

Health Special Interest Group

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**Develop
Leaders**



**Connect
Leaders**



**Influence
Policy**



**Support
Great
Governance**



**CEO
Support**

A Meeting of The C03 Health Special Interest Group

12th June 2025



AGENDA



10:00AM	Refreshments & Networking	
10:15AM	Welcome & Outline of Today's Session	Valerie McConville , Chief Executive, CO3
10:30AM	Welcome from CO3 Health SIG	Bernie Kelly , Chair, CO3 Health SIG
10:40AM	CONNECT NORTH: Your Partner to Wellbeing	Sabrina Lynn , Locality Lead, Northern Health & Social Care Trust Claire Ramsey , Wellbeing Manager, Northern Health & Social Care Trust
11:00AM	CONNECT NORTH LINK WORKER SERVICE – AN AGE NI PARTNERSHIP PERSPECTIVE	Mandy Wilson , Head of Wellbeing Services, Age NI
11:20AM	Libraries NI	Northern Health & Social Care Trust
11:40AM	Q&A	
11:55AM	Event Close	

Valerie McConville

Chief Executive

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**Northern Ireland
Health Collective**
powered by co³

Uniting Voices.
Transforming Health



www.nihealthcollective.org.uk

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PERMANENT SECRETARY

MIKE FARRAR

Meet Gillian Lewis
New Head of the NI Health Collective

7 July 2025 | 1PM - 3PM
Barnett Suite, Stormont Hotel, Belfast

Delegates are invited from 1PM for Networking Lunch

RSVP to michelle@nihealthcollective.org.uk





Chief Officers 3rd Sector

Bernie Kelly

Chair

CO3 Health Special
Interest Group

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Chief Officers 3rd Sector



Sabrina Lynn

Locality Lead

Northern Health & Social Care Trust



Claire Ramsey

Wellbeing Manager

Northern Health & Social Care Trust



Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



Connect North

Your Pathway to Wellbeing

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What is Connect North?

Social factors such as **work, money, housing problems**, the challenges of **managing long-term conditions** or feeling **lonely or isolated** are just as important to our health and wellbeing as our physical needs.

Connecting people with the right help and support to address these social needs is called “**social prescribing**”

Connect North is an **integrated, co-designed, person-centred & needs-led** social prescribing service within the NHSCT area aiming to connect clients to the right help and support to address these social needs

Connect North is delivered in partnership between Age NI and the NHSCT working collaboratively with other agencies to provide compassionate care with our community, in our community





Aims & Objectives

Aim

Review NHSCT social prescribing related services to determine a more cost-effective, efficient and sustainable model of service provision for people requiring support with their practical, social or emotional needs impacting their wellbeing.

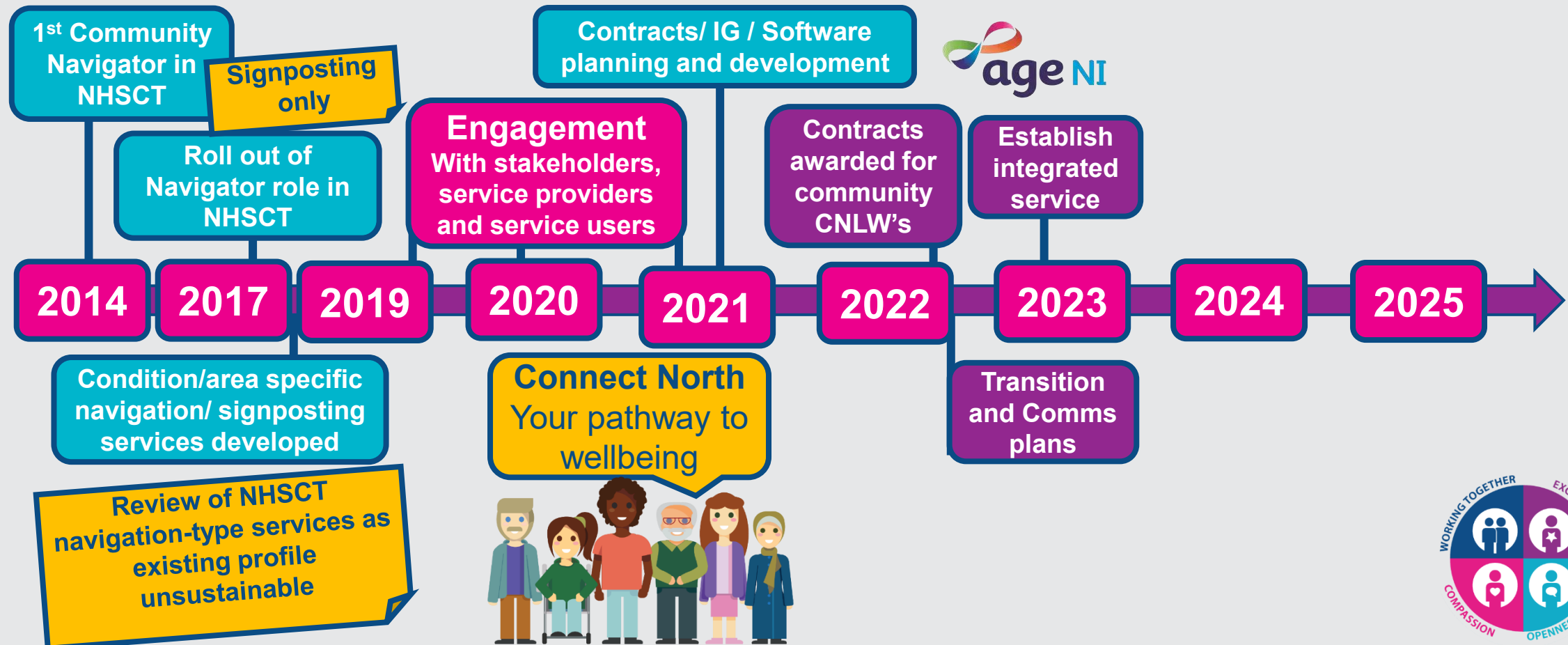
Objectives

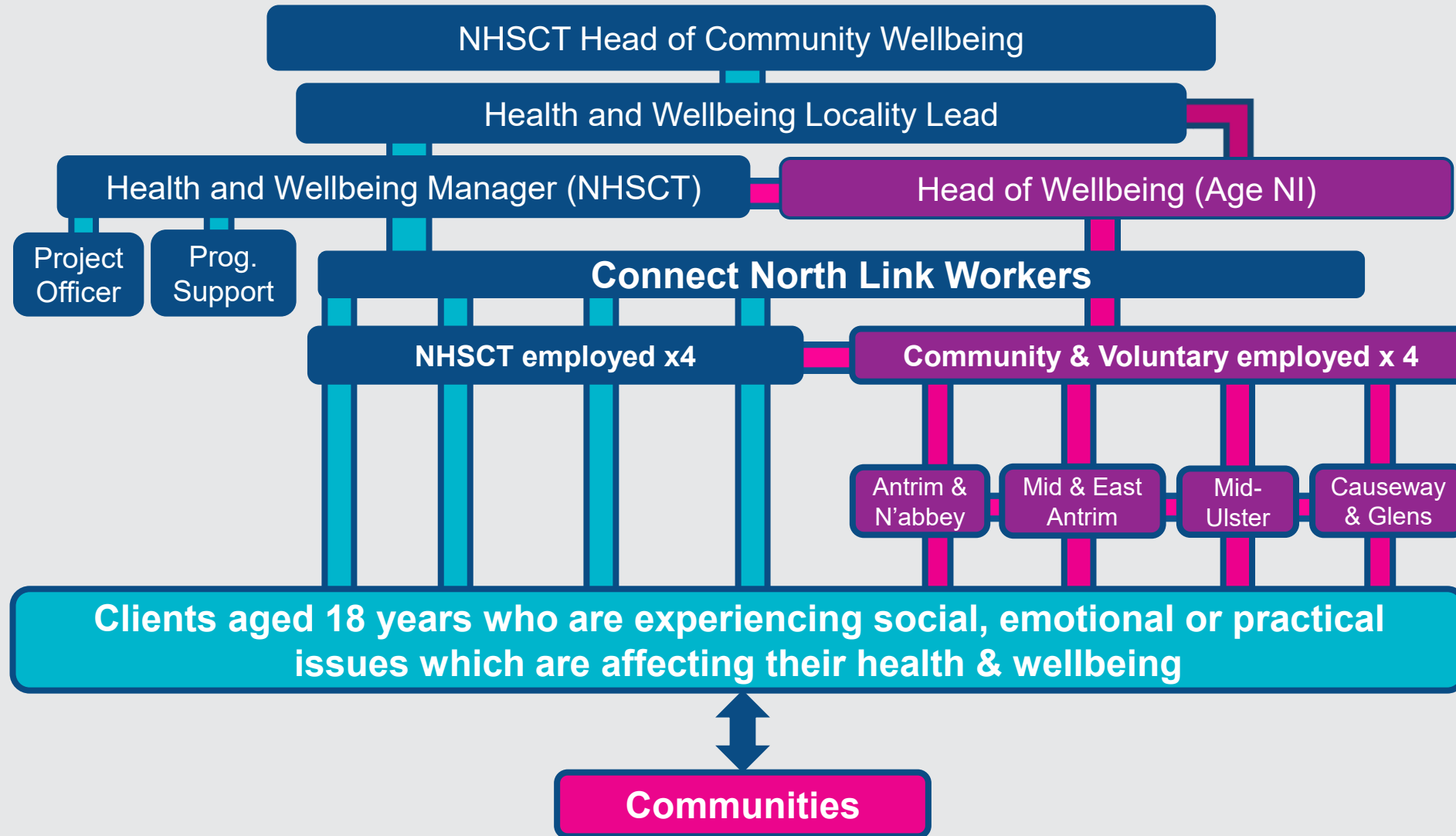
1. Review and map existing services and offerings exploring how a more collaborative approach and technology can support effective service provision
2. Engage with all stakeholders to determine “what matters to you?”
3. Co-design a collaborative model that delivers on “what matters to you?”
4. Operationalise the service to deliver a person-centred and positive user experience with measurable outcomes, utilising all reportable data to inform service improvements





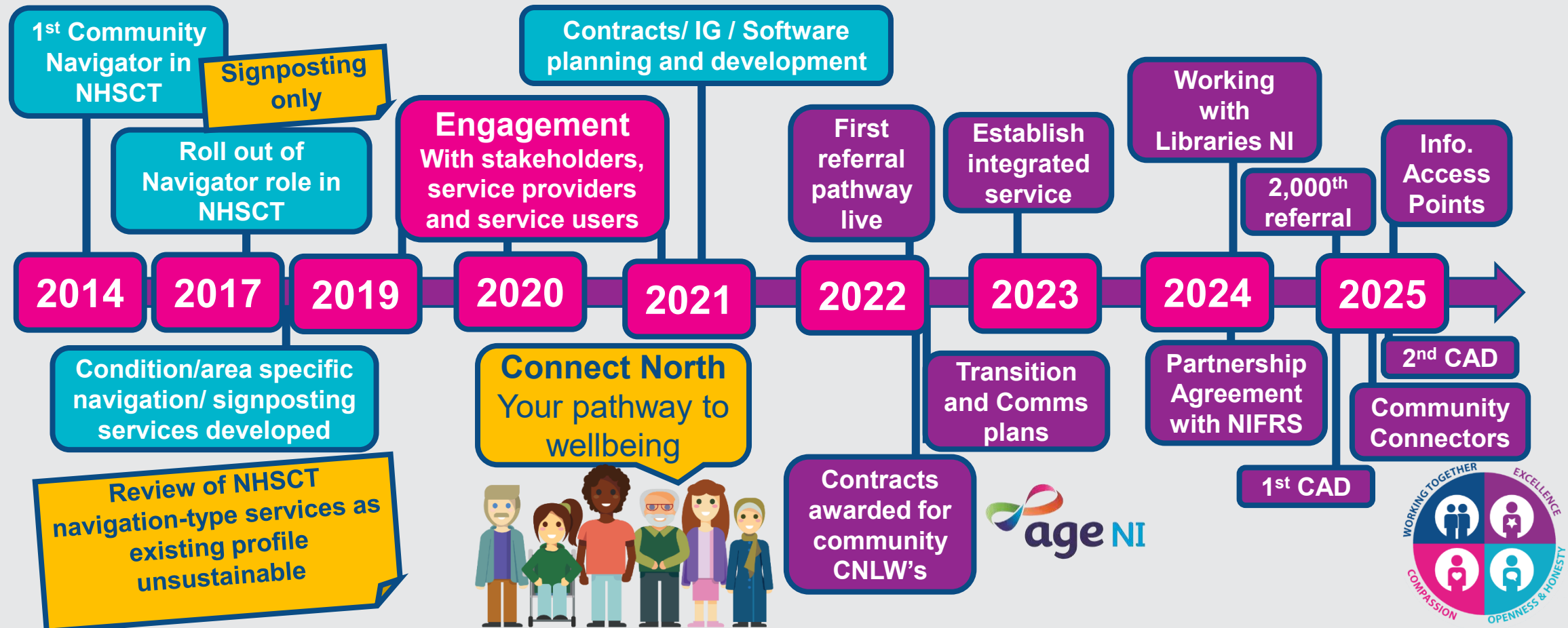
Background in NHSCT Area





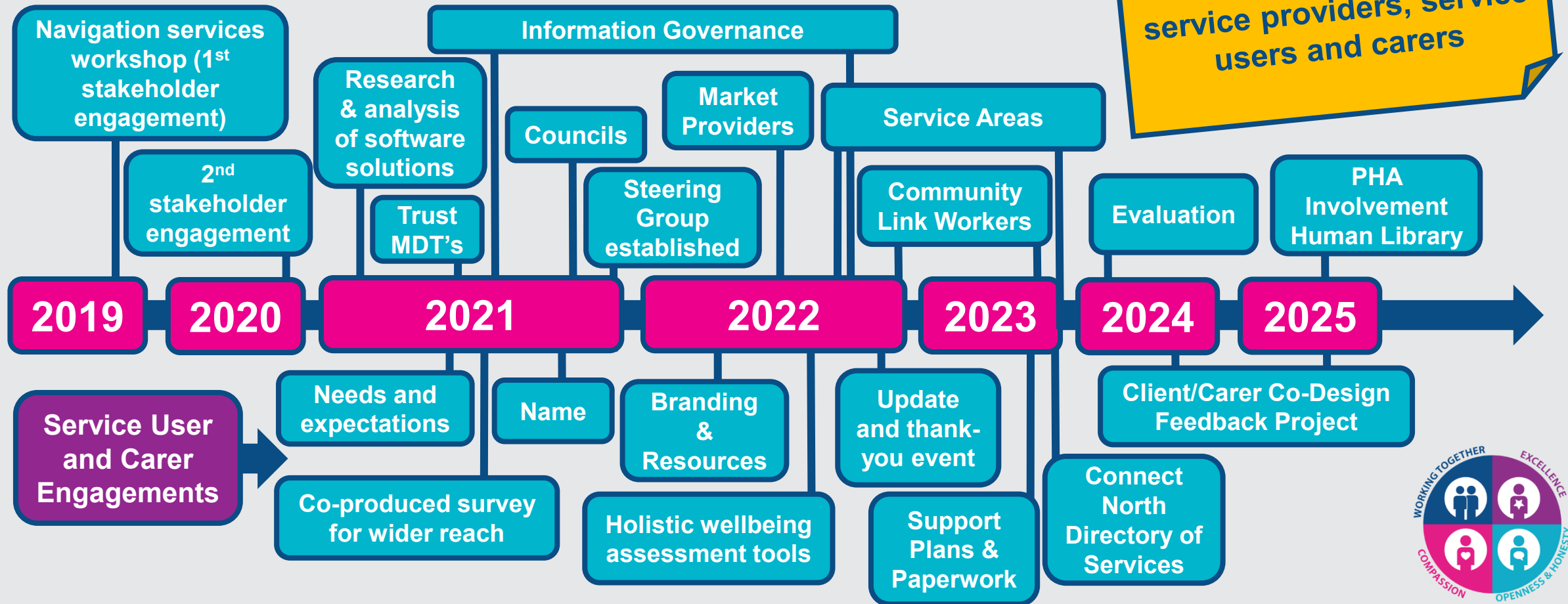


Background in NHSCT Area





Engagement Summary





The need

Effective 1st point
of contact

To know what's
available and have
easy access to it

To look at the whole
person, not a single
issue/condition

Integrated,
accessible and
responsive service

A single
directory of
services for
everyone

Consistency – I
don't want to
repeat my story

To have it all
in one place

Not getting passed
from pillar to post



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Integration

Consistency – I
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Digitalisation



Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



A Single Shared Directory

www.connectnorth.co.uk

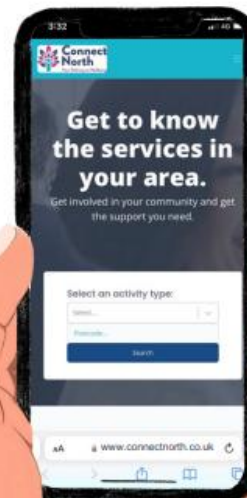
Training and Resources

Connect North Directory -
Training & Resources



Connect North can help connect you to the right help and support to meet your social needs.

To find out about activities, services and supports available near you:



- 1 Scan QR code using the camera on your device
or type:
www.connectnorth.co.uk
into your web browser
- 2 Open the link
- 3 Select 'Activity type'
- 4 Insert your postcode
- 5 Click 'search'

Email: connectnorth@northerntrust.hscni.net for more information.

HSC Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



>1,100
services

Publicly
available

Shared widely
across NHSCT area

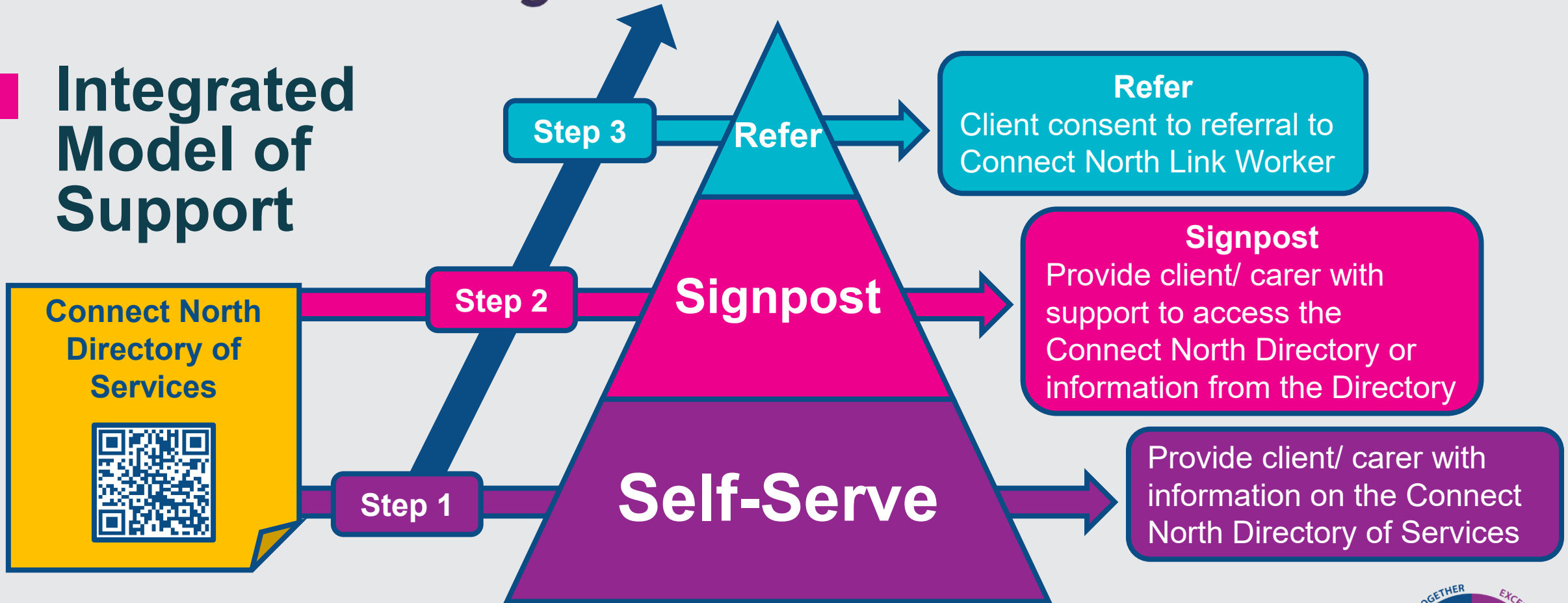
Maintained as
close to source

Improved
access



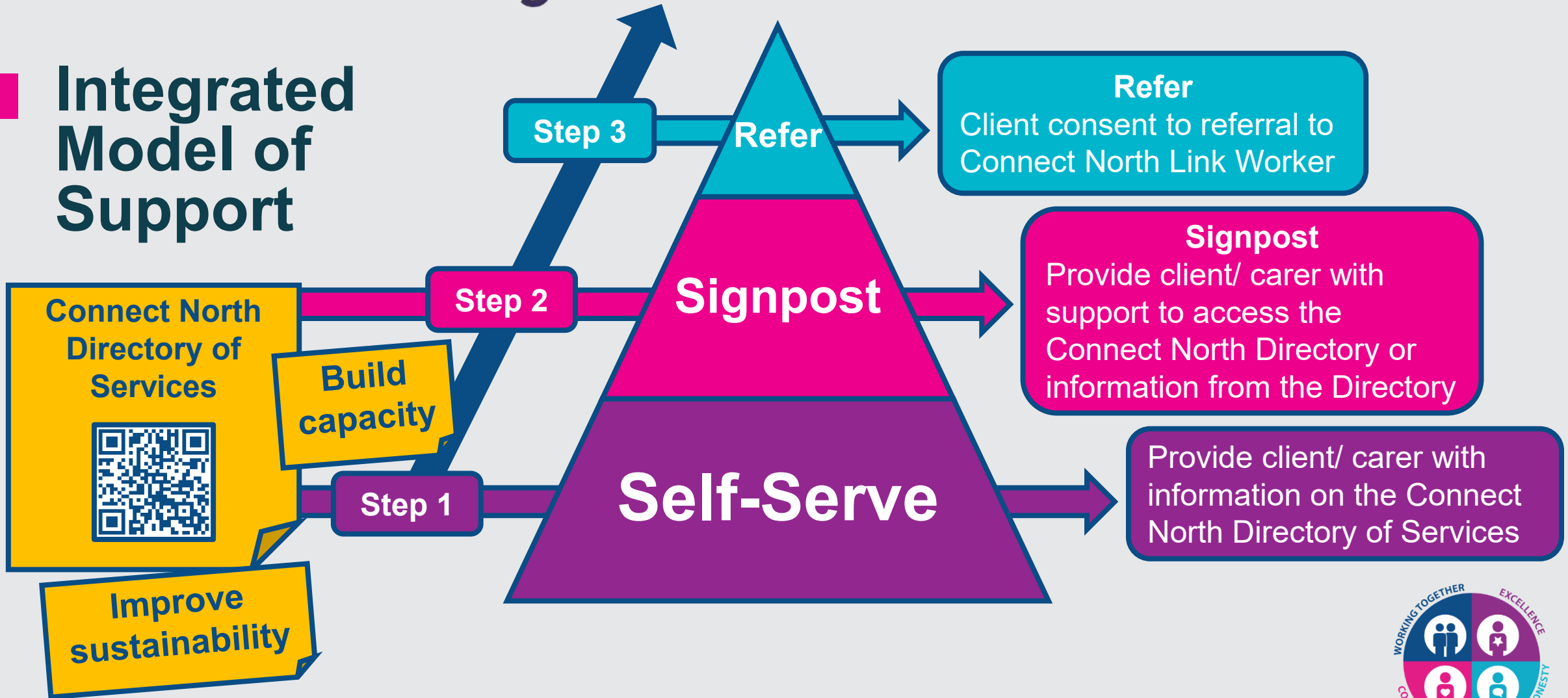


Integrated Model of Support



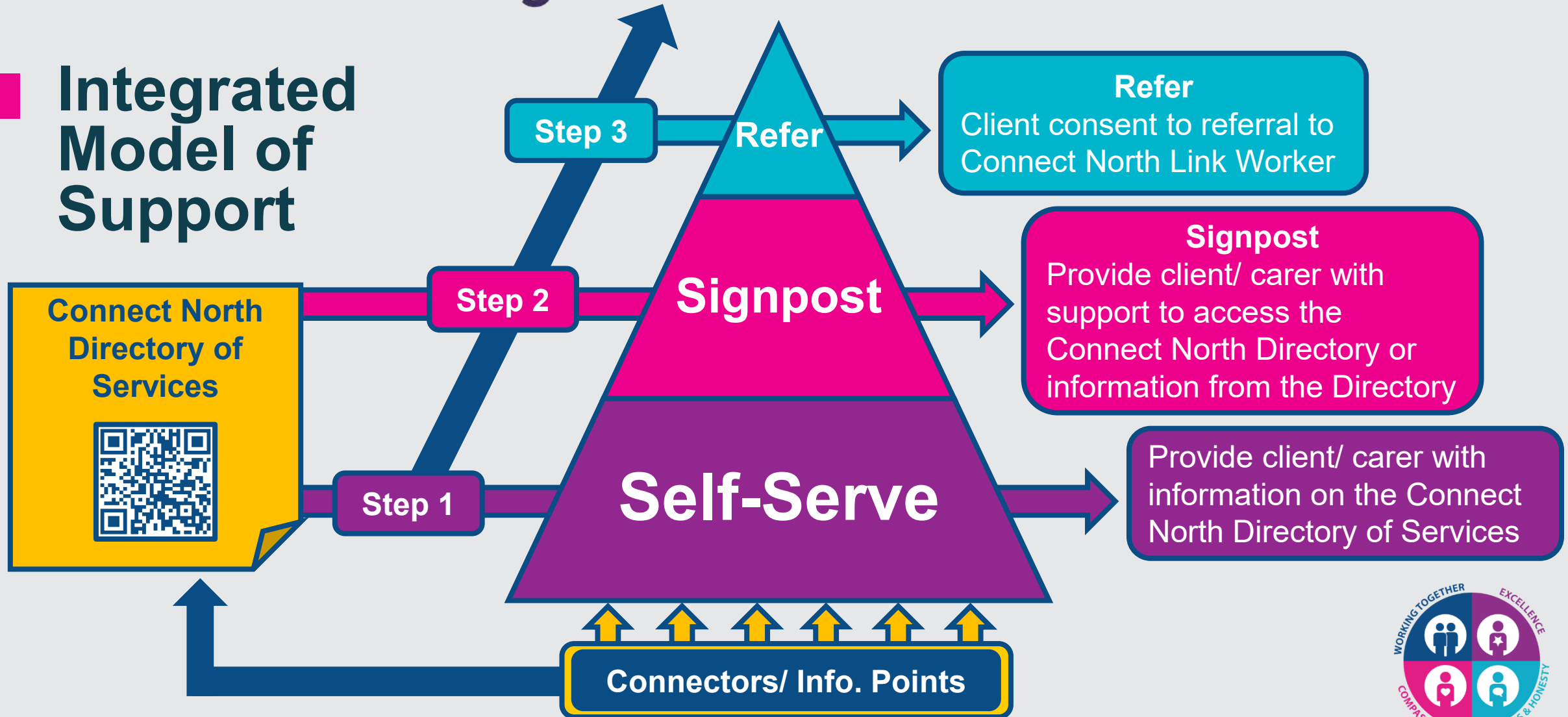


Integrated Model of Support





Integrated Model of Support

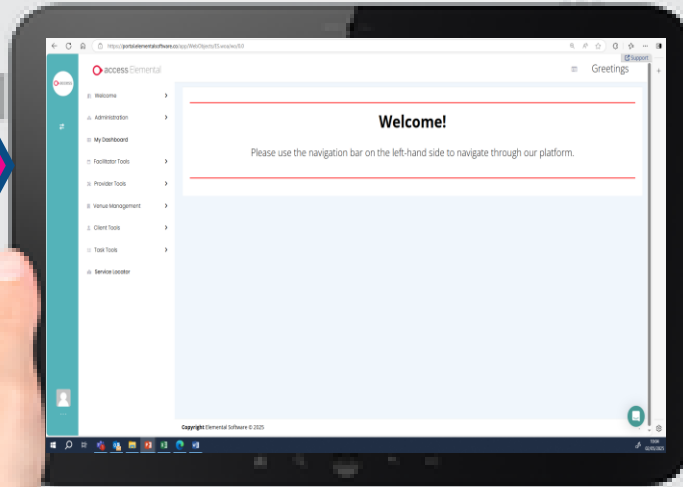




Integration & Digitalisation for Client Care

Accessible

**Single
point of
access**



Centralised

No duplication/cross-referring

Not passing from pillar to post

Effective 1st contact

Consistent

Care continuity

Accountability

Reporting

Evidence/Outcomes

Validated assessment

Service improvement





Referral Criteria

Clients must meet these criteria and the referrer must be approved by the Connect North Service and aligned to one of the approved referral pathways

Adults **aged 18 years and above** and **living in or registered with a GP in the NHSCT area**

Experiencing **social, emotional or practical issues which are affecting their health & wellbeing** e.g. housing, transport, income/finances, social connections etc. and for who basic signposting has been ineffective or inappropriate

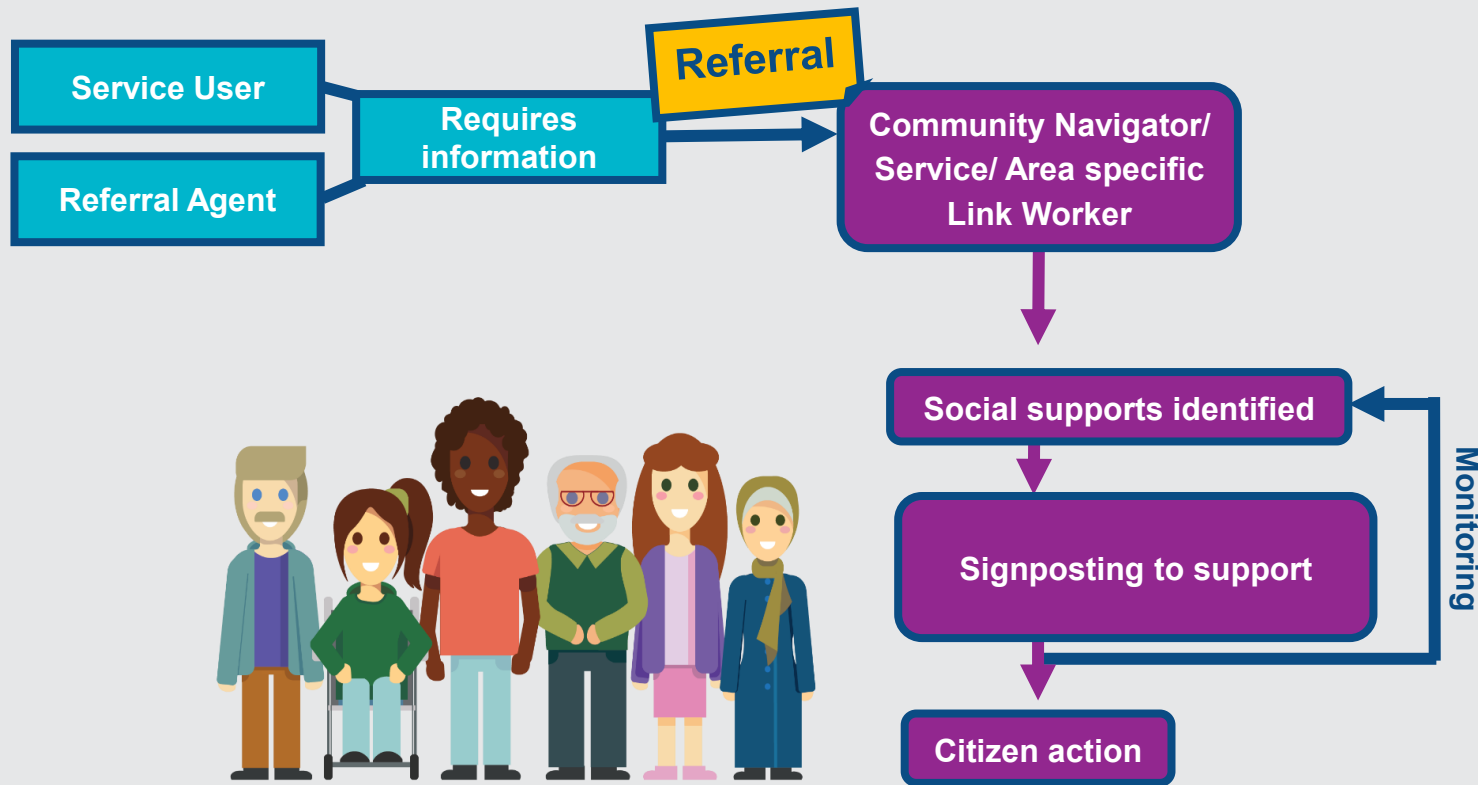
Requires **assistance from a link worker** to determine appropriate supportive services

Consent to referral to Connect North and motivated to engage with the service



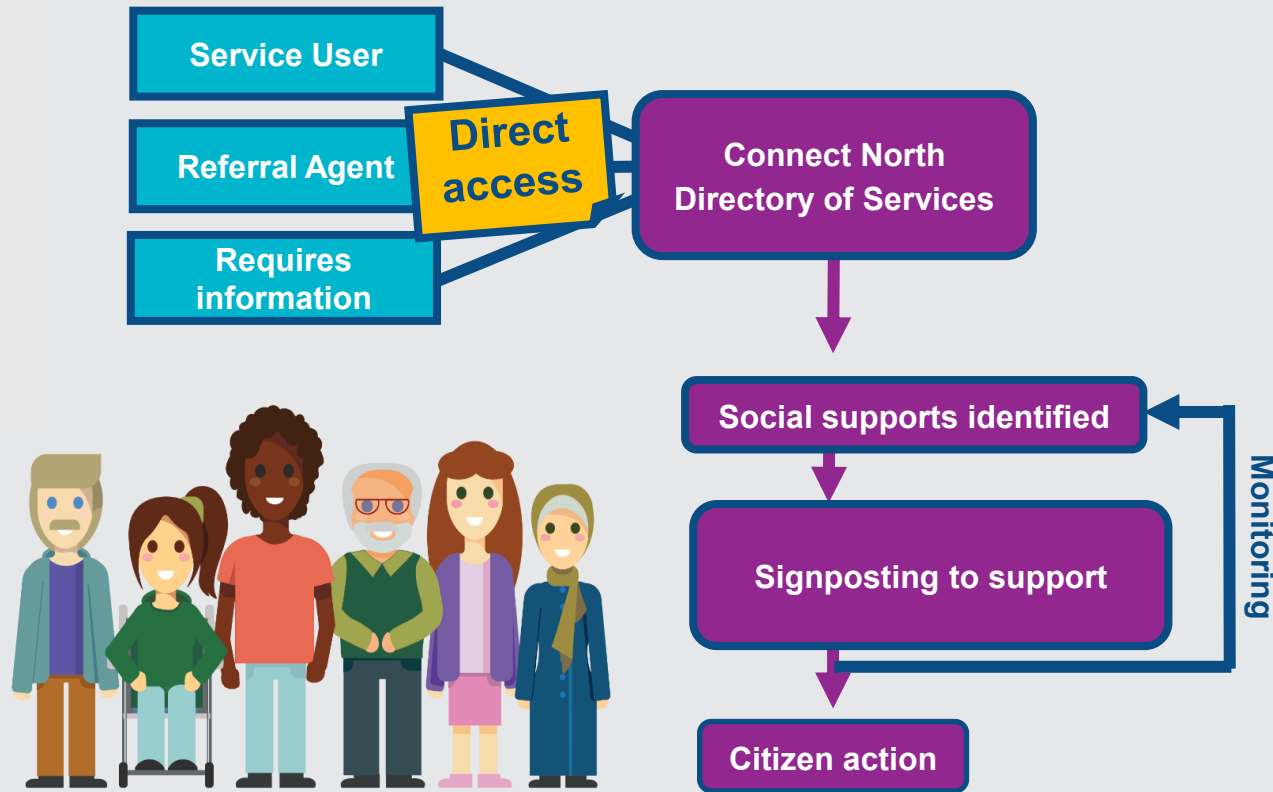


Pre-Connect North

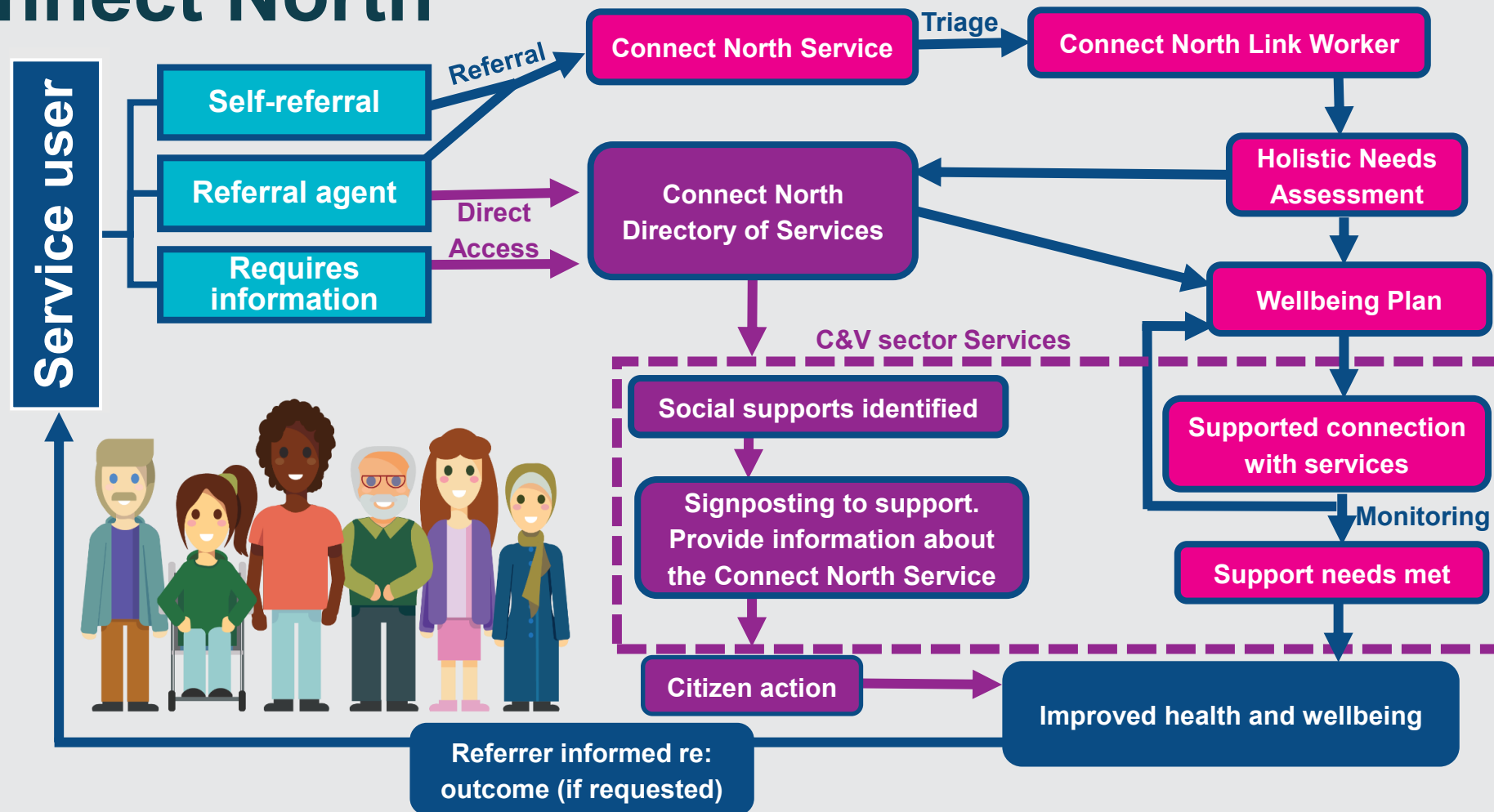




Connect North



Connect North





How Much Did We Do?

Extensive engagement

Co-designed &
integrated pathway &
resources

Created and shared
an accessible
directory for all

Digitalisation

Single
access
point



↑ Continuity of Care

We trained

291

Referral agents

30

Agencies

2,109 Referrals

1,044 Client related
communications/mth



2,525 Social
prescriptions

1. Carer Support

2. Condition info/support

3. Advice & Advocacy

5,674
Signposts

1. Connecting with others

2. Emotional Support

3. Carer Support

Online Directory



Publicly
available

>1,100
services

Developed standards &
procedures

Resolved legacy backlog

Multi-agency approach

Link worker peer support

Reporting for improvement





How Well Did We Do It?

Person-Centred



Needs Led

Digitalisation

↑ Governance

↑ Access

↓ Admin

↑ Care

Online Directory

8K active users in 1 year



Ave. engagement
= 4mins 18secs

84% via direct URL

75% users access via
desktop
(24% mobile)

Ave. page views/session
= 33.07

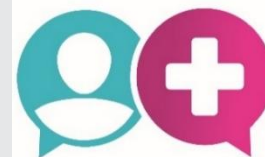


Client/Carer Experience

100%
Users found
service
helpful

100%
Users
recommend
service

100%
Users had a
positive
experience



Health
Literacy
Take time to ask.
Make time to listen

Met all
stakeholder
needs

PEN National
Awards 2024
(Runner-Up)

Commissioning for
Patient Experience

Partnership Working to
Improve the Experience





Is Anyone Better Off?

Client Wellbeing

85%

Improvement
in health and
wellbeing

Improvement in
primary
concern

68%

Improvement in
secondary
concern

66%

Quality of service

I'm so impressed with the
tenderness of it all – it's
been wonderful

Reduced
Stress

60%

Greater
peace of
mind

75%

Directory

Widely shared
across
NHSCT area

Single point of access



Streamlined client journey



Reduced duplication



Max. capacity for care



100% on time reviews



Fair & consistent service



Responsive service



Sustainable



Evidence based delivery



They helped me to feel in
control of my situation, I
couldn't have done it
without them

I know if I
ring action
will be taken



It made it easier
to access
services & less
stressful

It was a lifeline
for me really
and truly

Promoting independence & autonomy over
own health and wellbeing





Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



Community Appointment Days

Providers



Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service



A targeted approach is so much more effective for clients, carers and ourselves

Satisfaction from assisting people in a friendly environment

Able to relay information in a positive and personal way



Service users & carers

71% Uptake
(Usual care = 51%)

We found out about support available and how to access it

The informed atmosphere was very conducive to finding answers

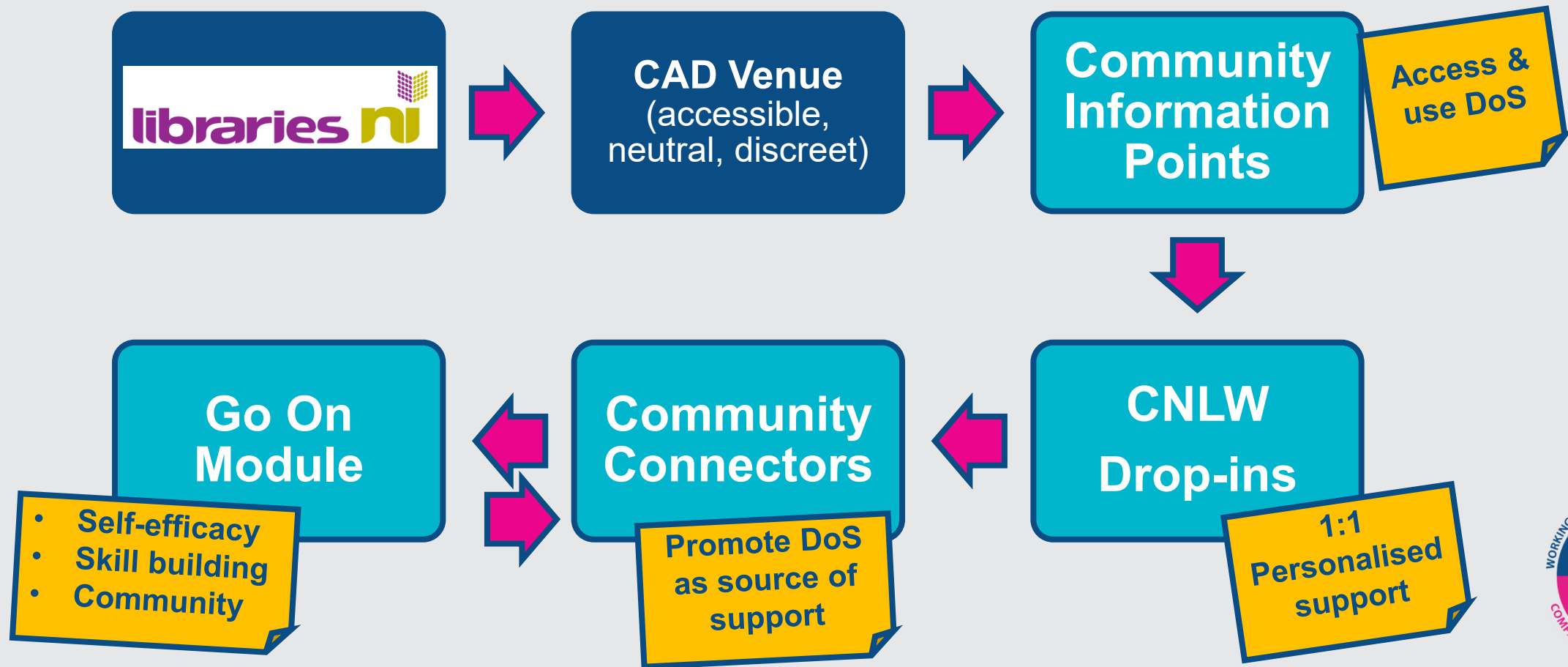
We had just been left with no help

20/10!

So well organised. From the invitation everyone has been so welcoming and friendly, we have felt really comfortable



Collaboration with Libraries NI





Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



■ The future

Personalised
Care

Collaboration

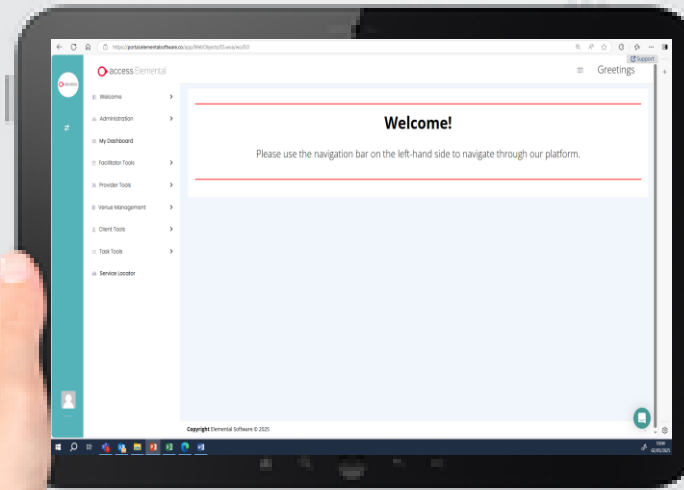
Data driven
service delivery

Track needs
& gaps

Needs led
innovation

Support others

Sustainability





Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



Contact Details

Sabrina Lynn, Mandy Wilson & Claire Ramsey

E-mail: ConnectNorth@northerntrust.hscni.net

Directory of Services: www.connectnorth.co.uk



Connect North



@ConnectNorthSP



Mandy Wilson

Head of Wellbeing Services

Age NI



CONNECT NORTH LINK WORKER SERVICE – AN AGE NI PARTNERSHIP PERSPECTIVE.

Empowering individuals through community-based support

Mandy Wilson, Head of Wellbeing Services Age NI. June 2025

Age NI

Age NI believes every older person should be included and valued. We're working across Northern Ireland to change the way we age.

We're changing the day-to-day experience of getting older through essential services – like help at home, emotional and practical support, and age inclusive training. Our local knowledge is transforming older people's health, wellbeing and finances.

Our specialist, impartial advice is changing how older people feel when they face a challenging issue – whether it's care, money, health or housing. A call to our free advice line or a visit to our website can help change older people's worries into answers.

Our friendship services are changing the issue of loneliness among older generations. From weekly chats on the phone to day centres and local support groups, we're changing loneliness and isolation into comfort and connection.

We're an expert voice on ageing, changing the way older people are treated and represented in society through research and campaigning. We work with local, national and international policymakers to challenge inequalities and push for the changes that'll improve older people's lives

HOW DID THE PARTNERSHIP BEGIN AND DEVELOP?

- TENDER
- INNOVATIVE THINKING TOGETHER
- SHARED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE
- INSPIRATION
- CREATIVITY
- ONGOING DEVELOPMENT



Purpose of the Partnership

- Compliment primary and secondary care with holistic, person-centred support.
- Promote community resilience and preventative health.
- Strengthen the links between statutory and VCS.
- Reduce loneliness and isolation

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

- Improved mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Increased social connections.
- Reduced demand on GP and hospital service.
- Positive feedback from service users.
- Increased community development.
- Elevated collaboration of statutory and VCS.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Continuing to co-design with people within the Northern trust area
- Scaling and sustaining the partnership and collaboration.
- Expansion of referral pathways
- Measuring long term health and social outcomes
- Continuing with ethos of place-based support.

CLOSING MESSAGE

Together, in true collaboration, Connect North Team, Age NI, MEAAP, Libraries NI and numerous other statutory and VCS organisations and groups are stronger together in the strive to provide the right support at the right time for those who need it.



Partnership Working

Thank you

CO3 Upcoming Events

To learn more about us: www.co3.org.uk



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**Influence
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Great
Governance**



**CEO
Support**

The CO3 2025

SUMMER INFLUENCE INSTITUTE

High level strategic insight and actionable strategies for VCSE Leaders who want to influence policy in Northern Ireland



BOOK NOW

Two Sessions

20 June & 21 August 2025

Free for CO3 Members

CO³
Chief Officers 3rd Sector

**Northern Ireland
Electricity
Networks**

40th ANNIVERSARY FUNDRAISING GALA

4 Decades Empowering Leaders Driving Change



BOOK NOW

20 NOVEMBER 2025 - TITANIC BELFAST



Thank you.