

# NHS app

Promotion and engagement across North Yorkshire  
January 2022 - June 2022



# Introduction

In December 2021, Humber Coast and Vale Health and Care Partnership commissioned Healthwatch North Yorkshire £10,000 to help with the promotion of the NHS App. They provided us with digital and printed materials and asked if we could distribute them via our online channels, and at engagement events.

As a result, we have been sharing these materials to raise awareness of the NHS app and share the benefits to encourage people to download, and use the app. We have been actively promoting the app through our social media channels - including Facebook and Twitter - sharing articles in our monthly newsletter and speaking with people at the many events we have attended over the past 5 months.

The NHS app is free to download and is a safe, secure and easier way to book appointments at your GP surgery, order repeat prescriptions, and view your medical records. The Humber Coast and Vale Health & Care Partnership has created a set of guides to support people to download and use the free NHS app. There are two videos and two leaflets which provide step by step guidance on how to download and set up the NHS app, and how to link it to a person's personal health record so they can start using the app to its full potential.



## NHS app discussed at engagement events

Since the Covid restrictions have relaxed, Healthwatch North Yorkshire has restarted a programme of engagement and activities and events. We are working with local groups, event organisers and more to get back out and about to talk to people about their experiences. This has also provided the opportunity to talk about the NHS app.

So, we ensured staff and volunteers were fully briefed about the NHS app, had read all the information available and were able to talk about the NHS app, distribute leaflets and encourage people to use the NHS app at a range of events and activities we had and will continue to attend over the coming year.

### Talks

This has included talks to a number of organisations where we have been able to raise the issue and include the NHS app in talking about new approaches to GP practices including different healthcare professionals being available to support people.

We have both proactively mentioned the app, GP practices' online systems and new roles and responded with this information to questions about people's concerns about not being able to see a GP or having to wait on the phone to talk to a receptionist to get an appointment.

We have completed talks at:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue/audience</b>	<b>Number attending</b>
14 March	Brigantes Rotary Club, Harrogate	30
13 April	The Voice, older people's group, Scarborough	60
20 April	Yorkshire Coast Sight Support group	11
28 April	Harrogate Vision Support group	11
	Sherburn Visiting Scheme group of over 70s	29
<b>Total</b>		<b>141</b>

## Stalls at events

We have run a number of stalls at events and activities across the county. We have prominently displayed information about the NHS app on our displays at these events. We have been engaging with people to ask them about the issues that they feel they are facing in their local area, asking people to put three stars on the issue(s) they think are most pressing for them.

Getting a GP appointment was the most common topic that we heard about across our engagement events. In one event it had more than twice as many stars as any other topic.

When anyone put a star on this topic, it enabled us to talk to them about using the NHS app to take a different approach to getting a GP appointment. We also used other issues raised about GPs to share information about the app.

We have run stalls at:

Date	Event	Number attending
19 March	Masham Health and Wellbeing event	25
10 May	Harrogate College	70
17 May	Bedale Market	76
21 May	Sherburn in Elmet Gala	120
27 May	Leyburn Market	62
9 June	Whitby Market	64
11 June	Thirsk Market	45
15 June	Sherburn Community Library event	25
19 June	Selby Family Fun Day	87
<b>Total</b>		<b>574</b>

We will continue to take this approach and distribute information at a further 16 events that we are attending over the next three months. This includes the Great Yorkshire Show, which we are attending with Healthwatch York. The Show expects up to 100,000 visitors from across Yorkshire and the UK over its four days.

## Survey and engagement

In February and March, we ran a survey about people's use of the NHS app and a GP's own online services.

The aim of this work was to raise awareness of the NHS app and online options, following up on a survey we did in 2021 which showed the majority of respondents were using the phone to contact GP practices. Feedback in this earlier survey and report ([The Public Experience GP Appointments](#)), showed that those who used online options had a better experience of booking GP appointments.

So our aim was to understand why people were or were not using the app or a GP practice's own online services to better promote these options.

We sent our survey and information about the app to 170 people who receive our regular surveys and through our social media and other channels.

We got 82 responses, but know more people looked at the information about the app that was shared as part of the survey.

We also heard directly from people who said they had downloaded the app as a result of the survey and information we had circulated.

The resulting report is available on the Healthwatch North Yorkshire website: '[Digital Access to Health Services](#)'.

## Promotion of the NHS app across communities

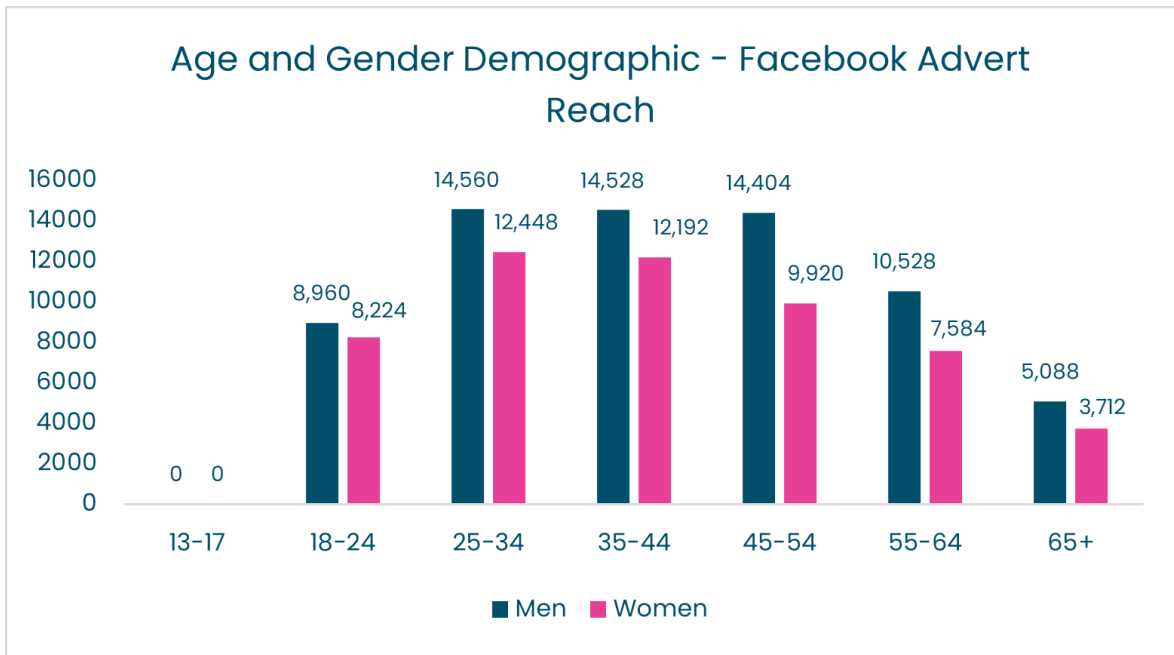
We distributed 500 leaflets to libraries across North Yorkshire and shared with members of local communities, including younger people and students, older people's groups, carers, disability groups etc.



## Support to people to access, register & use the NHS app

Since January 2022, we have been promoting the NHS app via our digital channels. This includes our social media channels, our website, and in our monthly e-newsletter.

Between January 2022 and June 2022, we have shared the materials on our Facebook and Twitter page more than 40 times. We also scheduled a Facebook advert to promote the NHS app which ran for two weeks. The graph below indicates how many people the advert reached, and it breaks down the audience demographics by age and gender.



Since January 2022, the digital posts have reached 124,671 people on Facebook. On Twitter, the digital posts have had 2,682 impressions.

We have shared the promotional materials in our monthly e-newsletter which has been delivered to our 773 subscribers. Similarly, we promoted the NHS app in our printed newsletter and we had 3,000 copies printed to be sent to GP practices, libraries, community venues, and handed out at engagement events.

As well as promoting the materials via our social media channels and e-newsletter, we created an advice and information page on our website, promoting the NHS app. Between January 2022 and June 2022, we received a total of 364 link clicks onto this page.

It has been difficult to quantify exactly how many people actively downloaded or used the NHS app as a result of our engagement and promotion, but we heard from over 200 people who said that they intended to use the NHS app as consequence of our work.

## Conclusion

Since January 2022, we have actively engaged with people at our engagement events, through a survey, and via our online platforms. As a result, we have successfully promoted the NHS app and its uses to share knowledge of the features and why people might benefit from using it. We understand that with support and information, people are willing to try digital health services where it seems appropriate and when it can help them or fits with their lifestyle. However, it's important to note that not everyone has or wants digital access and so other non-digital options should remain available.

Moving forward we will continue to share our understanding of the NHS app with members of the local community across North Yorkshire, and all conversations will feed into informing health and care providers on how to ensure that the services provided are most suitable for all.

## Engagement and promotion figures for NHS app:

<b>What we did:</b>	<b>Number of people reached:</b>
Talks	141 people
Stalls	574 people
Survey	82 responses
Facebook	124,671 reached
Twitter	2,682 impressions
E-newsletter	773 subscribers
Printed newsletter	3,000 copies

# healthwatch

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