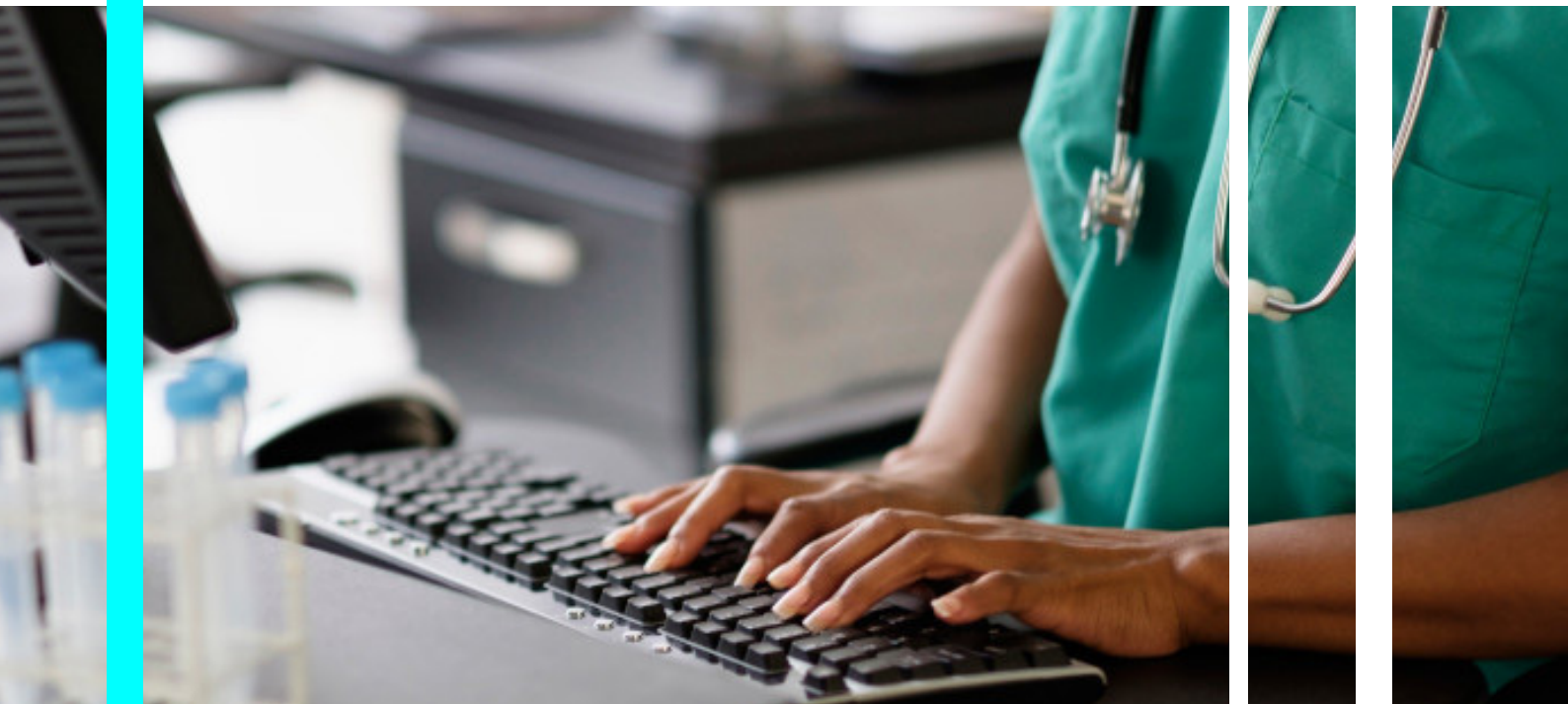


Empowering NHS staff: Delivering impactful care navigation training to improve patient care

A case study from NHS England



We're helping NHS England deliver care navigation training throughout the country, breaking barriers and driving co-ordinated care and personalised support.

There is widespread recognition that health and social care needs are changing. This includes an aging population and more people living with long-term, complex conditions and needs. This requires access to different healthcare services and numerous assessments from multiple providers. Not only is this tricky for both patients and medical professionals to navigate, but many vulnerable people are slipping through the cracks.

A coordinated care approach: Navigating demands and capabilities

In the NHS Delivery plan for recovering access to primary care, launched in May 2023, the government has committed to making it quick and easy for patients to get the help they need, especially during the notorious “8am rush” when demand is high. Care navigation training for GP reception staff, is integral to this promise.

Care navigation refers to the support offered to patients and carers in navigating through the complex health and social care systems, to overcome barriers in accessing quality care and treatment. It helps bring together medical teams and services in a “joined-up way”, so that people know when and how they can access the right help, at the right time, and in the right place. It’s essential that NHS staff are trained to a standard level of basic care navigation and be confident to communicate effectively with patients and other medical professionals to signpost to the relevant clinician or local health service.

Although funding had been made available in previous years for training purposes, feedback received from NHS staff highlighted the need for a refresher course, as well as induction and orientation sessions for new medical staff. Learning and development initiatives were also considered to be beneficial for attracting and retaining top talent.





Achieving milestones: Successful implementation of tailored training

As a long-term partner of the NHS, we have a deep understanding of the organisation's unique challenges and needs. With tight deadlines imposed by the Delivery Plan, we were tasked with providing an accredited, flexible training solution for 7,800 NHS staff via a virtual and facilitated learning environment within a short nine-month period. By October 2023 – only three months into the official roll out – 50% of practices were expected to have registered for training, and 70% by February the following year.

With these milestones looming, we quickly set about delivering on our contractual obligations, together with the National Association of Primary Care (NAPC).

Using our experience from another similar project, we devised a national care navigation offering, providing GP practices with a free of charge, consistent and standardised training platform that is formally accredited and easy to access. Much thought was put into its design and delivery, ensuring maximum accessibility, suitability of learning and usage, for busy and stressed general practice staff.

Between July 2023 and March 2024, our facilitators led CPD-accredited, virtual, Foundation and Advanced level training sessions for over 5,500 NHS staff. By the end of March, as per our mandate, a total of 6477 staff members had enrolled onto the training.

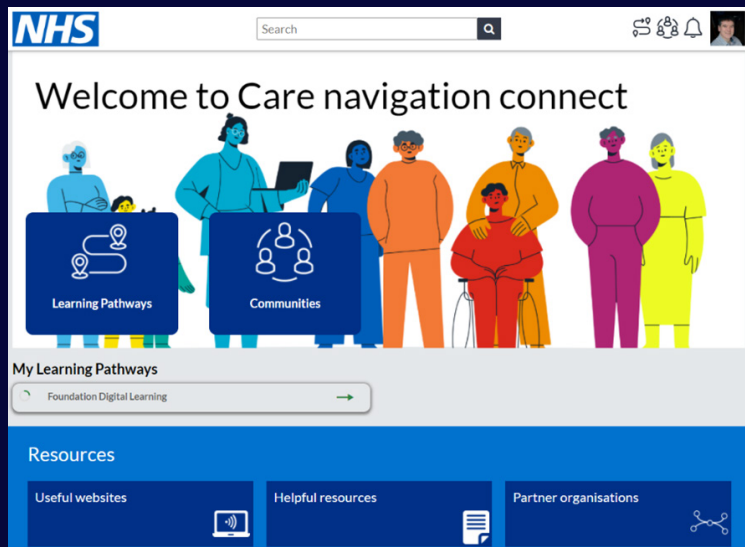
In addition, digital e-learning modules were developed in conjunction with the NAPC and are freely available on a purpose-built learning platform for all general practice staff to access until September 2025.

Enhancing user experience: Continuous improvement through feedback

Throughout the collaboration, our dedicated project team held regular reviews and feedback sessions with the NHS and NAPC, to ensure we were able to adapt quickly and easily to whatever came our way. To improve the user experience, we closely monitored bookings so that dates, timeslots and levels of training, matched the demand. We also established a data dashboard for monitoring purposes, ensuring national and regional colleagues could view up-to-date registration numbers, course participants and completers – allowing us to target specific practices and networks to encourage participation if required.

Widespread impact: The Care Navigation Connect community

Currently, the Care Navigation Connect community contains carefully curated resources, helping to keep some 9,000 medical professionals – and counting – better informed and up to date on best practices in care navigation.



"It's pretty amazing how many resources are available when you start digging. It feels good knowing we can connect patients with the help they need right here in our community."

NHS Medical Professional

The collaboration has yielded measurable benefits. Between June 2023 and March 2024, 6,477 NHS staff enrolled in virtual sessions, meeting our commitment to offer training to at least 70% of NHS staff, with the actual figure reaching 83% of the target pool. The Care Navigation Connect community has also witnessed a significant growth in staff engagement, with over 8,900 users accessing the resources between July 2023 and March 2024.

Speaking about the collaboration, Frances Mead, Senior Programme Manager, NHS England, commented that "regular access to a dedicated project team and learning partner has been extremely beneficial" and "Capita's reputation for its experience and knowledge of the NHS environment and ability to offer solutions" has aided the whole experience.

Positive outcomes: The journey ahead

In addition, the NHS Core Skills Development Programme for Primary Care staff in non-clinical roles – particularly Practice Managers and Primary Care Network Managers, as well as those aspiring to these positions – achieved many positive outcomes. Out of the 450 people who participated in the two virtual development sessions in February and March 2023:

- 98% found the training relevant.
- 90% learned something new.
- 97% found the content engaging.

Participants commented that they particularly valued learning about the nine dimensions of leadership, effective engagement with others, and adapting leadership styles based on the situation and the individuals involved.

Following the training, valuable feedback was received, including insights and reflections from the participants:



I realised how many places there are to navigate patients to and it's often a lack of knowledge or understanding and confidence of them that impact them being used."



There are so many services out there that are at our disposal. It is our job now to make sure they are utilised properly."



I am a lot more confident now in my position and authority to signpost patients to the appropriate care they need."



I have found that the training has helped me to communicate with my patients a lot more effectively and clearly."



I'm feeling more positive about navigating patients."

Overall, the training programme is significantly enhancing patient care by ensuring NHS staff are well-equipped to guide patients through the healthcare system, leading to more coordinated, timely, and personalised support for patients and carers across the country.