

### 1 Introduction

Over the last 12 months there has been a significant growth in the NMAHP utilisation of digital solutions to support service delivery and student placements<sup>1</sup>.

The Rapid Action Placement Oversight Group (RAPOG- see <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/our-work/rapid-action-placement-oversight-group-rapog/> ) is encouraging the use of digital solutions to help address the current disruption to NMAHP students' placements.

A short life working group, with representation from education, practice placement providers and NHS Education for Scotland (NES) on behalf of the Nursing and Midwifery National Strategic Group for Practice Learning and Allied Health Professions Practice-Based Learning Stakeholder Group have produced the following guidelines to support this agenda: [Guiding principles for virtual/digitally enhanced practice placement experiences for nursing, midwifery and allied health professions students](#) [PDF].

As the use of digital solutions increases, it is recognised that there are a number of challenges facing individuals working within services delivering care, and the organisations that host them.

In order to scope the current NMAHP landscape across the NHS in Scotland, a survey of those involved in AHP, Nursing and Midwifery Practice Education was carried out to establish the utilisation of three digital approaches to supporting service delivery and student education: Microsoft Teams; NHS NearMe and InHealthcare Apps.

### 2 Scope

The survey was distributed electronically to the NMAHP practice education network across Scotland via Practice Education Leads (PELs), Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs) and Care Home Education Facilitators (CHEFs).

The following metrics were measured

- Utilisation of each digital solution in service delivery by organisation
- Utilisation of each digital solution in student placement delivery by organisation
- Confidence of individuals using each digital solution by organisation
- Utilisation of each digital solutions in service delivery by professional grouping
- Utilisation of each digital solution in student placement delivery by professional grouping
- Confidence of individuals using each digital solution by professional grouping

The data were collected during the first two weeks in February 2021.

The survey contained closed and open questions. Overall quantitative findings are presented in sections 5-7 and further detail per health board, alongside word clouds generated from the open questions, are included in the data appendix.

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<sup>1</sup> Twogood R, Hares E, Wyatt M, et al (2020) Rapid implementation and improvement of a virtual student placement model in response to the COVID-19 pandemic BMJ Open Quality 9: e001107. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2020-001107 <https://bmjopenquality.bmj.com/content/9/4/e001107.full>

### 3 Engagement

A total of 763 responses were received from across the NMAHP practice education community in Scotland. The division of responses (n) by organisation and professional grouping is outlined below:

	(n)		(n)
Allied Health Professions (AHP)	226	NHS Ayrshire & Arran	56
Nursing & Midwifery (N&M)	489	NHS Borders	31
OTHER	48	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	31
TOTAL	763	NHS Fife	79
		NHS Forth Valley	19
		NHS Golden Jubilee	15
		NHS Grampian	58
		NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	120
		NHS Highland	64
		NHS Lanarkshire	76
		NHS Lothian	122
		NHS Orkney	9
		NHS Shetland	3
		NHS Tayside	55
		NHS Western Isles	6
		OTHER	19
		TOTAL	763

The 'other' category includes responses where no answer was given, and responses from primary care and organisations other than NHS Boards.

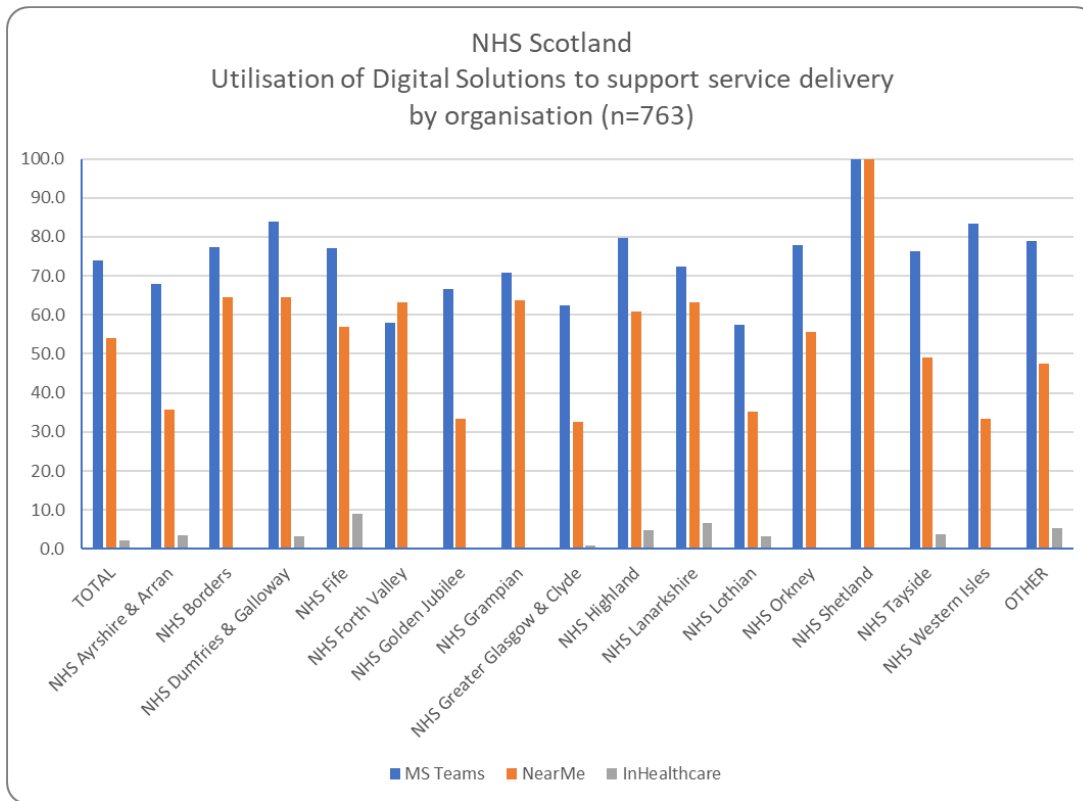
### 4 Limitations and context

When interpreting the responses by organisation, it is important to recognise that these responses were gathered from a specific subset of those working within service delivery across the Boards. The practice education communities within NMAHP may not be representative of the wider NMAHP community, and therefore the findings should be interpreted as relative rather than absolute.

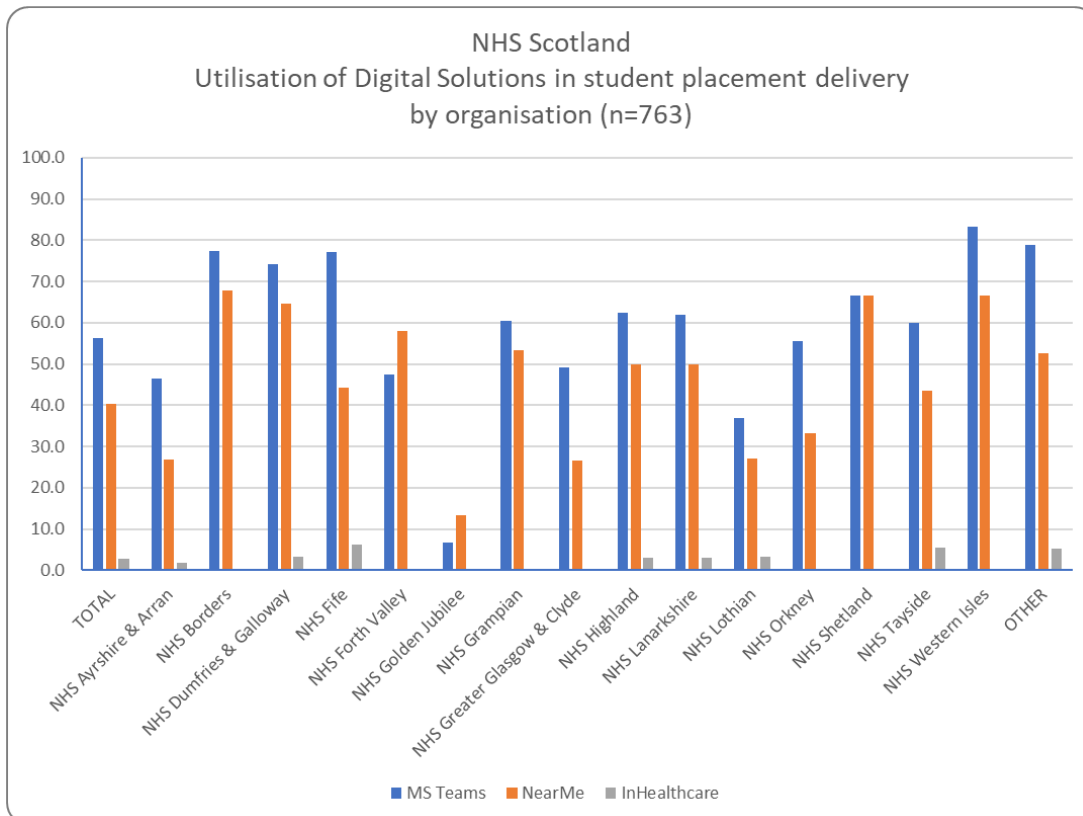
It is recognised that the broad professional groupings outlined here are not sensitive enough to distinguish between the wide range of loci within which practice education takes place. For example, the survey did not differentiate between ward-based nursing and community nursing or health visiting. Similarly, the AHP grouping did not differentiate, for example, between radiography and occupational therapy. It is recognised that some sub-specialties in each professional group are more able to readily utilise digital solutions in service delivery and student education than others.

## 5 Results by Organisation

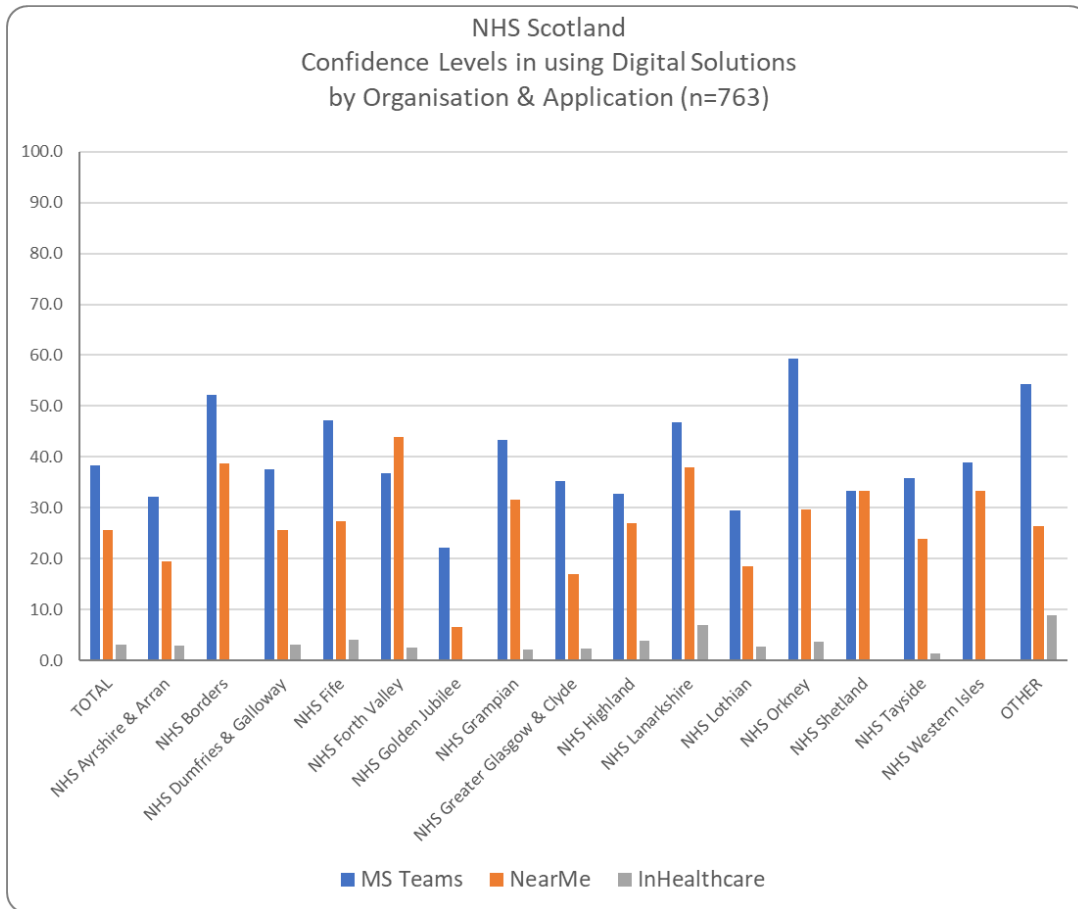
### 5.1 Utilisation of each digital solution in service delivery by organisation



### 5.2 Utilisation of each digital solution in student placement delivery by organisation

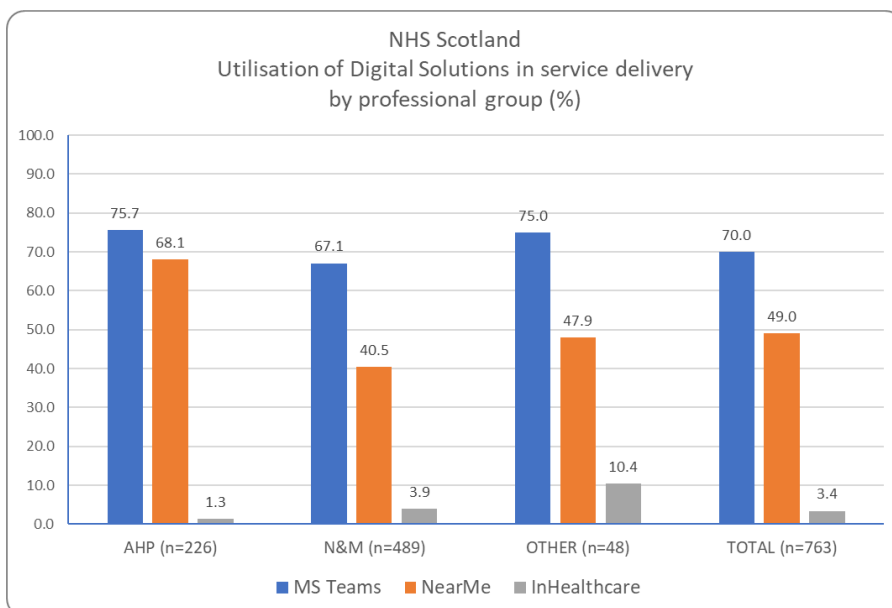


### 5.3 Confidence of individuals using each digital solution by organisation

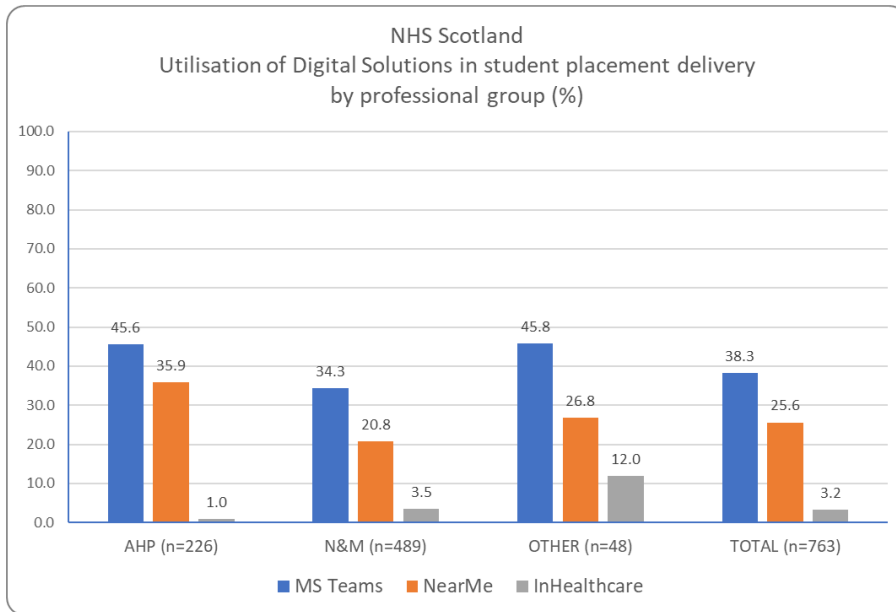


## 6 Results by Professional Grouping

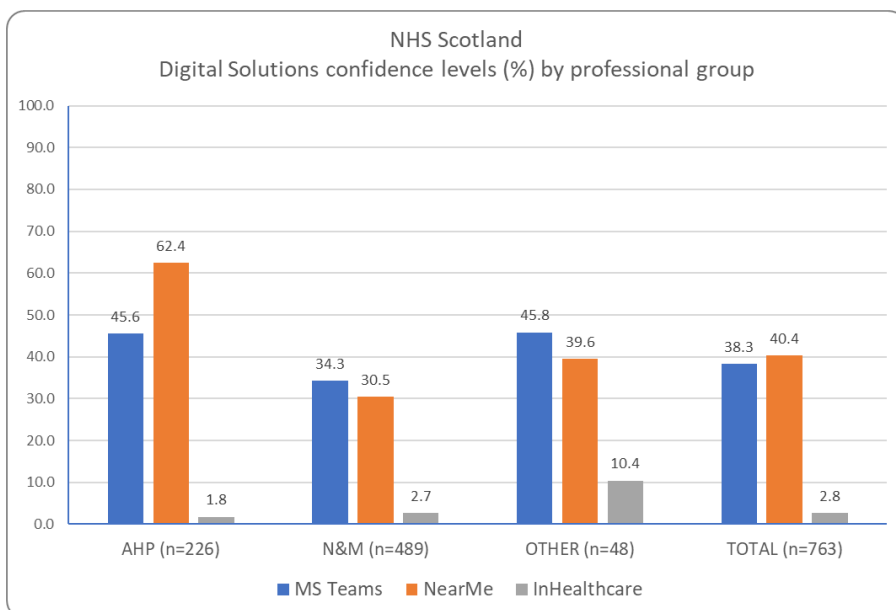
### 6.1 Utilisation of each digital solutions in service delivery by professional grouping



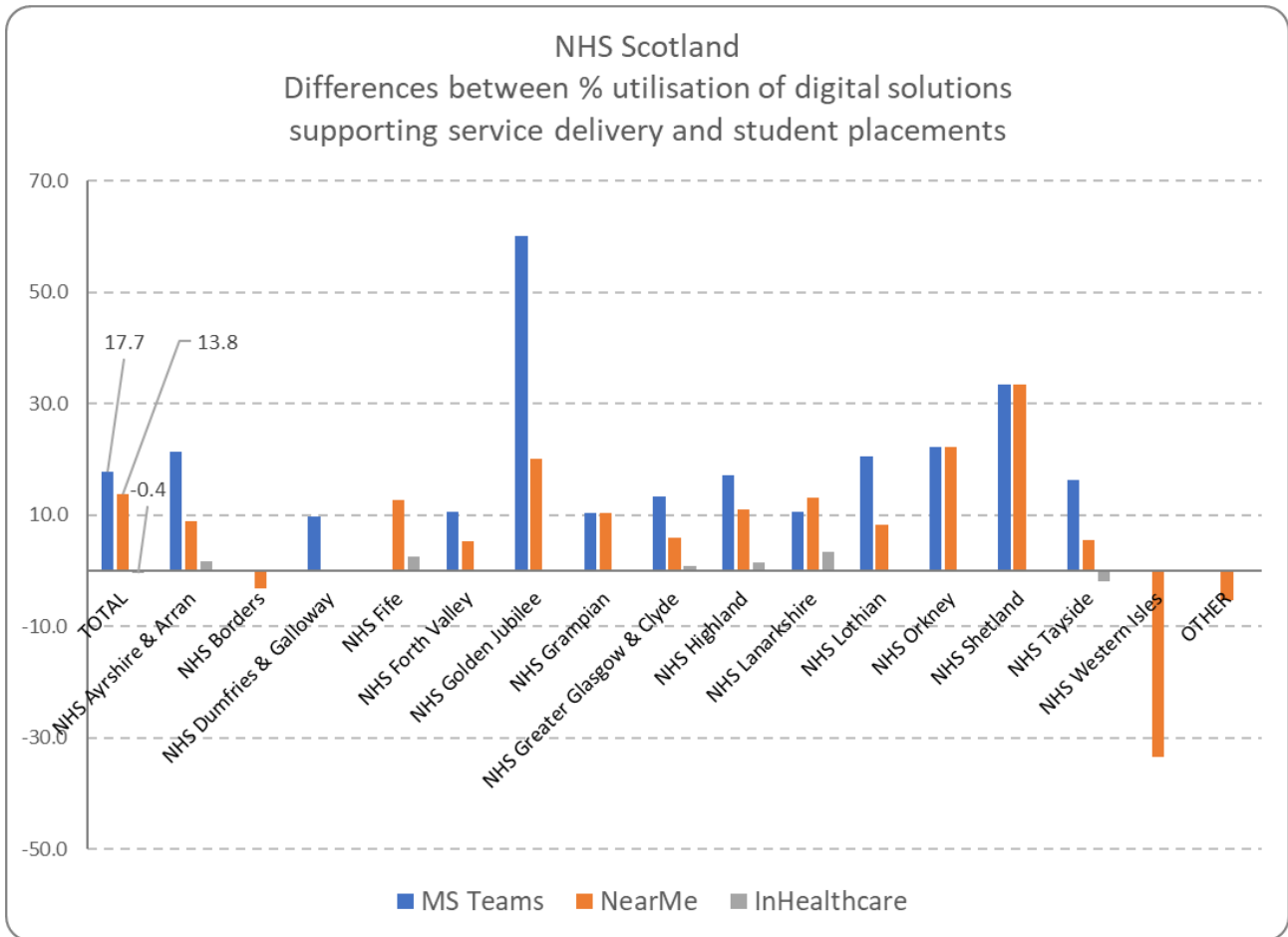
## 6.2 Utilisation of digital solution in student placement delivery by professional grouping



## 6.3 Confidence of individuals using each digital solution by professional grouping



## 7 Gap Analysis



Any negative values on this chart indicate that the application is being utilised *more* in student placements than in service delivery within the specified organisation.

## 8 Summary

It is evident from the results that the NMAHP practice education community across Scotland has embraced digital solutions in service delivery with over 70% of respondents using MS Teams and over 50% using NearMe. The utilisation to support student placements is also encouraging, with over 55% of respondents using MS Teams and 40% using NearMe for this purpose. The use of InHealthcare is significantly less well established, and provides further opportunity for digital development.

There remains a challenge in supporting the NMAHP practice education community to become confident users of digital solutions, since although the utilisation was reported as being high, confidence in using the applications was relatively low - MS Teams was under 40%, and NearMe around 25%.

Within the professional groupings, AHPs utilise NearMe more than other groups, and this is reflected in their relative confidence in using it. This is likely to be due to the differences in how nursing and midwifery care and education are delivered within the acute, ward-based environment, potentially rendering NearMe as less useful as a digital tool.

## 9 Next steps

As the drive towards implementing digital solutions supporting service delivery and student placements continues, it is important that progress and challenges are monitored in order to identify the support that is required, and to ensure that learning from early adopter services and Boards can be disseminated and shared across NHS Scotland.

This paper provides a snapshot and benchmark to identify the progress that has been made in implementing digital solutions into service delivery and student placements across NHS organisations in Scotland.

A series of engagement opportunities will be set up to share these findings and to enter into dialogue with all stakeholders. There will also be opportunity to maximise the efficacy of learning and support materials for individuals involved in using digital solutions, and to increase the confidence of existing and new users of these digital solutions.

Much has already been achieved, however this paper provides some indication of the ongoing challenges in the levels of support required to achieve a confident digitally engaged NMAHP workforce.

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## DATA APPENDIX

### Responses by Organisation & Professional Grouping

	N&M		AHP		TOTAL	
	(n)	(% N&M)	(n)	(% AHP)	(n)	(%TOT)
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	53	10.8	1	0.4	54	7.6
NHS Borders	3	0.6	28	12.4	31	4.3
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	25	5.1	5	2.2	30	4.2
NHS Fife	50	10.2	25	11.1	75	10.5
NHS Forth Valley	10	2.0	6	2.7	16	2.2
NHS Golden Jubilee	9	1.8	6	2.7	15	2.1
NHS Grampian	25	5.1	23	10.2	48	6.7
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	94	19.2	19	8.4	113	15.8
NHS Highland	51	10.4	13	5.8	64	9.0
NHS Lanarkshire	44	9.0	28	12.4	72	10.1
NHS Lothian	82	16.8	29	12.8	111	15.5
NHS Orkney	9	1.8	0	0.0	9	1.3
NHS Shetland	0	0.0	3	1.3	3	0.4
NHS Tayside	25	5.1	28	12.4	53	7.4
NHS Western Isles	2	0.4	4	1.8	6	0.8
OTHER	7	1.4	8	3.5	15	2.1
<b>TOTAL (n)</b>	<b>489</b>		<b>226</b>		<b>715</b>	

### Detailed Tabular Data

#### % Using Digital Solutions to support service delivery by Organisation

	(n)	MS		
		Teams	NearMe	InHealthcare
TOTAL	763	74.1	54.1	2.3
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	56	67.9	35.7	3.6
NHS Borders	31	77.4	64.5	0.0
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	31	83.9	64.5	3.2
NHS Fife	79	77.2	57.0	8.9
NHS Forth Valley	19	57.9	63.2	0.0
NHS Golden Jubilee	15	66.7	33.3	0.0
NHS Grampian	58	70.7	63.8	0.0
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	120	62.5	32.5	0.8
NHS Highland	64	79.7	60.9	4.7
NHS Lanarkshire	76	72.4	63.2	6.6
NHS Lothian	122	57.4	35.2	3.3
NHS Orkney	9	77.8	55.6	0.0
NHS Shetland	3	100.0	100.0	0.0
NHS Tayside	55	76.4	49.1	3.6
NHS Western Isles	6	83.3	33.3	0.0
OTHER	19	78.9	47.4	5.3



### % Using Digital Solutions to support student placements by Organisation

	(n)	MS		
		Teams	NearMe	InHealthcare
TOTAL	763	56.4	40.4	2.8
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	56	46.4	26.8	1.8
NHS Borders	31	77.4	67.7	0.0
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	31	74.2	64.5	3.2
NHS Fife	79	77.2	44.3	6.3
NHS Forth Valley	19	47.4	57.9	0.0
NHS Golden Jubilee	15	6.7	13.3	0.0
NHS Grampian	58	60.3	53.4	0.0
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	120	49.2	26.7	0.0
NHS Highland	64	62.5	50.0	3.1
NHS Lanarkshire	76	61.8	50.0	3.1
NHS Lothian	122	36.9	27.0	3.3
NHS Orkney	9	55.6	33.3	0.0
NHS Shetland	3	66.7	66.7	0.0
NHS Tayside	55	60.0	43.6	5.5
NHS Western Isles	6	83.3	66.7	0.0
OTHER	19	78.9	52.6	5.3

### Confidence Levels in Using Digital Solutions by Organisation

	(n)	MS		
		Teams	NearMe	InHealthcare
TOTAL	763	38.3	25.6	3.2
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	56	32.1	19.5	2.8
NHS Borders	31	52.2	38.7	0.0
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	31	37.6	25.6	3.0
NHS Fife	79	47.3	27.4	4.2
NHS Forth Valley	19	36.8	43.9	2.6
NHS Golden Jubilee	15	22.2	6.7	0.0
NHS Grampian	58	43.3	31.5	2.1
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	120	35.3	17.0	2.4
NHS Highland	64	32.8	27.0	3.9
NHS Lanarkshire	76	46.8	38.0	6.9
NHS Lothian	122	29.5	18.5	2.8
NHS Orkney	9	59.3	29.6	3.7
NHS Shetland	3	33.3	33.3	0.0
NHS Tayside	55	35.8	23.9	1.4
NHS Western Isles	6	38.9	33.3	0.0
OTHER	19	54.4	26.5	8.9

**% Using digital solutions to support service delivery by Professional Group**

	(n)	MS Teams	NearMe	InHealthcare
AHP	226	75.7	68.1	1.3
N&M	489	67.1	40.5	3.9
OTHER	48	75.0	47.9	10.4
TOTAL	763	70.0	49.0	3.4

**% Using Digital Solutions to support student placements by Professional Group**

	(n)	MS Teams	NearMe	InHealthcare
AHP	226	67.3	62.4	1.8
N&M	489	51.5	30.5	2.7
OTHER	48	56.3	39.6	10.4
TOTAL	763	56.4	40.4	2.8

**Confidence Levels in Using Digital Solutions by Professional Group**

	(n)	MS Teams	NearMe	InHealthcare
AHP	226	45.6	35.9	1.0
N&M	489	34.3	20.8	3.5
OTHER	48	45.8	26.8	12.0
TOTAL	763	38.3	25.6	3.2

What might help improve your confidence?



What do you see as the major challenges in using digital solutions to support student learning?



A word cloud of responses to the question "What do you see as the major challenges in using digital solutions to support student learning?". The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with the most prominent words being the largest. The largest words are "access", "available", "digital", "learning", "students", and "working". Other large words include "challenges", "computers", "connectivity", "equipment", "experience", "lack", "learning", "patient", "placement", "solutions", "support", "systems", "training", and "used". Smaller words include "able", "apps", "area", "assess", "better", "care", "changes", "clients", "clinical", "communication", "completely", "contact", "confident", "confident", "devices", "different", "difficult", "distancing", "due", "education", "engage", "enough", "environment", "face", "face to face", "feel", "gain", "getting", "hands", "health", "help", "home", "interact", "internet", "issues", "knowledge", "laptop", "limited", "meeting", "missing", "needs", "nurses", "office", "online", "opportunities", "people", "personal", "practical", "provide", "require", "services", "skills", "social", "space", "staff", "technology", "things", "think", "ward", "wifi", and "team".