

Factors impacting on older people's (75+) access/experience of digitalised public services during Covid-19



Dr Charlotte Eost-Telling

Healthy Ageing Research Group
School of Health Sciences



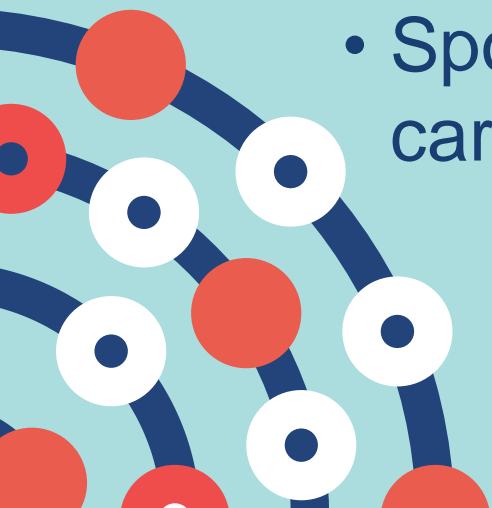
Exploring factors impacting older adult's (75+) experience of public services during the Covid-19 pandemic, with specific reference to digital inclusion and exclusion

Workstreams

- **Phase 1: Initial rapid review**
- **Phase 2: Interviews with older adults and community leaders**
- **Phase 3: Report and Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

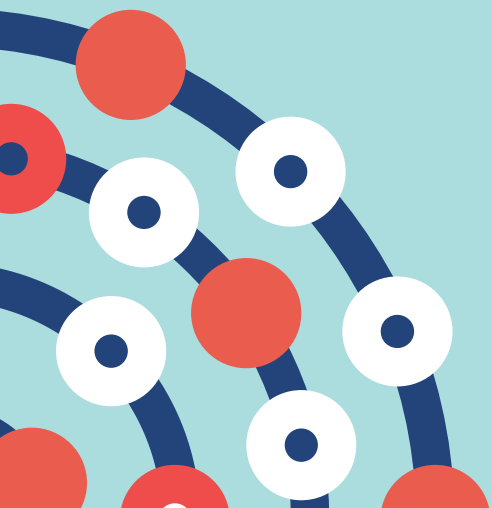
Phase 1: Rapid review

- Latest info on older adults' digital skills, internet use, non-use and disengagement
- Summarise support recommendations
- Spotlight implications of increased digitalisation in health and care services, financial services and public services



Digital inclusion

- Infrastructure
- Skills
- Support
- Confidence
- Motivation

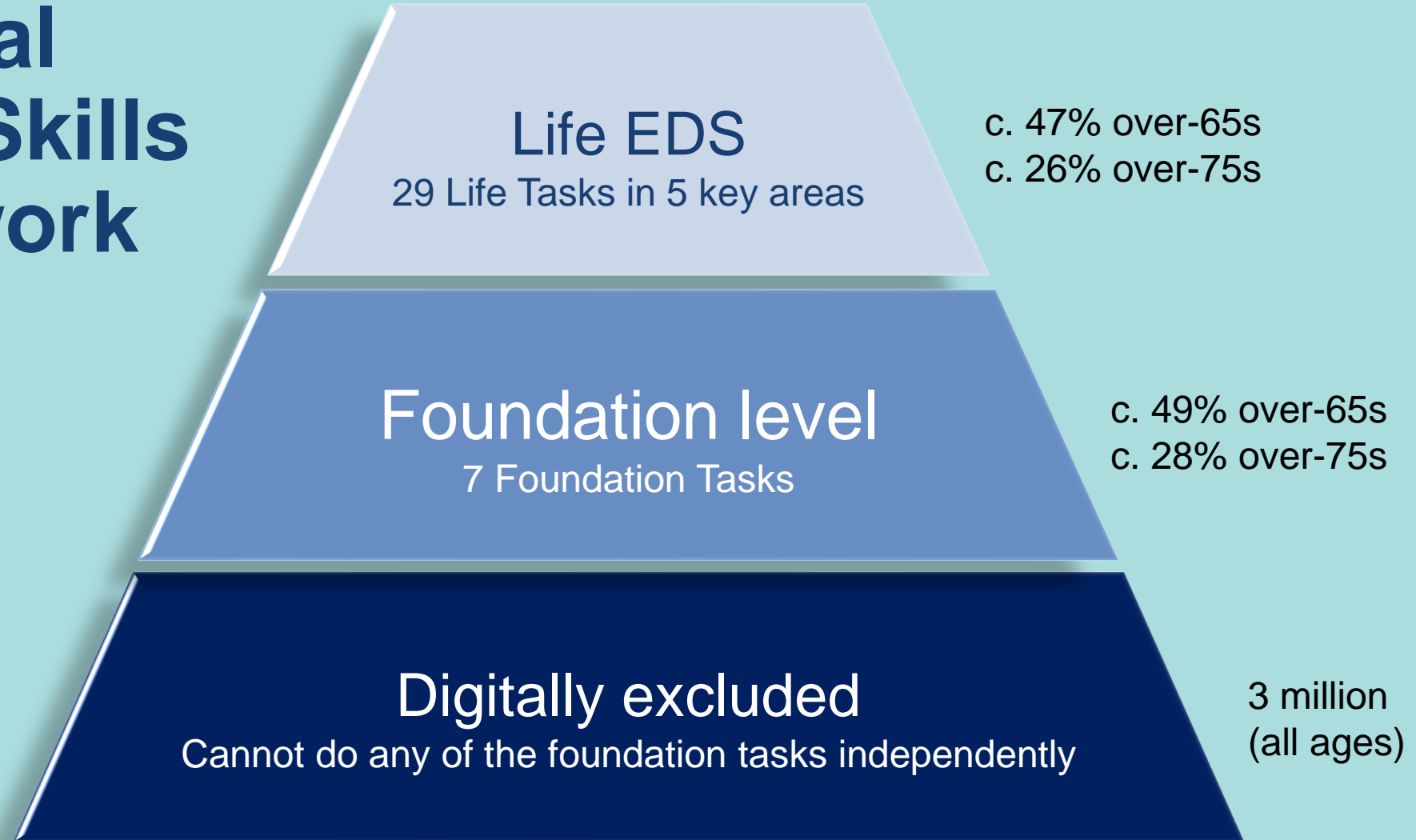


Barriers to inclusion



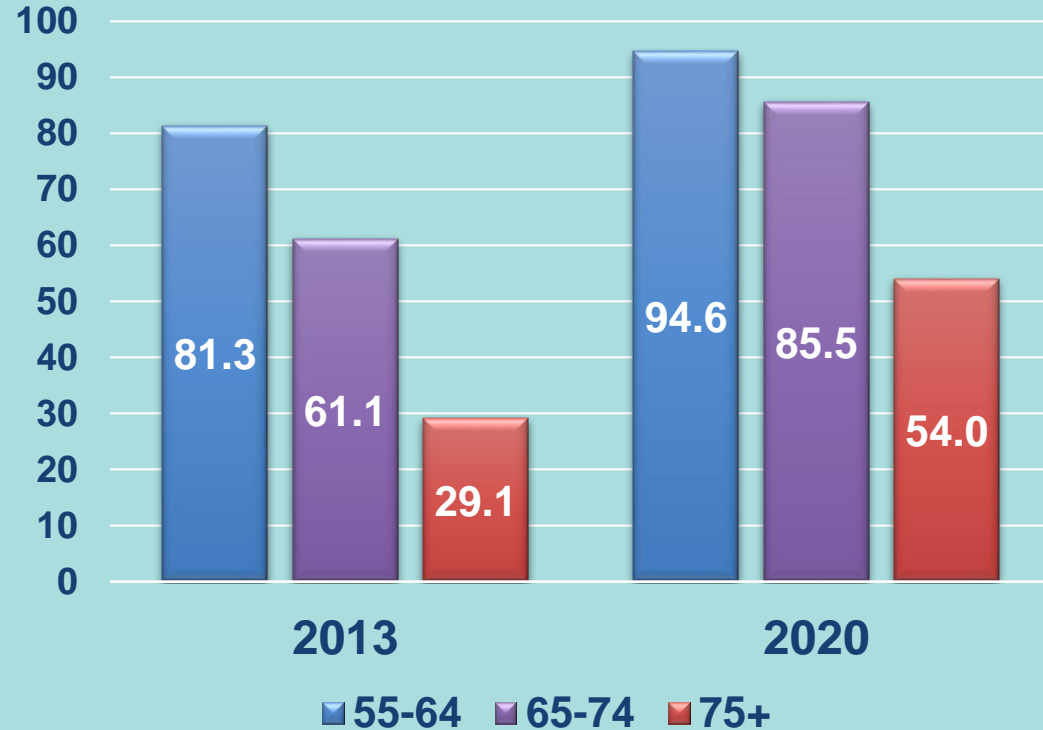
- Self-efficacy
- Awareness of benefits and risks
- Employment history
- Perception of cognitive ability
- Influence of family
- Perceived value and relevance
- Access and affordability of equipment

Essential Digital Skills Framework

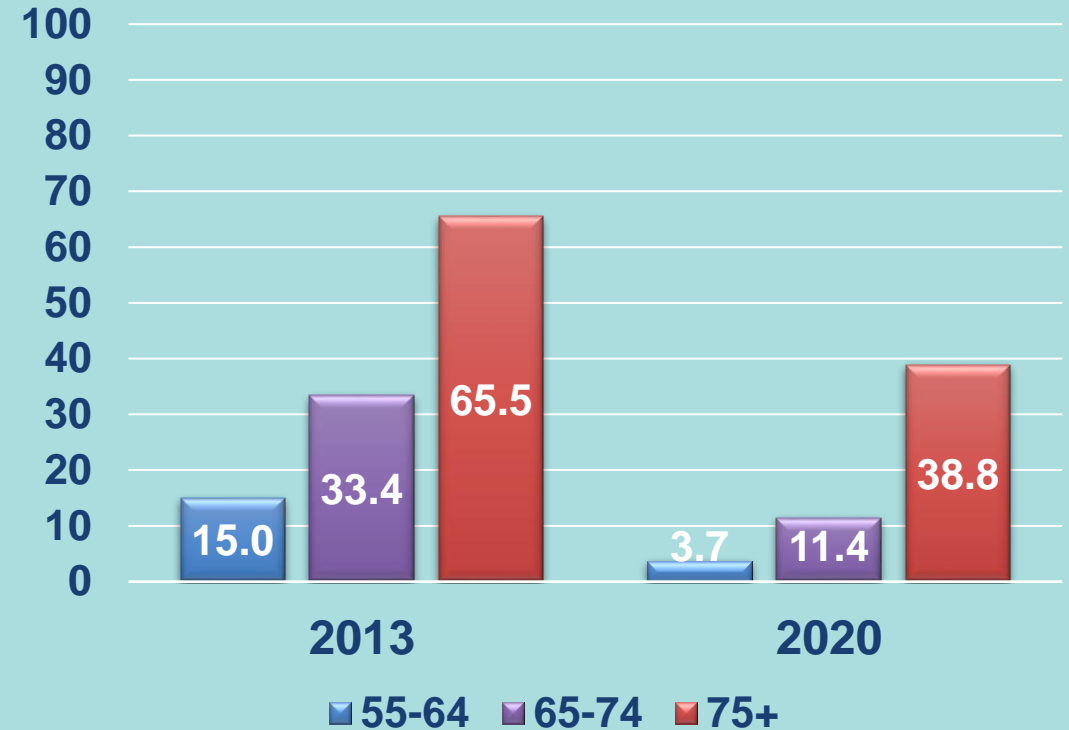


Internet use (pre-Covid)

Used internet in previous 3 months



Never used the internet



Pandemic has NOT encouraged non-users

- Increased use seen in those already using internet
- Age UK analysis of ELSA data:
 - 45% of 52–64 year-olds and 41% of 65–74 year-olds used the internet more since the outbreak
 - Only 24% of those 75+ increased their usage and 9% were using it less



Health and care services

- Digital exclusion affects access to health and care services and impacts on wider determinants of health, including social participation
 - Old age is strongest indicator of internet access and use
 - Those from lower socioeconomic groups less likely to use internet
- No evidence whether digital technology helped access to healthcare
 - Current evidence base does not match up well with NHS 'Empower the person' roadmap
- Complex area with nuances, e.g. rural areas may lack broadband but prefer remote consultations to cut journey times

Financial services

- Substantial increase in digital delivery over the last 15 years
- Share of population using online banking rose from 30% in 2007 to 76% in 2020
 - Mirrored by decrease in high street presence BUT
 - 93% people over 80 years do not use internet banking



Increased use of contactless payments, especially during Covid-19 fuelling disappearance of cash

Commitment to maintaining access to cash BUT

1/3 people aged 80+ years have never used or preferred not to use cash machines

Public services

- Much of the evidence of digital exclusion from public services is anecdotal
- Public services offered by local authorities often some of the least accessible
 - e.g. Age UK study found 41/100 council claims could only be made online, and others required forms to be downloaded and printed out
- During pandemic closure of public libraries, community centres and internet cafes meant free access to internet even more limited
- Highlights risks of 'digital-by-default' services
- Internet recognised as an essential utility vs legislation to maintain offline access

Phase 2: Interviews

Participants: 2 older adult groups, both aged 75 and over:

Group 1 'Adopters/users'

Group 2 'Non-adopters / users'

Group 3 'Community leaders'

Project team:

Annemarie Money

Alex Hall

Charlotte Eost-Telling

Alison Littlewood

Jane McDermott

Danielle Harris

<https://www.arc-gm.nihr.ac.uk/projects/NHS-digital-project>

