

# Transforming Diabetes Through Innovation

## Mapping the current landscape and identifying future priorities in Scotland

### Context

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases in NHS Scotland and prevalence is increasing. The role and need for innovation in supporting transformation within healthcare systems is well recognised. This research aimed to map the current diabetes digital innovation landscape in Scotland and present an overview of its potential impact on the experiences of people living with diabetes. Through engagement with people living with diabetes, healthcare, and third-sector professionals we sought to understand unmet needs and identify gaps to inform future diabetes data-driven, digital and service innovation developments.

### Methods

Research ran from summer 2022 to November 2023 and involved an online survey of people living with diabetes and healthcare professionals that sought to identify current challenges and priorities for diabetes innovation<sup>1</sup>. Survey and desk-based research findings were then used to build a map of the main scale-up challenges and current diabetes innovation projects. Interviews and workshops were designed to engage people with lived experience of diabetes and relevant healthcare and third-sector professionals in validating and identifying gaps, priority areas and aspirations for future innovation.

### Results

Survey responses (n=275) and desk-based research findings were analysed to build a map of current projects and priority areas, which was validated and used to identify opportunities for future innovation in interviews (n=8), four in-person workshops (n=25) and one virtual workshop (n=16). The findings are presented as interactive digital maps, structured around seven thematic challenges: individualising care, lifestyles, education, health and digital inequalities, mental wellbeing, technology and data, and flexible care pathways. The current landscape maps identified innovation projects, highlighting their innovation type and readiness for adoption. The future landscape maps ideas and aspirations for future care and specific innovation ideas alongside current innovation projects. Finally, we identify five challenges in innovating diabetes care: implementation, resourcing, variation in resources and services, integrating user data, implementation timescales and managing expectations.

### Limitations

The scope of this research was limited to Scottish innovation projects, therefore the potential impact of innovations from the rest of the UK and beyond was not considered.

**References:**  
<sup>1</sup>Savage, Jamie (2022) Transforming Diabetes Care Through Innovation – Survey Results. Digital Health & Care Institute, Glasgow <https://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/83025/>

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### Implications




This research undertook a novel, and person-centred approach to identifying innovation priorities and explored the impact of current innovations on the experiences of service users. By mapping future aspirations against current innovation projects, we highlight key thematic gaps in the current diabetes innovation landscape for attention. Placing users' needs at the center of the innovation agenda as demonstrated in this research, offers a fresh perspective and enables organisations to gain valuable insights into unmet needs and aspirations. Furthermore, it fosters collaboration, empathy, and a deeper understanding of challenges leading to potentially more sustainable long term and scalable innovative solutions.

### INNOVATION PROJECTS

Full descriptions of the numbered projects are available via the QR code below.

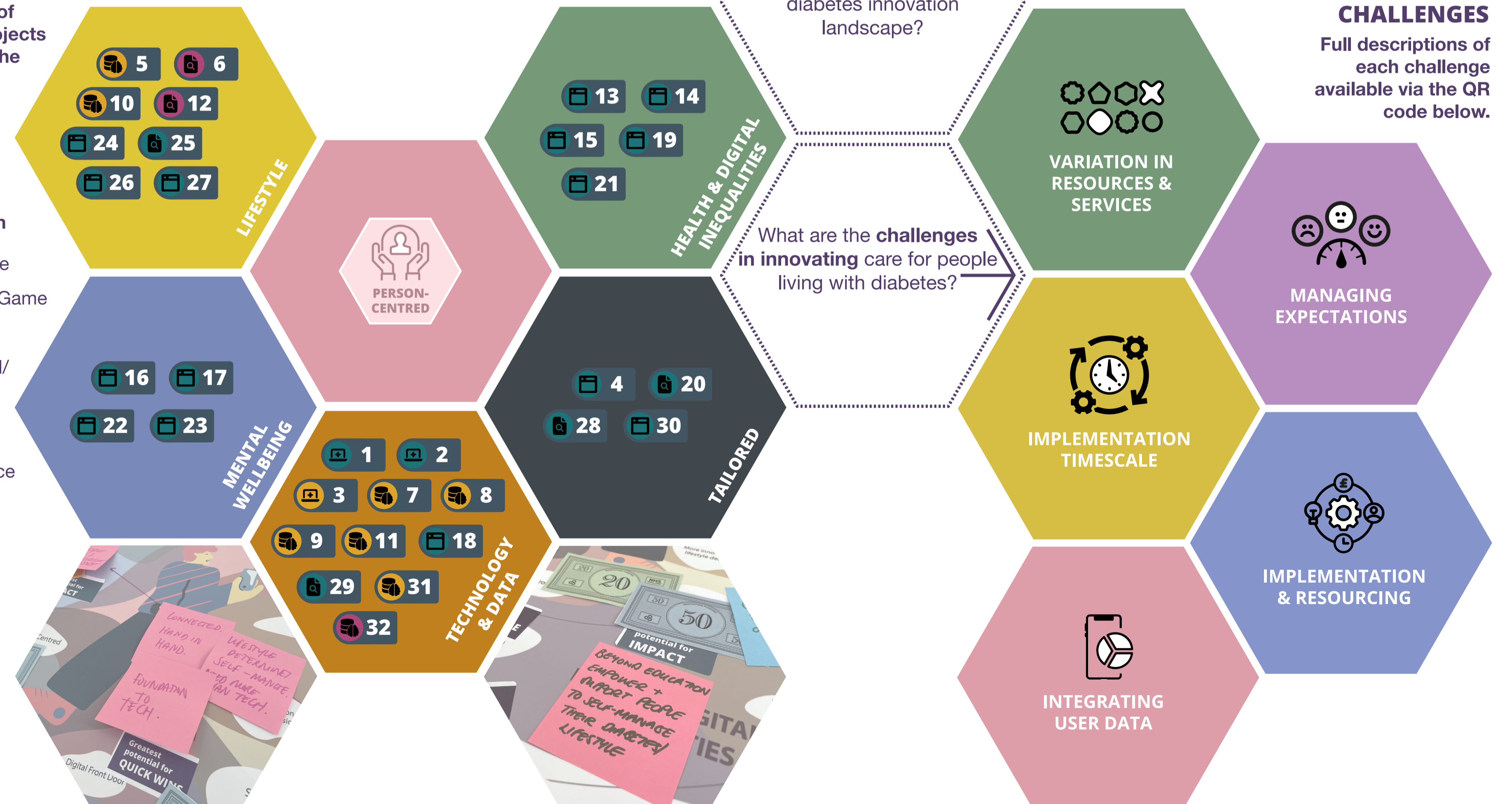
#### KEY

##### Type of innovation

-  Medical device
-  App/Website/Game
-  AI / Data
-  Service model/research

##### Readiness

-  Product/service available
-  Developing innovation
-  Early innovation



### GAPS

Overarching 'how might we...?' questions by theme. See all questions via the QR code below.

- LIFESTYLE**: How might we ensure education supports the person to identify small changes they can make to their lifestyle to ensure they are achievable and not overwhelming?
- HEALTH & DIGITAL INEQUALITIES**: How might we support people struggling financially for whom lifestyle is not a choice?
- EDUCATION**: How might we tailor the technology options to the person to help them find the best available solution?
- MENTAL WELLBEING**: How might we identify when mental health challenges are preventing someone from engaging in diabetes care and focus on supporting this first?
- TECHNOLOGY & DATA**: How might we ensure professional education is an enriching experience rather than a tick-box training module?
- FLEXIBLE CARE PATHWAY**: How might we support people to navigate the diabetes care landscape to find the information and support they need?

### CHALLENGES

Full descriptions of each challenge available via the QR code below.

 <View the full report including interactive visualisations via this QR code