



Health+ A Story of Change: John

A Health+ surgery held in February

Interview conducted on the 24/2/23

Practice: Warren Lane

Name: John (Not the patient's real name).

Age: 80 and up

Method: This case study was selected from patients who attended a Health+ digital session at Warren Lane. Patients were selected for interview, sequentially, in the exact order of the date they gave permission to take part in a case study. The Timeline of the conversation was changed to meet the logic of the three Topic Guide questions. Any items that were off-topic, but considered important, have been included. Quantitative data is included for context.

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1. Transcript

- 1) What are some of the issues faced by yourself and other over 50s when trying to access health information, book appointments online, ordering repeat prescriptions, trying to contact the surgery or using digital tools in general?

I'm one of the lucky ones, I'm tech savvy. I'm eightyish but I've worked with computers ever since they were popular. Other people, friends, and friends of friends' struggle; many have not been brought up with computers and hadn't the need, until now, to use them. But, I think, they are okay for help with general things – there's people can help with that – but not with what you are doing. Even I needed help.

I can use my iPhone and iPad well enough, but even for me, the logins and usernames you're emailed are confusing; [volunteer name] walked me through how to use an NHS login for almost everything – what a relief; no one tells you these things. That's what you don't get: a clear way to login to things. [Volunteer name] cleared all that up right away.

- 2) Could you describe your experience of taking part in the health+ digital surgery.

I didn't, honestly, know what I was going to achieve when I saw [volunteer name]. It was surprising to have the offer of help. I knew I wanted some help – guidance, really – with the Apps. I could already order prescriptions through the website but not through the Apps. I wanted to learn to book appointments, really, and use the Apps – I think Apps are better, easier.

I already had the NHS App install but I couldn't see much of my medical history. I didn't know why that was, so I never investigated if I could see my history through the apps. [Volunteer name] said, 'yes, you should be able to see your full history'; I came to find out about booking appointments, but it turned out seeing my history was possible, so that became the most important thing. I doubt I'd have ever sorted this without this visit with [volunteer name].

[volunteer name] requested medical history access for me through a form I was never aware of, nor knew I could do myself.

I don't know why I was put off booking appointments online. It seems to me, it's best to know the proper way to do it once and then not fuss with it – I wanted to avoid all the fuss. We learned to do that together, book appointments online, and that I could do this with the NHS login. [Volunteer name] wrote it all down, in a flowchart so I could visualise how all the different apps and websites worked together.

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We explored the NHS App – I had the app on my phone, but I never really looked at everything it could do. You can find information on your health conditions. I never knew you could do that through the app. I'd use Google, but I might use this now.

My time with [volunteer and] was well spent, and I'll come back again; I cannot login to the apps we used on my iPad as I can with my iPhone. I would like help with that. Everything is bigger on the iPad, and I find it easier to use. I think a lot of people could benefit from visiting [volunteer name]; but they might not visit because the 'time well spent' is known after the fact, not before.

It was just about learning what was available. Without [volunteer name] I might never have known what was available to do online. Now I know, my friends will know.

3) What are you now able to do with your device that you could not previously?

[Volunteer name] sorted out access to my medical records; seeing my test results is especially important for me. I'm going through a lot of tests at the moment and if no one rings me up, I don't find out. And now I can do that easily in the app.

I didn't want to go through the trouble of ringing the surgery nor to trouble the surgery; getting through is not easy. The NHS is finding it hard to cope as it is, and I don't like to be ringing them up.

Because the App became more useful for me, I used it and I saw that you can get information about health concerns and vaccinations and news on COVID and the Flu vaccinations. I said at the start that that was a reason I came to see [volunteer name]; all the apps and websites you are told about make little sense until someone comes along and says 'you can use your NHS login for all that'. Why didn't someone else tell me that ages ago?

I am encouraged that I can now book appointments and start a GP consultation online, and this is not as fussy as I anticipated. If I don't have to ring the surgery and don't have to rely on anyone else, all the better for me and the NHS.

I'm grateful I got the chance to come along and glad I got the notification of the help you offer, because I thought immediately 'yeah, I could really use that'.

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2. What did the quantitative data show?

Q, 'What was your reason for attending today?'

A, 'To learn to book appointments online'

Q, 'Can you book a GP appointment online or via an App?'

A, 'Today I've learned to book an online appointment'

Q, 'Can you order a repeat prescription online or via an App?'

A, 'I could already order repeat prescriptions online'

Q, 'Can you check your medical records online or via an App?'

A, 'Today I've learned to check my medical records online'

Q, 'Can you use the NHS website/app or a GP approved system to decide whether you need to see a GP or go to A&E?'

A, 'Today I've learned to find health information online'

Q, 'What else have you learned today to help with using online health services? (you can select as many options as you like)'

A, 'I can take part in an online or video GP consultation'

A, 'I can login to the NHS app'

A, 'I can download documents from an online system (e.g. a sick note)'

A, 'I know how to send/receive Messages through one of the Apps'

Q, 'Would the Participant like to take part in the following?'

A, 'Yes, I'd like to attend another Health+ surgery'

Q, 'Do you feel confident passing on what you've learned today to one other person or friend your age?'

A, 'Yes'

Q, 'You feel more confident about finding information online to do with your health and wellbeing'

A, 'Strongly agree'

Q, 'You feel more confident using online health services'

A, 'Strongly agree'

Q, 'Your Digital skills have improved'

A, 'Strongly agree'

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