologies for people referred to NHS Talking Therapies (preliminary title)

This topic has been identified by the NICE-NHS England Digital Prioritisation Subgroup as a priority clinical area to address growing unmet need in mental health services for people for whom NHS Talking Therapies is suitable.

1 in 4 adults experience a diagnosable mental health condition in any given year. However, only around 20% of those were referred to NHS Talking Therapies. Of those referred, around 67% get access to NHS Talking Therapies. For some people, the services are not suitable for their needs and whilst they have an assessment, they do not access treatment. There is a need to increase appropriate access to mental health care and expand access to digital services to accommodate greater accessibility and choice for patients. There is an increase in demand for treatments for common mental health conditions, but there are insufficient resources (mental health practitioners/clinicians) to meet this demand.

Digital front door technologies involve online referral, with the majority being self-referrals and some through GPs, along with additional information gathering to inform the 1-to-1 patient-centred assessment that must occur before the start of treatment. This is intended to improve efficiency and accuracy of the assessment. The process of sharing information via a digital front door technology may help a service user consider what they want or need to share and prepare for the assessment, as well as feel engaged with the process from an earlier point. As NHS Talking Therapies assessments are typically relatively short already, the key benefits of digital front door technologies are improving the quality and accuracy of the assessment, reducing the administration time for the assessor, and maximising opportunities to provide people with the right treatment choices first time.

In this early value assessment, NICE will identify and digital front door technologies for people referred to NHS Talking Therapies and assess these technologies on whether they can be recommended for use in the NHS,

conditional on further collection of real-world evidence to inform later NICE guidance.

Specialist committee member disciplines

- Clinical psychologist
- Psychological wellbeing practitioner
- Cognitive behavioural therapist
- Neuropsychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Psychotherapist
- Neurologist
- Talking Therapy administrator
- High Intensity and Low Intensity (PWP) therapist