

Connecting Older People webinar – 20 April 2021

Questions we didn't get time to answer on the day

Thanks for your questions. I have tried my best to answer them below. If anyone wants any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at sarah.parkes@ageuk.org.uk



1. Device loan scheme - do you use a particular system to book devices in/out? Any processes/procedures you could share on how to wipe tablets after use/set up for next user?

The Age UK network or partners each have their own systems in place to manage their client and volunteer database, as well as coordinator services such as a tablet loan scheme. This will vary from partner to partner and nothing has been put in place at a national level as it is important that the system in place speaks and works with existing and wider service systems.

Tablets must always be wiped after a loan period. The easier way to do this is to return to factory settings. This will also allow a blank canvas for setting up the tablet in an accessible way for the next client, or downloading Apps which they are hoping to use or might find useful. It's also important that the tablet is not donated without being set-up first. The set-up process can prove complicated and daunting for some clients, and taking this barrier away ensures that they are more likely to find the support successful.

Both the wiping/resetting of the devices and setting them up for the next client can be time consuming. Depending on how many tablets you have in circulation, this can be resource heavy and staff time and capacity needs to be considered ahead of the implementation of any loan scheme.

2. One issue - after loaning out what next?? If folks can't afford to buy their own device

The Tablet Loan Scheme is intended to give clients an introduction to technology ahead of purchasing a device themselves. The reluctance to purchasing a device is sometimes due to financial constraints meaning they can't afford a device, or can also sometimes be that whilst they can afford a device they don't have enough awareness about the benefit to justify the cost.

All of our Age UK partners work with clients at the end of the loan period to create an exit plan. This will work through how the client might access a device beyond the loan period. These plans will vary client to client based on their individual circumstances. It might be that it involves identifying the right device for them and sourcing it for them or it might involve benefits checks or finding ways to fund the purchase.

Some of the Age UK partners delivering Tablet Loan Schemes offer the loaned device to the client at the end of the loan period at a discounted price. Some also enable clients to pay for the purchase of the device in instalments, but as you can imagine, this is a more complicated approach and can be resource heavy in terms of staff time, and also means that costs are not recouped for the organisation as quickly as they otherwise would be.

3. What do you have in place for remote access in terms of policies, liability etc.?

As each Age UK partner is their own individual charity, they have their own internal policies and procedures for ways of working and the provision of services. Age UK provide guidance on what measures should be put in place at a minimum, which includes advice on the safeguarding of volunteers and clients.

Specifically for remote access support provision, this is only used by staff and volunteers who have been trained to deliver this work. They will be aware of the boundaries of use and ways to safeguard the client. This can be daunting for an older person who isn't used to technology, and in some cases, make them more at risk of scams in the future as they become used to someone controlling their device. Therefore, it is absolutely crucial that an assessment is made and that it's only used for clients who it is appropriate for. Think about their level of confidence, skills and awareness of online safety for example. We will be creating specific guidelines around best practice for this in the coming months.

Another great way to show someone how to carry out an online task without using remote access is to share your screen if you are on video call. This way, you are not taking control of their device in any way but can clearly show them how to do something using your own device.

4. Are these easy guides stored somewhere for anyone to use?

Many of our Age UK partners make use of the Digital Unite Technology Guides available on the Digital Unite website. At the moment, the only guidance we have available publicly can be found here: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/work-learning/technology-internet/>

We are currently in the process of gathering resources and guides that have been created by partners across our network to learn about what works best. We will use this information as a basis for the development for a national bank of resources specifically targeted at older people. These will be in a format that can be viewed online by a digitally confident older person, or a friend, family member or carer. They will also be downloadable and printable, as many of our Age UK partners find it useful to print and post instructions to clients ahead of sessions. These ensure that the Digital Champion and the older person are following the same steps during a session, and can also be used to continue learning or reflect during sessions. These resources will be made available in the next 6 months.

More often than not, each client will need specific guides based on what it is they are hoping to learn. For example, instructions will differ depending on what supermarket they shop at, what bank they use, or who their email account is with. Therefore, we suggest that any resources you use are used flexibly and where possible edited to the needs of the individual.

5. Are the resources posted from centrally or from the DC? How do you manage the consent for data sharing of addresses?

It varies – depending on the consent in place, instructions will be posted centrally or by the volunteer. Traditionally, volunteers would have sometimes carried out home visits, and therefore partners have the consent templates and processes in place for the sharing of this information. All

consent processes are managed at a local level. Whilst things are mainly being delivered remotely, verbal consent forms are used to record consent verbally.

6. How do you support people to be aware of online scams?

Online safety is embedded within all of the digital support that we provide. Every session is delivered with online safety in mind. For example, if we are supporting an older person creating a Facebook account, the Digital Champion will cover ways to do this safely. Similarly with supporting an older person to shop online, access health information and services, or using online messaging. Digital Champions need to find the perfect balance between ensuring that the older person is aware of the risk and the steps to take to reduce risk, or if they become victim to unsafe online activity, whilst also ensuring they remain confident and don't increase any initial fear they may have had.

Some sessions that Age UK Digital Champions delivery are purely focussed on online safety.

Age UK Digital Champions provide ongoing support to older people. This means that if older people have a concern about their online safety or a potential scam, they can always reach out to their local Digital Champion to seek advice, even if they don't need a full session.

7. How do you support someone with dementia to make progress?

When working with someone with dementia, particular considerations need to be made:

1. Does the Digital Champion feel competent and confident to support that individual? Older people with more complex support needs might need to be supported by a specific Digital Champion who feels more confident in this area or who has more expertise. This ensures that the older person is adequately supported, and hopefully avoids frustration from the Digital Champions side that they can't provide the support that someone needs.
2. Is there a local organisation that you can work with to gain specific expertise in this area? They may have training programmes and resources that your Digital Champions could benefit from, or volunteers who could become Digital Champions for you.
3. Does the older person with dementia that you are working with have a friend, family member, or carer who can support the process? This support network can help the individual remember when the session is taking place, and support their engagement with the service. Make sure you work with their support network as well as the older person.

When working with an older person with dementia, it's important to remain open-minded and flexible with the support offering. The individual may not follow the trajectory that other individuals without dementia do, and may not for example achieve the independence from being online that others might.

The provision of written resources is important to ensure that the older person can reflect on these and make notes in between sessions. But again, be open to the fact that older people may have forgotten what you covered in the previous session by the next, and that support might need to be longer term.