



QUEEN'S
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*A project supported by PEACEPLUS,
a programme managed by the Special
EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).*

Substance **U**se & **M**ental Health **I**nterventions Using Digital **T**echnology (SUMIT)

Digital Products Breakfast Briefing: 31st March 2026



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



Digital Health & Care
Innovation Centre



University of
St Andrews | FOUNDED
1413



Digital Products Pre-Market Briefing


AGENDA


- 8.30am Welcome & Introductions
- 8.40am SUMIT Project Overview
- 9.00am Participatory Design Methods & Insights
- 9.20am Anticipated Procurement Process & Timelines
- 9.30am Industry Feedback, Q&A
- 10.00am Finish


SUMIT

Substance Use and Mental Health Interventions using Digital Technology

 €6.8m supported by PEACEPLUS, managed by Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)

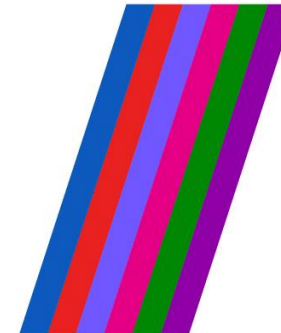
 Led by QUB with partners Trinity College Dublin, Digital Health and Care Innovation Centre, University of St Andrews & Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations

 Cross-border initiative (IRE/NI) with Scotland (advanced demonstrator site)

 Digitally enhance existing services for people with substance use and mental health issues, co-design 3 digital products with staff and service users

Vision

“Enhance and transform support for people with substance use and mental health issues through digitally connected, person-centred care”



PEACEPLUS
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



European Union



UK Government



Official Launch of SUMIT

- 28 May 2025
- Great Hall, Queens University Belfast



SUMMIT DEVELOPMENT



Over 5 yrs in preparation



Strategic all-Ireland engagement process with service providers, policy makers, service users to inform key challenges and the potential of digital products to address challenges including persona development workshops

SUMIT activities

Strategic Advisory Board

Project Implementation Board

PROJECT MANAGEMENT



Demonstrator site
development, training
and knowledge exchange

Lead: QUB



Digital - design,
inclusion,
implementation &
Products

Lead: DHI



Research & Evaluation

Lead: TCD



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SUMIT will provide

People with substance use and mental health issues (n=1,500)



Provide digital devices (or platform) & connectivity



Provide digital upskilling and human support to use devices and co-designed digital products



Provide easier access to treatment, support & self care through co-designed digital products

Associate partners and community organisations



Enhance digital inclusion



Provide digital up-skilling & increase digital confidence



Deliver Trauma-informed training



Co-design digital products to address gaps and enhance existing services



START360



Associate Partners & Demonstrator Sites

- Methodist Mission (Derry / Londonderry)
- DePaul (Derry / Londonderry)
- The Red Door Project (Drogheda)
- Turas Counselling (Dundalk)
- START 360 (Belfast)
- NHS Fife (Fife)

How SUMIT will work

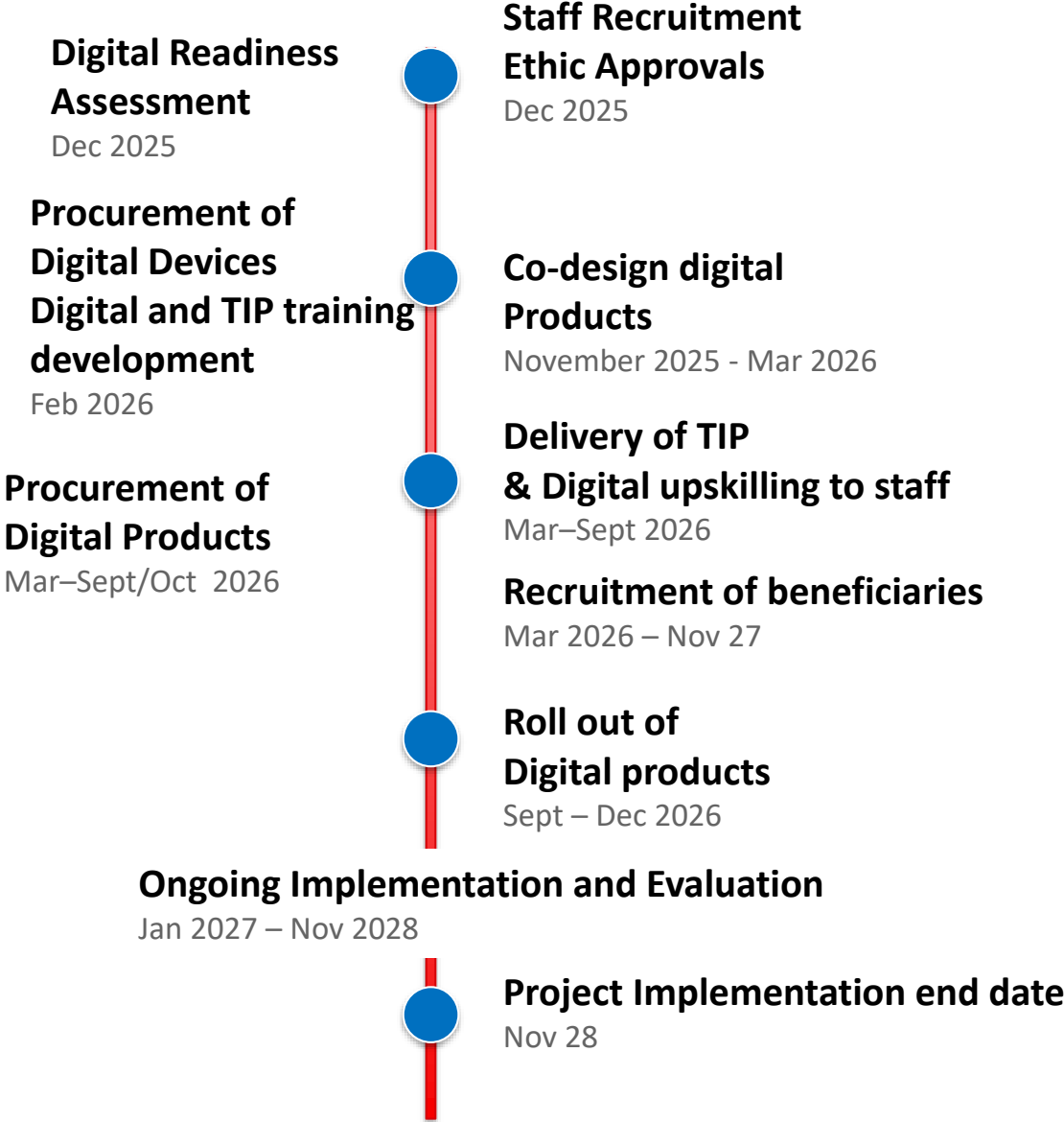
 Co-design and implement 3 digital products across 4 demonstrator sites

 SUMIT cross-border Community of Practice

 SUMIT Service User Advisory Panel



SUMIT Estimated Timeline – key activities



SUMIT – Project Result Indicator

Expand digital inclusion and co-design at least **3 digitally enabled products for 1,500 beneficiaries** to enhance existing services

- 600 beneficiaries from NI – Belfast & Derry
- 600 beneficiaries from ROI – Louth & Letterkenny
- 300 beneficiaries from Fife

Beneficiaries – defined as the individual experiencing substance use and mental health issues

Episodes of care – defined as the collation of a number of individual care interventions provided by a range of services across a defined time period. An episode of care will be counted once at the outset of a beneficiary signing up for and accessing a digital product.

Expected Outcomes

For Individuals (PWSUMH)

- Increased digital access, skills, and confidence
- Improved (or increased) access and engagement with community-based treatment and support
- Increased self-management capacity

For Staff and Organisations:

- Improved staff digital and trauma-informed skills
- Services adopt digital processes
- Better cross-border collaboration & data sharing

For the System


- Community of practice operational and active
- Regular COP Meetings, evaluation reports, policy briefs produced
- Early Improvements in continuity of care and user experience.

Long-term Outcomes/Impact (3+ yrs)

- Improved health and wellbeing outcomes for PWSUMHI
- More integrated and continuous care for PWSUMHI
- Reduced inequalities in access to health and support services
- Digitally inclusive, trauma-informed culture across sectors
- Strengthened system readiness for future technologies (AI)
- Evidence base embedded in policy and service design
- Enduring cross-border collaboration & knowledge exchange
- Adoption of digital processes in organisational service delivery
- Ongoing cross-border Community of Practice

Shared Common Challenges

 **Barriers to Accessing Care & Support**

 **Service Centric rather than Person Centered Care**

 **Lack of Joined Up Care for especially for people with substance use and mental health issues**

 **Service Capacity issues & the potential for digital to address some of the challenges**



Digital Health & Care
Innovation Centre

31/03/2026

SUMIT: User Requirements for Procurement

Initial findings from participatory research with professionals and service users



Initial Engagement

A design based / person centred approach

1. Stakeholder Consultations

- Online and in-person engagement with service providers, policymakers, and community organisations
- Cross-sector input spanning health, social care, and voluntary services

2. Lived Experience & Co-Design

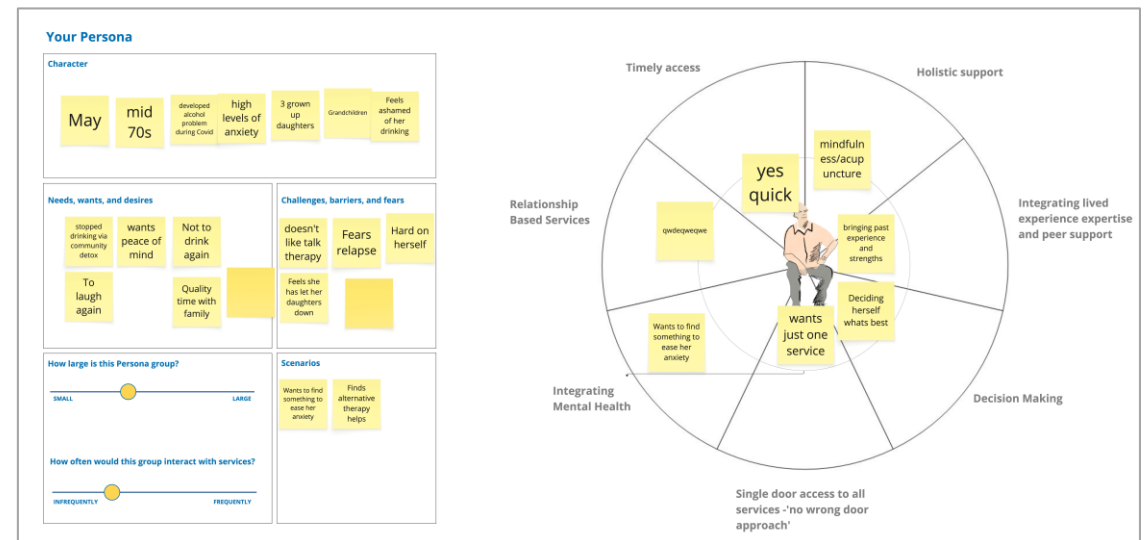
- Persona development workshops with service users
- Exploration of real-world journeys, needs, and barriers
- Foundations for ongoing co-production

3. System & Service Mapping

- Cross-border mapping of services (NI, ROI, Scotland)
- Identification of fragmentation, gaps, and transition points
- Understanding interactions across primary, secondary, and community care

4. Evidence & Insight Generation

- International evidence and gap mapping of digital interventions
- Synthesis of literature and practice to identify opportunity areas



Overview

DHI Design has been carrying out on-site workshops with professionals and service users at each of the test bed locations to determine the user requirements for procurement.

Test bed	Organisation	Dates	# Professionals	# Service users
Louth	Red Door	12 – 13 Jan	10	9
	Turas	19 – 20 Jan	6	4
Derry	DePaul	29 – 30 Jan	5	5
	Methodist Mission	11 – 12 Feb	4	3
Belfast	Start360	11-12 March	18	3
Letterkenny	<i>TBC</i>			
Fife	NHS Fife	25 March	10	<i>TBC</i>

Engagement format

- On-site participatory workshops with professionals and service users
- Two professional workshops of 1-1.5 hrs each and one service user workshop of approx. 1 hr. Service users did a more “light touch”, condensed version of the professional workshops.
- Professionals and service users take part separately, but service users are told about any ideas generated by the professionals. Both groups are shown examples of digital product types to stimulate discussion, without referencing any real products.
- Workshops were kept informal. We invited service users to discuss any topics they felt were of importance, as long as it remained within the remit of the SUMIT project.

Materials from pre-bid engagement

The pre-bid engagement work was used to create service user personas and digital product cards which were used in the workshops to stimulate discussion. Examples of the cards are shown below.

PERSONA

Ryan, 21 years old



Ryan lives with his **mum and 2 younger brothers**, although he is regularly kicked out when they aren't getting along. When he was younger he got involved with a local **gang** and most days he uses cocaine, alcohol, cannabis, or benzos. His **drug debt** has now resulted in the gang intimidating his family and putting them at risk of losing their home.

Goals

- Break free from debt and develop financial security
- Get away from gang involvement
- Find a stable living situation
- Ensure his younger brothers are not taken into care



This is reflective of our service population

DIGITAL PRODUCT

Wellbeing and personal growth



Specialised tools for reducing substance use (recovery) and improving one's mental health and wellbeing. Can either be personalised (requiring a login) or generic.

Possible features and benefits could be:

- Anytime, anywhere support for reducing substance use
- Quick activities for improving personal wellbeing
- Being able to set personal goals and track one's progress over time
- Doesn't require in-person attendance or for someone to discuss their problems with a group
- Professionals can track and observe usage trends online for reporting purposes, or providing support




This would be useful for us

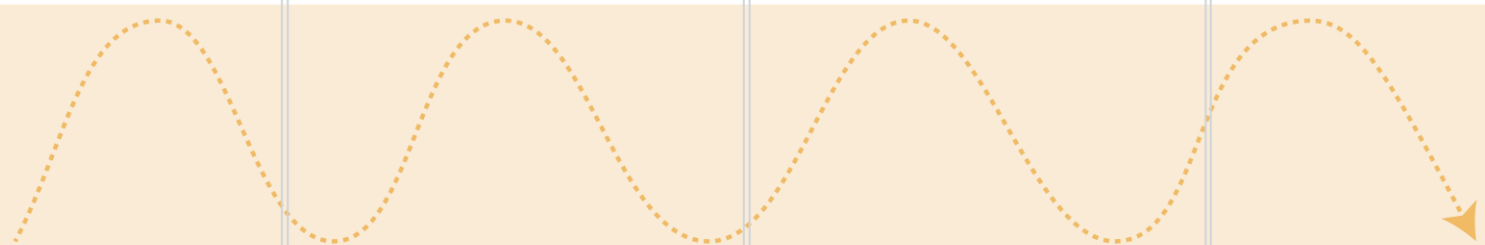
Service mapping

Professionals were asked to give a high-level description of their service journey, highlighting points where decisions were being made and/or information was being exchanged. This gave us a good idea of where digital could potentially be applied. We then asked them to highlight the biggest problem areas and opportunities on this journey.

Outcome: a basic understanding of their service offerings and journey, highlighting the areas which they feel are most and least effective

 **Service Journey Map**

Service name(s): _____ Participants: _____


	Context for entering the service <i>How do they find out about the service? Are they in the system already? Are they referred to or walk off the street? What are their goals?</i>	Initial assessment <i>How does the service assess their needs? What information is recorded about the person? Where is it stored? What actions are taken at this point? What emotional barriers or other obstacles might get in the way?</i>	Ongoing support & referral <i>What does ongoing support look like? Is this provided within your service or are they referred onwards? Are further assessments done? How might the relationship with the service user develop over time (if it does)?</i>	Exiting the service <i>Is there a formal process for exiting your service? Do people exit at all or is support continuous?</i>
Individual <i>What are they doing, thinking, feeling...?</i>				
Information & data <i>What is recorded or known? How is it shared? Where is it stored?</i>				
Professionals <i>What are they doing, thinking, feeling...?</i>				
Emergency / high risk <i>Does a high risk service journey look different for you?</i>				

Future state

In the second workshop, professionals focused on the problems and opportunities they had identified.

We worked through a series of questions to help them think about how a digital product could be embedded in their service to affect these areas.

Outcome: selection of 1-2 digital products and an understanding of how these will work within their service and what the product will need to achieve (user requirements).



Future State

Service name(s): _____ Service name(s): _____

<p>1 Opportunity or challenge <i>Briefly describe the service opportunity or challenge which you plan to address</i></p>	<p>3 How we will use it <i>Describe how the digital product will address this opportunity or challenge - at least one element must be used by service users</i></p> <p>Staff will...</p> <p>Service users will...</p> <p>The benefit for service users will be...</p>	<p>4 Who will use it <i>Using the persona cards (and adding any of your own), describe who will use this product and what their digital requirements are</i></p> <p>This will be used by (types of people/roles)...</p> <p>Their level of digital skill/access is...</p> <p>The way they will use the product is...</p>	<p>5 Obstacles <i>Describe any obstacles that you anticipate which may stop the product or service delivery from being successful</i></p> <p>Obstacles for staff might be...</p> <p>Obstacles for service users might be...</p> <p>Wider concerns might be...</p>	<p>6 Route to success <i>Describe how you might address the obstacles you identified and how this could be achieved</i></p> <p>We can address these obstacles by...</p> <p>Staff will...</p> <p>Service users will...</p>
<p>2 Type of digital product <i>Using the digital product cards (or describing your own idea) write the type of digital product which you will use</i></p>				
<p>7 What this will look like <i>Map out how future service delivery will look using the digital product that you've identified, reflecting on needs and obstacles</i></p>				
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Product: resource libraries

- Online resources (videos/ podcasts/ signposting) could be made available alongside service support which would be accessed on a self-service basis.
- This could be done anonymously (no personalised logins), giving a low barrier to entry, or could be linked to the client database for more personalised support. Participants also suggested the idea of personas (“someone like you”) to make results semi-personalised.
- Suggested content: managing anxiety, mindfulness, support for early recovery, and local information such as drug risks or events/activities.
- Professionals would like to see anonymous, high-level reporting on how the resources are being accessed.
- Ideally could also be used on kiosks, e.g. for prison services (full screen, can’t access backend).

Product: personalised journeys

- Both service users and professionals wanted personalised support, especially for out of hours when people might be feeling lonely and a bit low.
- Being able to track and see information about one's personal journey, so that people could look back and remember achievements.
- Service users and professionals also wanted support for their future journeys. For example, they might want to set goals and then see how to achieve them, such as working towards becoming a volunteer. This could also be supported through stories of recovery ("someone like me") that they could follow to get recommendations for future goals.
- Service users might also want to find out about local activities or opportunities which could help them meet their goals
- Service users would like to record trusted contacts that could be used for a "mental health rescue plan" for when they are feeling very low.

Product: client-facing database UI

- Professionals wanted features to extend or support their use of their client databases, for example by sharing information with clients.
- Service users could view their care plans and goals, and note down points that they are interested in discussing with professionals. Professionals saw this as a good way to remind them what they are aiming for.
- Professionals also wanted service users to be able to engage with their records more, for example by recording personal achievements.
- Service users could view their own personal data and take a copy of it for their own use (e.g. with another service).

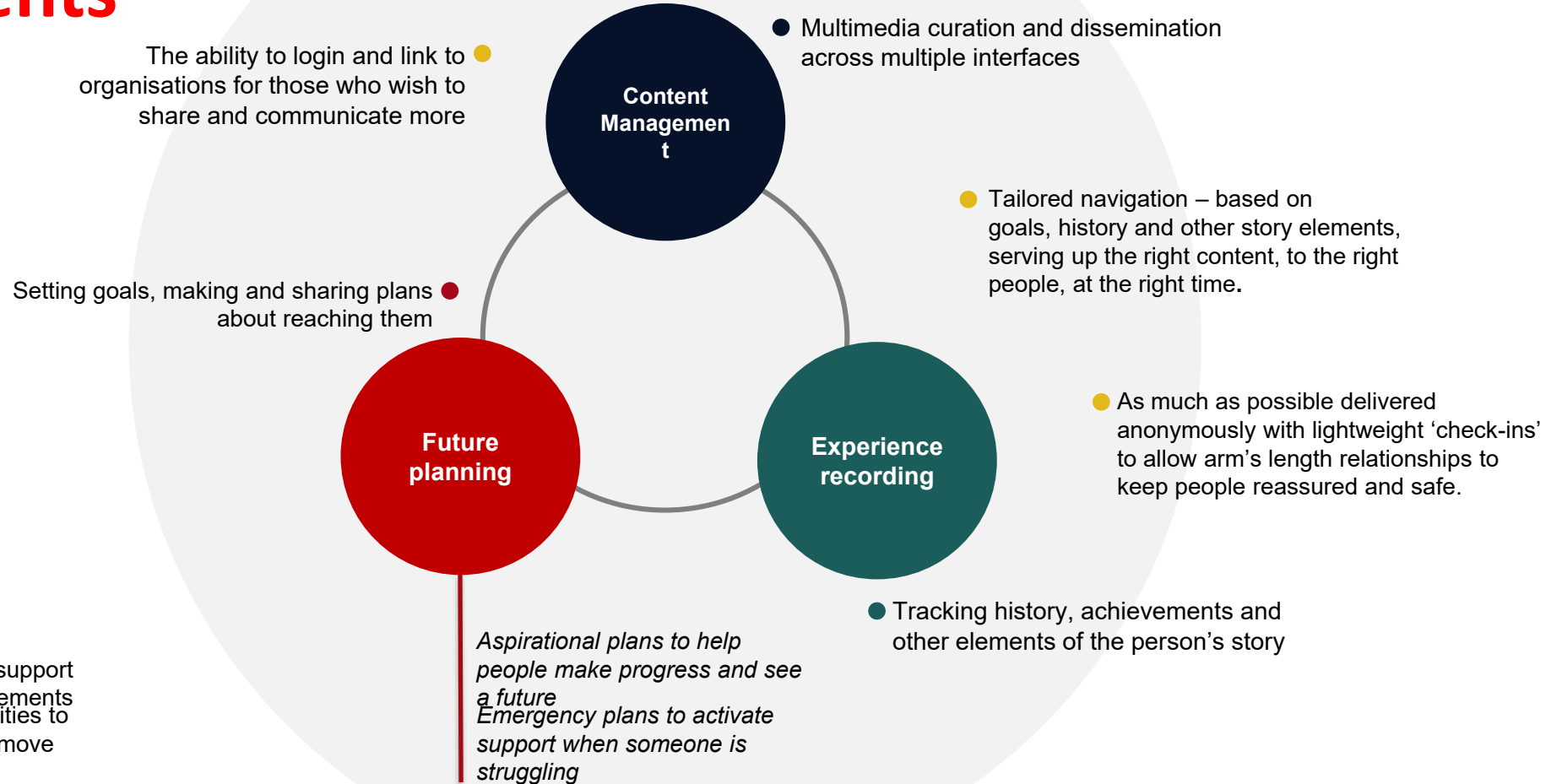
Product: recovery communities

- Service users talked about how lonely recovery can be, and how important it is to connect with peers and professionals.
- Specialised tools for use in recovery communities which could support people to speak to each other – e.g shared chat, photo album, forum or more sophisticated means to share personal stories and get help.
- Ability to check in with close circle of peers through simple communication such as ‘virtual hug’ (i.e. preset interaction options, reactions, etc.)
- Volunteers to chat to if feeling low.
- Accessibility options to use predictive text/ audio recordings.

Additional ideas

- Professionals thought AI could be used to help support service users out of hours, for example by signposting or giving positive support.
- Service users would like more digital resources that would encourage people who are hesitant to engage with services to come in for the first time. This could be a digital tour, introductions to the staff, and showcasing what the service can offer.
- Service users who had kids talked about how there was a need to support parents who were in recovery through holistic family support tools. Where children had been taken into care, there was often a disconnect which required them to rebuild the relationship after they had been reunited. They were also keen to stop the cycle of trauma for the future.

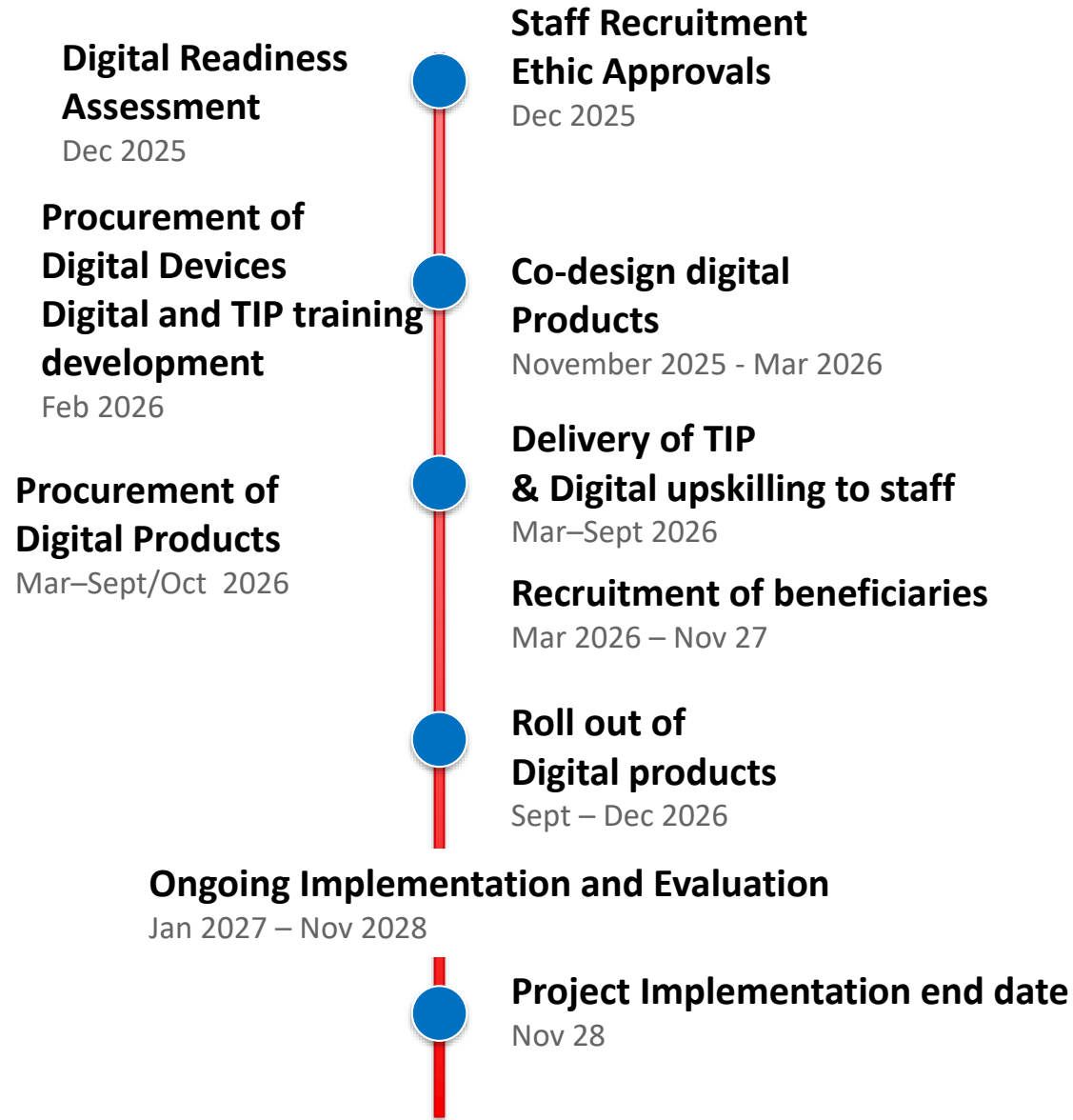
High Level Product Requirements



'Nice to have'

Peer to peer and family support elements
Lightweight 'person held' capabilities to bring your story with you as you move between services

Estimated Timeline Reminder – key activities



SUMIT Digital Products Procurement

- Route to Market has not been decided
- A Prior Information Notice (PIN) has been published on Public Contract Scotland (PCS) and the Official Journal of the European Union (links to the PINs will be provided)
- A request for Information (RFI) will be published and uploaded against the PIN on PCS
 - Seek suppliers' views and interest in the requirement
 - Encourage early questions, dialogue and clarification before tender publication
 - Foster an environment that promotes collaboration and innovation
 - Establish indicative pricing
 - Establish suppliers' experience, innovations, capacity and capability to undertake the work
- RFI feedback received will be used to tailor the specification and other aspects of the tender