HAPPI Hour - Digital Telecare: How ready are we for the digital switch?

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Outline

- The Digital Switchover and local authority TECS
  - Achieving sustainability in care systems: the potential of technology Project

- Digital technology: challenges
  - 'Understanding Digital Poverty in South Yorkshire' project

- Ways forward

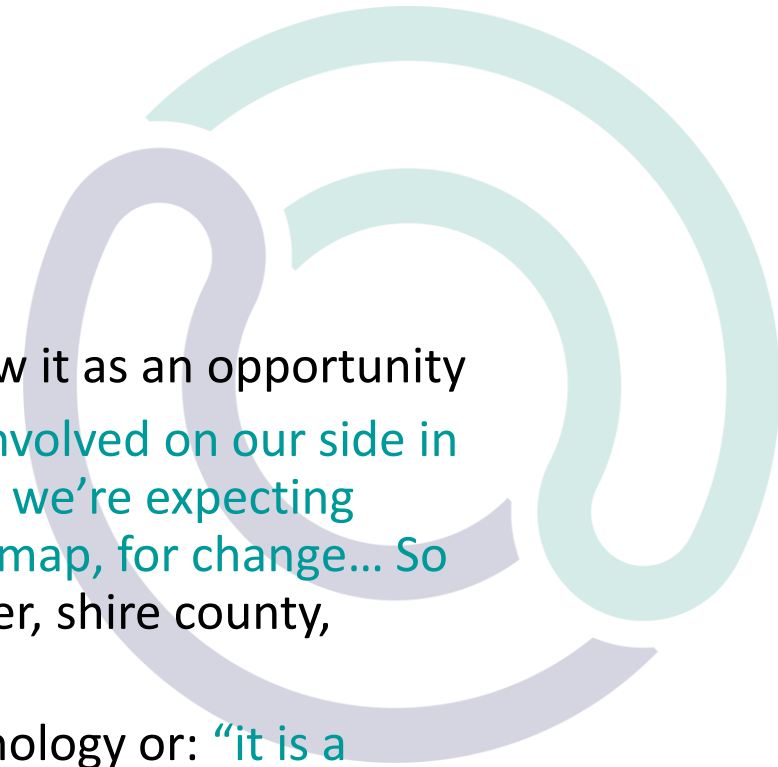# Achieving sustainability in care systems: the potential of technology

- Part of the ESRC-funded Sustainable Care: connecting people and systems programme

- Project aim: to explore the potential role of technologies in developing sustainable care systems that deliver wellbeing outcomes

  1. **Understand the challenges adult social care (ASC) is facing-**
     - Evidence review of literature and data
  2. **Map the changing role of technologies within care systems**
     - Policy landscape review of UK 4 nations (2000-2020) - review of policy documents and grey literature
     - 'Deep dive' into specific local authorities
  3. **Explore the potential role of technologies in developing sustainable care systems**
     - Stakeholder consultations
     - Book- international comparison of England, Japan, Germany, Canada and Australia.

The Digital Switchover

Exploring Local Authority Approaches

- Some described themselves as **prepared**: strategies, new equipment, saw it as an opportunity

- Some **reliant on service providers to manage the change**: "the people involved on our side in the telecare service, while we've got an appreciation of what's going on, we're expecting [provider], certainly with the existing contract, to provide us with a roadmap, for change… So at this stage, we're absolutely reliant upon [provider]" (TEC Commissioner, shire county, North).

- **Some playing a 'waiting game'** for guidance, funding, the 'perfect' technology or: "it is a numbers game is and a finances issue- actually a digital device is more expensive than the analogue ones. The analogues are quite simply cheap, digital ones are a bit more expensive. But there is a case of when do you actually make that switch… making the choice to use a bit more of an expensive kit now because this won't happen for four years and in which case we could have put in a bit an analogue device because that would have been fine for that individual because they'll only be, you know, our average time on our service is between 19 and 22 months" (TEC Commissioner, shire county, South).

Benefits of digital technologies in care

Enthusiasm for digital technologies, especially the potential of mainstream devices

- Local authorities: to save costs (LAs as facilitators, not providers) and enhance outcomes

- Care and technology providers: familiar and user friendly

- People who use services and carers: supporting independence and control, non-stigmatizing

Barriers to forward-planning

- Costs

- Fragmented, confusing marketplace for digital

- Commissioning cycles and arrangements- 'slow', inflexible

- Lack of government guidance

- Standards

- For mainstream devices, data governance & ownership, though some felt this wasn't an issue: "people are out there sharing their data with these four large companies aren't they? Google, Amazon, Microsoft and Apple. So, to some degree, we're just relying on their consumer relationship, we're not getting in the way of it" (TEC Commissioner, shire county, east).

- Techno-centric approach: "people sitting around and waiting around for a technical solution to what is a human problem because they're saying, 'Well we'll wait for a cheap piece of kit as if the bit of kit is going to solve all the problems'. The kit never does, the kit is, the is a mechanism to enable other things to happen" (TEC Commissioner, shire county, south)

- Acknowledged issues related to 'digital divide' or exclusion in access, skills and confidence…
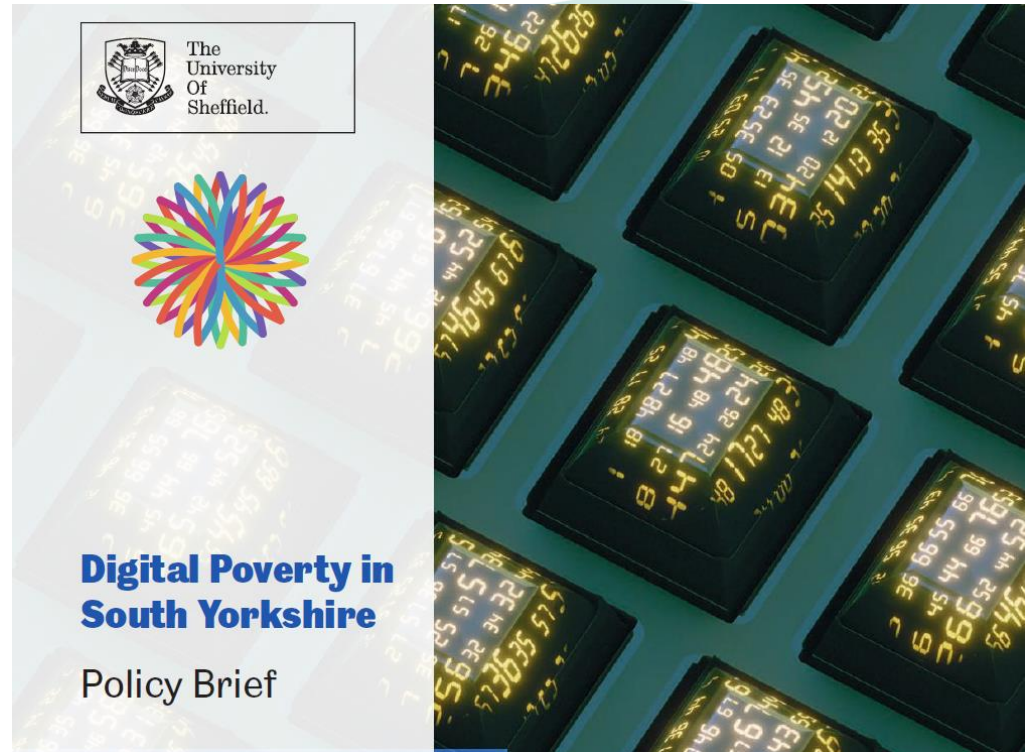
Digital poverty

*'Understanding Digital Poverty in South Yorkshire'
project,* Dr. Efpraxia D. Zamani and Dr. Sara Vannini
(Information School, University of Sheffield, UK)

Good Things Foundation, the most digitally poor are:

- Those who lack the most basic digital skills;

- Those who have basic digital skills for life but not for work purposes;

- Those who are digitally disengaged due to worries over data privacy and security or lack of interest in the digital world;

- Those who cannot afford internet access;

- Those who cannot afford the cost of the necessary devices to connect.

Understanding Digital Poverty in South Yorkshire

Which groups are digitally poor?

- People from low income households

- Those over 65 years old

- Minority ethnic groups
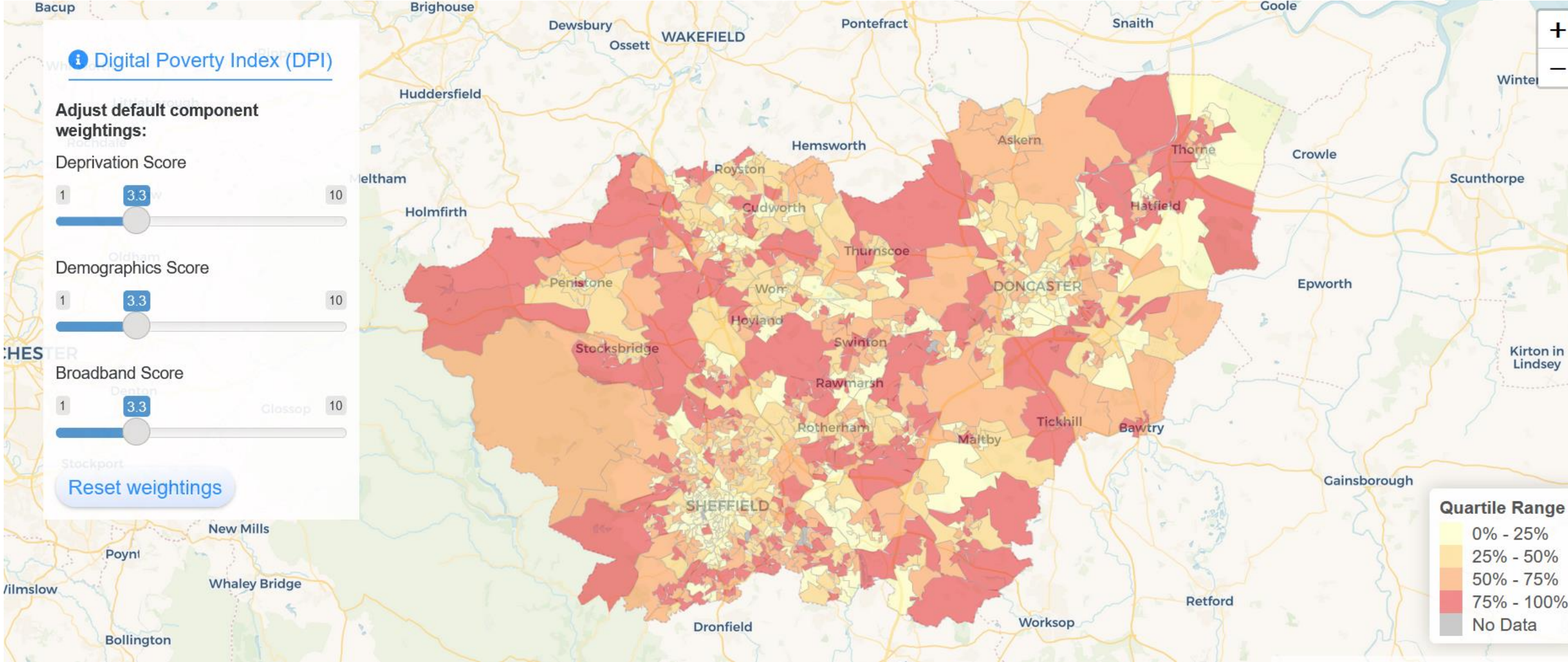
- People with disabilities

- LGBTQIA+ groups.

Project created **Digital Poverty composite index**: deprivation, demography and broadband access as the three domains that influence digital poverty.

→ **Digital Poverty map** to identify geographical areas across South Yorkshire that are at higher risk of digital poverty.

→ https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/office-for-data-analytics/digital-poverty

Digital Poverty Index (DPI)

Adjust default component weightings:

Deprivation Score

| 1 | 3.3 | 10 |

Demographics Score

| 1 | 3.3 | 10 |

Broadband Score

| 1 | 3.3 | 10 |

Reset weightings

Quartile Range

- 0% - 25%
- 25% - 50%
- 50% - 75%
- 75% - 100%
- No Data

Ways forward

Tackling digital exclusion

- Equipment loan/ gifting schemes

- Training, including peer-to-peer digital skills courses

- Improving digital infrastructure:
    - Liverpool- 5G mesh network
    - Norfolk- LoRaWAN network
        - 'Digital Care Futures' podcast:
          http://circle.group.shef.ac.uk/digitalcarefutures/

Outputs

Variety of outputs included on the following websites:

- Achieving sustainability in care systems: the potential of technology: http://circle.group.shef.ac.uk/portfolio/achieving-sustainability-in-care-systems/

- 'Digital Care Futures' podcast: http://circle.group.shef.ac.uk/digitalcarefutures/

- Sustainable Care: http://circle.group.shef.ac.uk/sustainable-care/

- Understanding Digital Poverty in South Yorkshire: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/office-for-data-analytics/digital-poverty

- https://centreforcare.ac.uk/