

Life After Migration: From Digital Transition to Digital Transformation

Three months to go until the January 2027 switchover

For much of the past few years, the focus across Scotland has understandably been on migration: replacing analogue equipment, moving services onto digital platforms and ensuring people continue to receive safe and reliable telecare. But completing the migration is not the end of the journey.

For services that have already made the transition, attention can now turn from getting digital to making the most of digital. Digital telecare creates opportunities to rethink how services are managed, monitored and improved. The challenge now is to make sure the move to digital delivers more than a technology replacement.

Moving from migration to optimisation

During migration, much of the focus is necessarily operational. Services need to understand their existing estate, identify equipment that needs to be replaced or upgraded, work with suppliers and connectivity providers, test new arrangements and manage the transition safely. Once that work is complete, a different question emerges:

How can we make the most of our new digital capabilities?

This is where the next phase of the digital telecare journey begins.

Rather than simply recreating an analogue service using digital technology, services have an opportunity to review how they operate and identify where digital capabilities could make processes more efficient, improve visibility and support better outcomes.

Better visibility of the technology estate

One of the important opportunities presented by digital telecare is improved visibility of devices and their status. Where systems and equipment provide remote monitoring and device management capabilities, services can potentially identify issues earlier and gain a clearer picture of the health of their technology estate. That information can support a more proactive approach to service management.

Smarter device management

Managing thousands of devices across a geographically dispersed service can be challenging. Digital technology can provide opportunities to manage aspects of that estate remotely, depending on the equipment and platforms being used. Remote diagnostics, configuration and monitoring can potentially reduce the need for some routine visits, while helping teams understand which devices genuinely require attention. For services covering large rural or island areas in particular, avoiding unnecessary journeys can have practical benefits for both staff time and service delivery.

Importantly, digital capability does not remove the need for people. Instead, it can help services target valuable staff time where it is most needed.

Turning data into insight

Digital telecare also creates the potential for services to have access to richer and more timely information about how services and equipment are operating. The value, however, comes not simply from collecting more data but from using it effectively. Operational data can help services explore questions such as:

- Are particular types of equipment generating recurring faults?
- Are there patterns in technical alerts or failures?
- Which devices may require preventative maintenance or replacement?
- Where are operational teams spending the most time?
- Could service processes be redesigned based on what the data is telling us?

Over time, this can help organisations move towards more evidence-led decision-making and continuous improvement.

Creating capacity for improvement

Efficiency is not simply about reducing costs. If digital capabilities reduce avoidable site visits, simplify device management or allow faults to be identified sooner, they can create capacity within services.

That capacity can be redirected towards activities that add value, including preventative work, supporting people with more complex needs, workforce development and improving the overall service experience. This is where the benefits of migration can begin to reach beyond the technology itself.

Digital is a starting point, not the destination

There is unlikely to be a single model for life after migration. Every telecare service has a different operating environment, technology estate, geography and set of local priorities. The capabilities available will also depend on the solutions and suppliers being used, but the principle remains the same.

Migration creates the foundation. Transformation comes from how that foundation is used.

As Scotland approaches the final stage of the analogue to digital transition, services that have completed migration have an opportunity to pause, reflect and ask what comes next.

That might mean improving monitoring. It might mean making greater use of data. It could involve reviewing maintenance models, developing new skills within teams or redesigning established processes. The important thing is not to stop at migration.

The move to digital gives Scotland's telecare services an opportunity to continue learning, improving and developing services that are resilient, efficient and ready for the future.

Questions for services

If your migration is complete, now could be a good time to ask:

1. Are we using all the capabilities available through our digital systems?
2. What operational data do we now have that we did not have before?
3. Can we identify technical issues earlier?
4. Could remote monitoring or management reduce unnecessary visits?
5. What have we learned since going digital?
6. Where should we focus our next phase of service improvement?

Migration may have been the destination for the analogue-to-digital programme, but for Scotland's telecare services, it can also be the beginning of what comes next.