

# Digital Champions programme



Become a Digital Champion to learn, share and inspire others to embrace digital technology. Register your interest now  
[www.ahsn-nenc.org.uk/digital-champions](http://www.ahsn-nenc.org.uk/digital-champions)

## Foreword by Dr Gareth Coakley

I am delighted we are working collaboratively across the region to launch the Digital Champions programme.

Key to the success of digital innovation is the enthusiasm and dedication of our local digital champions. By having people on the ground promoting how digital can improve the way we operate and provide care to our patients is the only way we will deliver the benefits of new technology. Conversely, Digital Champions have a vital role in ensuring the voice of those who are unable to, or have difficulty accessing digital health technologies is also heard so we don't leave people behind, or create inequalities in care.

The technology is only ever a part of the story, having the right people and processes in place to maximise their benefits will enable primary care to evolve and thrive in the digital world. Our champions will recognise and support their practices, and wider PCNs, to embrace change, whilst keeping a critical eye on how we adapt to a hybrid world where interactions with patients are both virtual and in person. They will be able to influence and encourage both staff and patients to try digital options to access care, and thus helping those who are less digitally enabled to ensure any gaps are closed rather than widened.

Their network will enable them to share ideas and best practice, so they are benefiting from the experience and good practice, sharing lessons and growing their skills. The champions will play a vital role in how digital technology is used and adopted across the North East and North Cumbria.

### **Dr Gareth Coakley**

GP and Clinical Lead Digital First Primary Care Programme



# What is a Digital Champion?

**Digital Champions have a crucial role in providing support to help people get online and develop their digital skills.**

Whether it's saving money, looking for work, staying healthy, keeping in touch, or accessing key services, digital skills can help people make the most of day to day life.

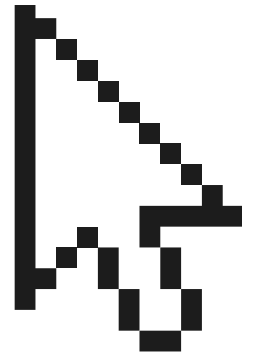
A Digital Champion is someone who inspires friends, family, colleagues, customers or people in their community to enjoy all the benefits that being online can bring.

The skills, knowledge, qualities, and approach that each individual brings as a Digital Champion will be unique and varied. Some learners have no skills and others have low level skills and need to develop specific ones.

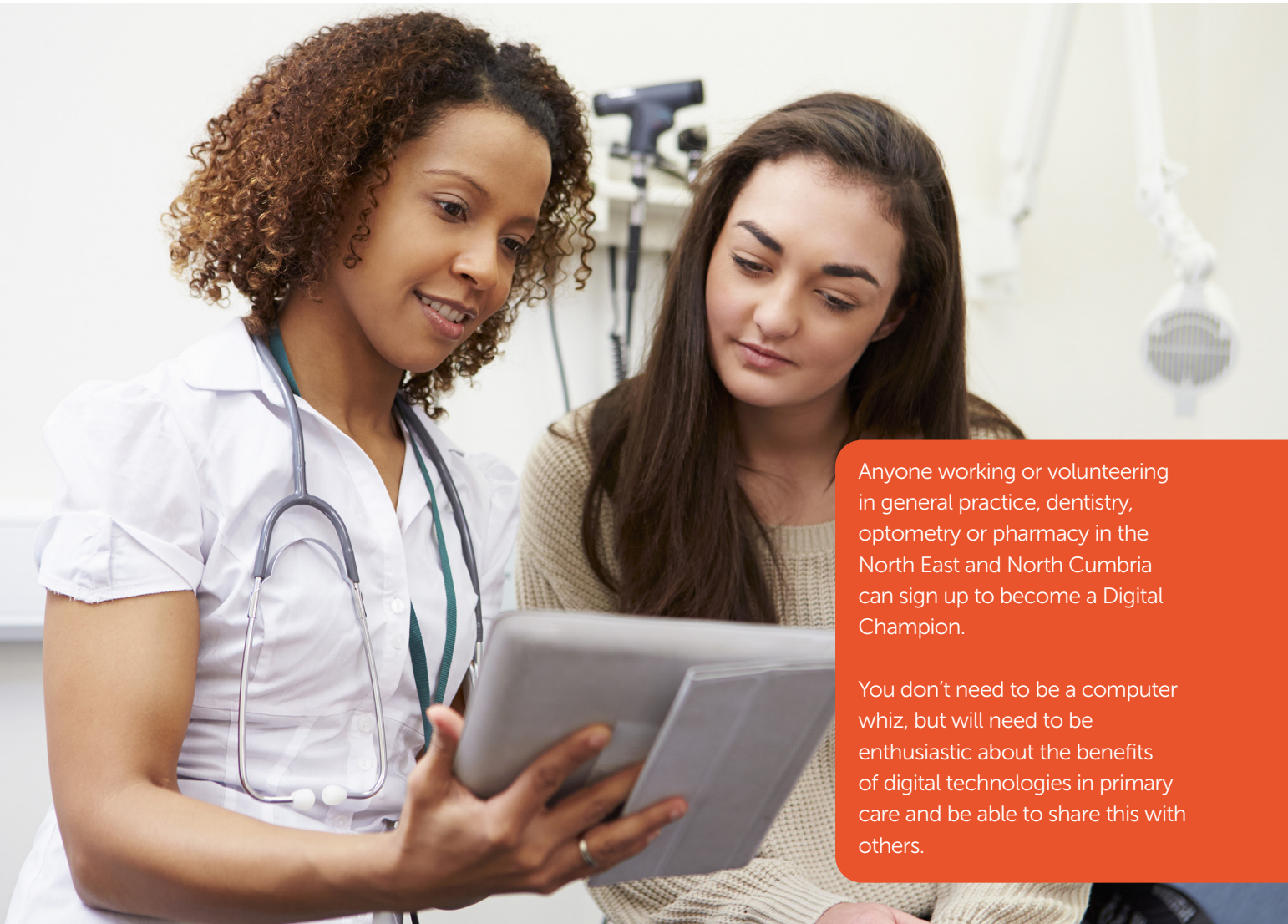
A Digital Champion will have basic digital skills themselves, and enthusiasm for the internet and technology. They need to be patient, good listeners, happy to chat to people they don't know, and be good at explaining things in simple terms.

It's a 12 month programme and during this time, you'll be expected to complete 12 hours of programme activities including some or all of the following:

- CVD accredited training and resources
- Events delivered in partnership with industry experts
- Mentorship opportunities and one-to-one drops in
- Networking with other professionals who have a passion for digital technology and innovation.



## Who can be a Digital Champion?



Anyone working or volunteering in general practice, dentistry, optometry or pharmacy in the North East and North Cumbria can sign up to become a Digital Champion.

You don't need to be a computer whiz, but will need to be enthusiastic about the benefits of digital technologies in primary care and be able to share this with others.

# Role overview

Digital Champion is a role in primary care created to support the focus on digital products with an aim to:

- Improve patient access.
- Manage the increase in demand for primary care services.
- Be visible and provide support to colleagues and help them navigate the digital world with confidence.
- Promote digital technologies amongst primary care colleagues.
- Share best practice.
- Provide peer-to-peer support for colleagues through a Digital Champion Network across the region.

Digital Champions will act as a link between the Digital Champion Network and Primary Care, disseminating best practice to colleagues, and likewise feeding in suggestions around digital products and support required from colleagues to the Digital Champion Network.

Having a Digital Champion in practice will mean that there is a nominated person, linked into a digital network, who can support the practice in navigating through the rapid acceleration to digitalise processes within Primary Care influenced by the covid-19 pandemic. At practice level, the benefits of having a Digital Champion include:

- In-house support for practice staff.
- Access to process documents for digital products.
- Access to key contacts for digital products.
- A nominated person to intercept and cascade the latest local digital information across the practice and your organisation, including any new digital products being used..
- At a system level, the benefit to primary care is a digitally confident workforce who have the tools to provide an efficient, digital service to patients.

You will need to have a good understanding of processes and procedures within primary care, as well as:

- The ability to communicate well with other stakeholders, including; colleagues within your organisation, other Digital Champions and the Digital Champion Network.
- The ability to take a friendly approach will be beneficial along with the confidence to inspire people on all things digital.

You will be provided with training and have access to the Digital Resource Hub and the Digital Champion Network to enable you to carry out the role effectively.

# Main duties and responsibilities

- Share best practice with colleagues.
- Provide peer-to-peer support for colleagues by signposting to technical support or training contacts for digital products, directing to best practice guides created by the accelerator group and providing information on how colleagues can access training, or where to enquire about establishing a new digital product in their practice.
- Maintain relationships with other Digital Champions via the Digital Champion Network space provided, drawing on these relationships for peer support and additional knowledge.
- As your knowledge on digital products adopted within the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) locality grows, you may be able to solve simple digital queries brought to you by fellow colleagues.
- Undergo training on new digital products adopted within your ICP, giving you the ability to draw on this knowledge when promoting or supporting colleagues.
- Raising awareness of the benefits of digital ways of working with colleagues.
- Relaying relevant information or requests on digital ways of working from colleagues to the Digital Champion Network.

