Our **one digital** strategy

2025 – 2028

v1.2 March 2025

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
University Hospitals of Northamptonshire NHS Group

Introduction

In October 2023, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL) and the University Hospitals of Northamptonshire NHS Group (UHN) - comprising Kettering General Hospital and Northampton General Hospital - formalised their collaboration by forming the UHL and UHN Group.

The strategic goals of this collaboration include:

- **High-quality care for all** - ensuring consistent, excellent care across all facilities.
- **Being a great place to work** - fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for colleagues.
- **Partnerships for impact** - collaborating with various stakeholders to maximise healthcare outcomes.
- **Research and education excellence** - promoting innovation and learning to advance medical practices.

By working together under unified Group leadership, the Trusts aim to address challenges such as increased demand for services, financial pressures, and workforce recruitment and retention. This integrated approach is designed to deliver sustainable, high-quality healthcare and improve the overall experience for both patients and staff.

Each Trust within the group has a well-established strategic direction, including digital, with strong foundations in digital delivery. This level of digital maturity allows them to effectively support group-level objectives while leveraging their individual strengths in service provision and innovation. However, rather than pursuing separate digital strategies for each Trust, we are now focused on delivering a joint group digital and data strategy – **one digital**.

Our **one digital** strategy acts as a framework for our collaborative work across both UHL and UHN. By working together across UHL and UHN we will leverage increased scale, provide a consistent platform to transform care, allowing us to scale innovation faster, support larger and more ambitious research and harness the unique capabilities from each Trust to deliver better outcomes for patients and an improved experience for our staff.

Foreword

The future of sustainable healthcare is digital and data driven. Getting it right will mean better care and outcomes for patients, and an improved experience for colleagues. The scale of what we can achieve together is genuinely exciting. We serve almost two million people across our Trusts, with a 30,000 strong workforce and a combined turnover of £2.4 billion.

Our scale as a Group brings real opportunity - whether that is attracting commercial partners, negotiating better contracts, or creating centres of excellence for our health system. By bringing our programmes together underpinned by our **one digital** approach, we will make a bigger impact for patients, communities, and colleagues, faster.

There are seven ways we will do this, which are expanded further through this strategy:

1. **Getting the basics right** - creating reliable, modern digital foundations that support daily operations.
2. **Putting users' needs first** - implementing systems that work for our people, reducing complexity, and making delivering and receiving care easier.
3. **Using digital as a tool for transformation** - solving bigger challenges and adopting innovations faster by working together across UHL and UHN.
4. **Embracing emerging technology** - taking bold steps with innovative solutions, from artificial intelligence to process mining, placing these at the core of care delivery.
5. **Bringing our data together** - transforming care through unified data, making insights accessible to everyone to empower staff and enhance research.
6. **Harnessing strategic partnerships** - increasing our impact through collaboration with NHS organisations, academic institutions, and private sector partners.
7. **Creating and embedding one digital** - delivering a unified approach to digital and data transformation across our organisations.

IM&T at UHL has become the Digital and Data team, while at UHN, we have expanded our remit from Digital to Digital and Data. **One digital** has replaced UHL's eHospital and UHN's dedicated to digital excellence programmes, providing a single banner for how we describe and organise our work. This isn't just a name change - it's a commitment to transforming care together.

We are bringing our digital and data governance together through shared decision-making forums to align our strategies, share learning, and make the most of our combined resources. It's about making sure we can move quickly and effectively when opportunities arise to work together.

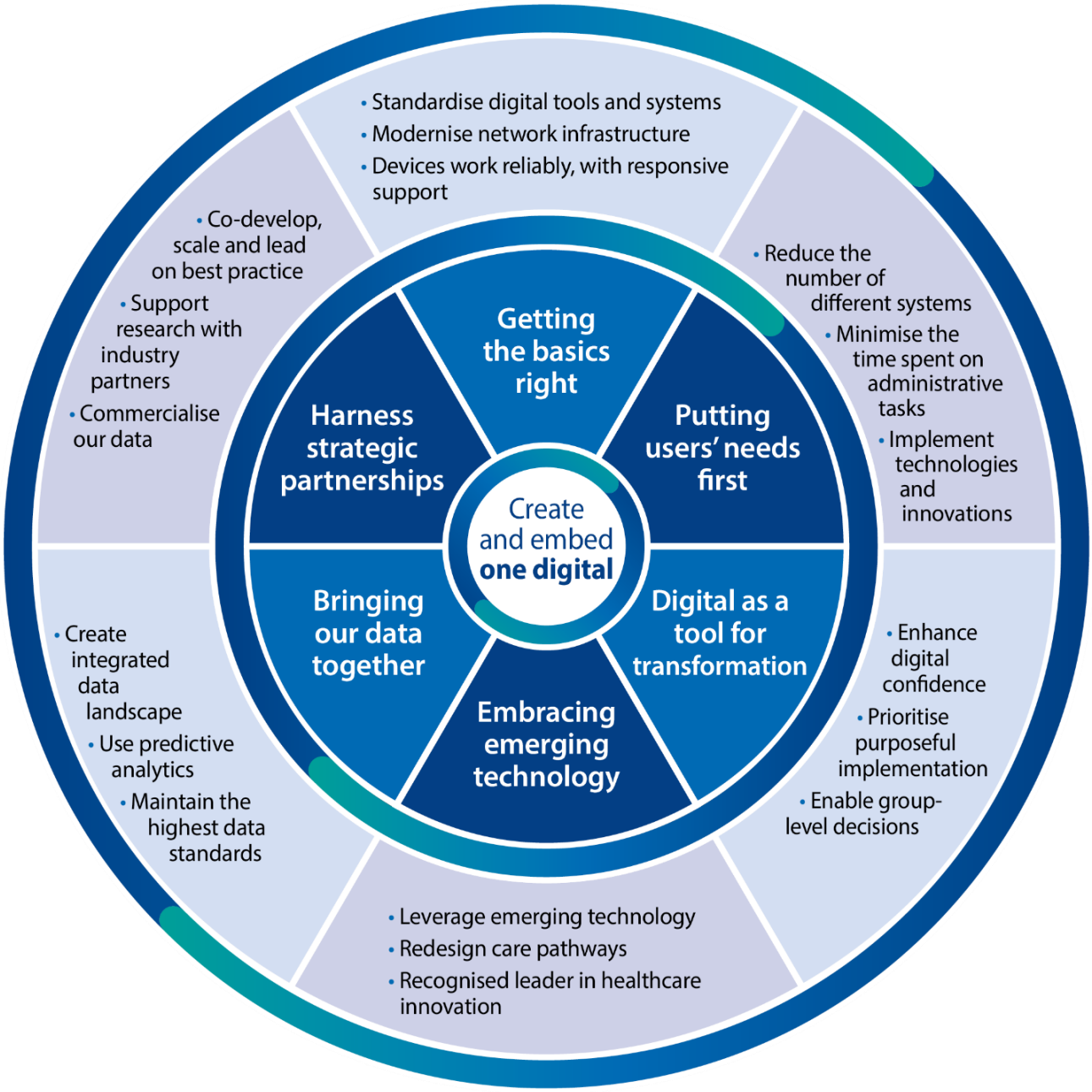
This strategy sets out our high-level ambition for 2025-2028, supported by detailed delivery roadmaps and clear measures of success. Delivering a unified strategy isn't about losing what makes each Trust special. It's about amplifying our impact and creating new opportunities. Whether based in UHL or UHN, we have a chance to build something great together. Every improvement we make, every innovation we deliver, and every minute of time we save for our teams - it all adds up to better care for our patients.

Will Monaghan
Group Chief Digital Information Officer

Strategy on a page

Our mission:

Make it easier and safer to deliver and receive care



Getting the basics right

A relentless focus on the basics is the foundation for everything we want to achieve.

We will make systems simpler and more reliable, so they don't get in the way.

Where we are now

Our foundational digital systems are not consistent or robust enough. This is worsened by systems that make people's jobs harder to do. Fragmented technology and inconsistent training mean colleagues often lack confidence in the tools they need. These challenges have led to frustration and hindered progress. To move forward, we must focus on making it easier and safer to deliver and receive care, ensuring a dependable digital foundation that supports colleagues and gives confidence in our ability to deliver.

What we aim to achieve

- Network uptime above 99.9% outside of planned downtime throughout 2025.
- Reduced time from device request to delivery from 6 weeks to 1 week
- Standardise digital tools and systems to create an intuitive, seamless experience for all staff.
- Modernised network infrastructure to enhance connectivity, reliability, and performance.
- Ensure a digital experience where devices work reliably, with responsive support resolving urgent issues within an hour and other matters the same day, so staff can work efficiently with minimal disruption.
- Remove obstacles and friction points by carefully studying how colleagues need to work to perform their roles, and ensure digital solutions are optimised to support these more effectively.

How we will do it

We will deliver a strategic, phased approach to unify and modernise our digital infrastructure:

Consolidate and simplify systems

- Reduce complexity by consolidating platforms and enhancing system integration.
- Improve access and collaboration through standardised tools and processes.

Strengthen network, data centre and device infrastructure

- Ensure reliable, high-speed connectivity across sites.
- Provide modern, up-to-date devices with efficient management and timely upgrades.
- Optimise asset availability and performance through enhanced tracking solutions.

Proactive training and support

- Deliver tailored training to meet staff needs.
- Expand peer-to-peer support networks to build confidence and digital capability.
- Engage regularly with staff to promote transparency, gather feedback, and provide reliable support.

Maintain a relentless focus on cybersecurity, clinical safety and data security and protection

- Uphold and ensure compliance with the highest standards of clinical safety and data security and protection.
- Continually enhancing systems and processes to protect against evolving cyber threats.

By focusing on these priorities, we will create a reliable, modern digital foundation that supports daily operations whilst enabling long-term innovation and transformation across our Trusts.

What happens next?

We will set out specific measures by May 2025 which set out how the experience of technology and support will improve.

Putting users' needs first

We are committed to putting people - patients and colleagues - at the heart of digital transformation.

From now on, we will implement systems that work for colleagues, reduce complexity, support our sustainability, and make delivering and receiving care easier.

Where we are now

Our digital systems are fragmented, outdated, and often feel like a barrier instead of a help. Our colleagues juggle too many systems—spending up to half their time navigating screens instead of caring for patients. Administrative teams, critical to smooth operations, have often been excluded from design decisions, leaving them with tools that don't meet their needs.

A recent staff survey showed that the majority of respondents feel digital tools make their work harder. We have heard your frustrations: re-entering data, delays in accessing vital information, and a lack of integration are holding us back. We acknowledge this and are committed to fixing it - focusing on tools that work for you, simplifying your tasks, and helping you deliver the best possible care.

What we aim to achieve

- Reduce the number of different systems colleagues have to use by 50% by April 2027.
- Minimise the time spent on administrative tasks, enabling colleagues to focus more on patient care by reducing processes that take hours to minutes.
- Integrate medical and remote monitoring devices to automate data entry.
- Implement technologies and innovations that directly improve the delivery and experience of care, ensuring solutions are user-focused, intuitive, and fit for purpose.
- Remove paper records wherever possible to remove the risk and challenges of using digital systems alongside paper.

How we will do it

User-led design
We will place users- healthcare professionals and service teams -at the centre of decision-making. Through co-design workshops, feedback sessions, and clinical and operational leadership, we'll ensure the tools we create reflect sustainable, real-world needs. All systems will be built to latest web accessibility standards across our digital estate, incorporating adaptive and assistive technologies, while also aligning with national usability priorities. No system will be implemented without clear evidence that users have shaped and approved it.

Streamlined decision-making and continuous improvement
A single prioritisation process led by clinical and operational staff will ensure we focus on the initiatives that have the greatest impact. By consolidating and simplifying systems, we will reduce the number of tools colleagues rely on and make digital workflows faster and more efficient.

Once solutions are live, we will not stop there. Ensuring digital and data solutions remain relevant and highly usable is dependent on ongoing engagement from colleagues. We will establish dedicated teams to make prioritisation decisions and run continuous improvement and optimisation of our systems.

Focusing on results
Everything we do is aimed at making it easier to deliver and receive care. We will measure success by how much time and effort we save for staff, how intuitive our systems are, and how well they support excellent patient care.

What happens next?

We will set out the technology roadmap in June 2025 which clarifies what systems we will use for what and which systems we will turn off.

Digital as a tool for transformation

Digital is our biggest opportunity to transform care and services by rethinking them entirely. Working together we can solve bigger challenges, adopt innovations faster, and create meaningful improvements.

By getting this right, we can make things easier and safer for staff, improve outcomes for patients, and run services more efficiently. This is not just about adding technology – it is about fundamentally improving how we work. Digital needs to be part of every conversation about our future, not an afterthought.

Where we are now

We are not making the most of working as a Group. In implementation at its worst, we see either the digital team works in isolation or with a particular service, or teams come to us with a solution they've already picked and just want us to install it. Neither approach works well. We end up with systems that do not talk to each other, features we do not fully use, and different tools doing the same job that cannot be supported and optimised effectively. We need to work differently.

What we aim to achieve

- Ensure every technological investment has a clear pathway to meaningful adoption, prioritising purposeful implementation that drives genuine, practical usage.
- Enable Group-level decisions to align priorities and strategies, such as the Electronic Patient Record direction.

How we will do it

Provide a route for teams to get input upfront
We will make it easy for teams to come to Digital and Data with a problem that needs solving and get help identify the right solution. We will prevent people buying or using services. (including free solutions) that do not follow this process.

Make critical design decisions
We want to get better at using digital to improve care - and help others to do the same. By choosing the right tools, like our Electronic Patient Records, and making sure they work well for colleagues, we can make a real difference to care. When we find something that works, we will share what we have learned with other NHS organisations.

Reduce health inequalities
Our population is diverse in culture, language, age, and digital literacy. By embedding equity in digital transformation, we will ensure our solutions benefit everyone, for example through improved access to medical records and correspondence via patient portals. Working with communities, colleagues, and partners, we will create sustainable digital solutions that enhance equitable, sustainable healthcare delivery, and reduce our environmental impact.

Recognising digital poverty as a barrier to accessing healthcare we will work with local partners and communities to provide targeted support, resources, and alternative access routes that ensure digital healthcare services are accessible to all, regardless of their digital capabilities or circumstances.

Join up transformation
We will join up digital transformation with other teams leading change to embed digital as the primary means of transformation. Every significant transformation across UHL and UHN will consider digital and all digital initiatives will be evaluated for their transformational potential. We will use the same Electronic Patient Record across UHL and UHN.

Embracing emerging technology

We are ready to take bold steps with emerging technology, placing innovative solutions at the core of care delivery. As one of England's largest healthcare providers, our Group's scale allows us to attract world-class partners and lead digital transformation.

Technology must enable care, not hinder it. From Artificial Intelligence (AI) supporting patient care to process mining redesigning pathways, we will adopt, test, and scale tools that deliver maximum value. Smarter systems will eliminate repetitive tasks, streamline workflows, and let all our colleagues focus on delivering.

Where we are now

While we currently use some emerging technologies, we can do more to fully leverage their capabilities across the Group to drive innovation, improve efficiency, and enhance patient care outcomes.

What we aim to achieve

- Leverage emerging technology to improve clinical outcomes and operational efficiency.
- Take bold steps to redesign care pathways using cutting-edge technologies, transforming how care is delivered across all sites.
- Establish UHL/UHN as a recognised leader in healthcare innovation, driving the adoption of emerging technologies at scale.

How we will do it

Leverage emerging technologies
Real-time analytics, automation, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will reduce administrative burdens, enhance workflows, and provide our colleagues with actionable insights to make informed decisions faster. These advancements will allow our colleagues to spend more time with patients, improving care quality and staff satisfaction.

Invest for innovation
We will take calculated risks on digital tools. This means balancing investment in proven systems with emerging technologies. By allocating resources to learn fast on promising innovations we can accelerate unlocking efficiency gains, and quickly explore new care delivery ideas to transform services for our patients and staff.

Partnerships for impact
We will identify and work with the best partners to deliver inward investment and become a proving ground for emerging technology. We will do this alongside fostering a reputation for a safe and responsible implementation.

Deliver ambitious initiatives
We will integrate emerging technologies such as AI, mobile solutions, voice recognition, smart buildings, robotic process automation, and genetic testing to streamline workflows, improve communication, enhance administrative efficiency, and advance personalised medicine.

Build the UHL/UHN AI Academy
We will create an AI Academy to train staff, ensure safe and effective adoption of technology, and foster innovation. This will empower staff to explore new ways of delivering care and create a Group-wide centre of excellence for digital transformation.

What happens next?

We will set out specific strategy and resourcing plan for emerging technology by June 2025.

Bringing our data together

Transforming care through unified data.

Data can transform care, drive innovation, and improve outcomes. By making data and insights accessible to everyone we will empower our colleagues, enhance research, and enable better decisions for patients and the population we serve.

Where we are now

Our data systems are fragmented and siloed, making it difficult to gain a complete view of patient care or population health. While pockets of research and operational data exist, their impact is limited by a lack of integration and accessibility. We recognise the transformative potential of data and are committed to addressing these challenges with urgency, creating a foundation for smarter, faster, and safer healthcare decisions.

What we aim to achieve

- Create an integrated data landscape that ensures seamless access to actionable insights.
- Use predictive analytics to improve patient outcomes and address health inequalities.
- Maintain the highest standards of data governance to build trust and ensure ethical use.

How we will do it

Improving access to data
We will ensure data is accessible to everyone who needs it, in formats that are clear, actionable, and easy to use. Staff will have the insights they need to make informed decisions, whether in patient care, operations, or research.

Building the foundation with FDP
The NHS Federated Data Platform (FDP) is the cornerstone of our vision for transforming care, unifying data across systems to empower clinicians, drive ground-breaking research, and enable smarter, faster decisions that will improve outcomes for patients and the populations we serve.

Business intelligence
Our business intelligence team will work closely with our clinical and operational teams, providing proactive insights and predictive modelling. We'll extend our focus beyond traditional operational metrics to deliver deeper clinical insights, strengthen clinical governance, and support research initiatives.

Advancing population health and predictive analytics
Data will drive tools that help predict illness, address health inequalities, and enable people to live longer, healthier lives. By integrating research findings and operational data, we will develop solutions that directly improve patient outcomes and healthcare delivery.

Enhanced clinical coding
We will enhance clinical coding accuracy, supported by our integrated digital systems to improve quality and streamline clinical workflows. We will consolidate clinical documentation and implement coding automation to enhance coding accuracy and efficiency. We will continue to improve our in-house coding accuracy, building internal expertise to ensure accurate activity-based revenue, rich clinical data, and robust planning.

Commercialising data ethically
We will explore opportunities to commercialise synthetic data, working with external partners. These efforts will adhere to the highest ethical standards, ensuring transparency and trust.

Embedding trust and governance
Protecting and managing sensitive data is central to our operations. Through rigorous standards, ongoing oversight, and clear

accountability measures we will ensure all data is accurate, secure, and ethically managed. By embedding this into every process, we will maintain trust in how we use data to benefit patients, staff, and the organisation.

Building a data confident workforce
Establishing a Data Academy will upskill staff across the Group and build a data confident workforce. This will empower teams to fully leverage the benefits of integrated data, improving clinical, operational, and strategic decision-making.

What happens next?

We will set out a specific data strategy including a plan for liberating our data for research and commercial opportunities by April 2025.

Harness strategic partnerships

We recognise the power of collaboration to amplify impact and drive innovation strategy.

By forging strategic partnerships with NHS organisations, academic institutions, private sector partners, and community organisations, we aim to enhance healthcare delivery, accelerate digital transformation, and explore commercial opportunities that benefit our Group and the broader health ecosystem.

Where we are now

UHL and UHN have actively pursued partnerships with various NHS and non-NHS organisations to enhance patient care, education, and research both regionally and nationally and are already achieving success from our partnerships. We have delivered significant elements of our Electronic Patient Record (EPR) system leading within the East Midlands Acute Provider Digital Design Collaborative (EMAP DDC) on the region wide deployment of Nervecentre.

We have achieved a first-of-type milestone, at UHL pioneering the use of Palantir technology for advanced data warehousing through the Federated Data Platform (FDP), and UHN serves as an FDP Accelerator Site, collaborating with the national team to develop innovative new use cases.

We have focused on using these partnerships to deliver transformation at lower cost across UHL and UHN. The next phase will be to develop these partnerships into routes to generate revenue for UHL and UHN.

What we aim to achieve

- Partner with other NHS Trusts, technology providers, research institutions and collaborative initiatives to co-develop and scale innovative solutions and lead on best practice.
- Commercialise our data by leveraging data and insights to support research, innovation, and collaboration with industry partners ensuring compliance with ethical and legal standards while generating revenue to reinvest in patient care and service improvement.
- Market anonymised, aggregated data to researchers, pharmaceutical companies, or health-tech startups for research and development purposes.
- Remain one of the top five NHS trusts for development and implementation of the FDP.

How we will do it

- Engage with NHS England, the FDP, and other national bodies to align with strategic goals.
- Develop strong foundational capabilities in EPR and data warehousing.
- Pioneer first-of-type technology, be an accelerator site for digital projects, pilot new technologies and workflows, iterating and improving as we test and learn, scaling what works best.
- Pursue and secure funding streams through collaboration with partner Trusts and national healthcare bodies.
- Data as a Service - market anonymised, aggregated data to researchers, pharmaceutical companies, or health-tech startups for research and development purposes.
- Partner with universities, pharmaceutical companies, and research institutions to use anonymised data for clinical trials, drug development, and health research.
- Use the Trusts' data to create customisable dashboards and reporting tools that can be sold or licensed to other Trusts or healthcare providers.

Create and embed **one digital**

One digital represents a unified approach to how digital works across UHL and UHN, in essence how we deliver everything described in our strategy.

Our mission is to form a cohesive Digital and Data team dedicated to supporting staff. By encouraging colleagues to draw on our expertise, we aim to solve problems together and deliver meaningful, joined-up solutions that meet the needs of the entire organisation.

Where we are now

Working at Group level to deliver **one digital** priorities across UHN/UHL is in its infancy and needs time to mature. A clear governance structure and delivery framework are not fully established, making it harder to align priorities, ensure accountability, and deliver digital initiatives effectively. While collaboration across the Group is starting to develop, it remains limited.

What we aim to achieve

- Foster a Group-wide culture of collaboration and shared responsibility for digital transformation.
- Design and implement a comprehensive delivery framework to drive alignment and accountability across UHL and UHN.
- Establish a clear and robust governance structure to streamline decision-making and ensure effective prioritisation.

How we will do it

Fostering a unified culture and workforce enablement
To support digital transformation, we will help colleagues deliver their critical work more effectively. Our digital and data teams are here to support and collaborate with colleagues, making daily tasks easier and more efficient. We will encourage colleagues to share challenges with digital and data teams so we can solve them together, rather than in isolation. By breaking down silos and empowering teams, we will promote collaboration and ensure our digital initiatives meet the needs of the whole organisation.

Enhancing responsiveness and continuous improvement
Digital and data teams will focus on solving problems quickly and delivering real, practical results. By working together, we will address challenges directly, improve workflows, and adjust processes as needed. This step-by-step approach will reduce inefficiencies, speed up delivery, and ensure consistent value. By learning from each challenge, we will be better prepared for the next.

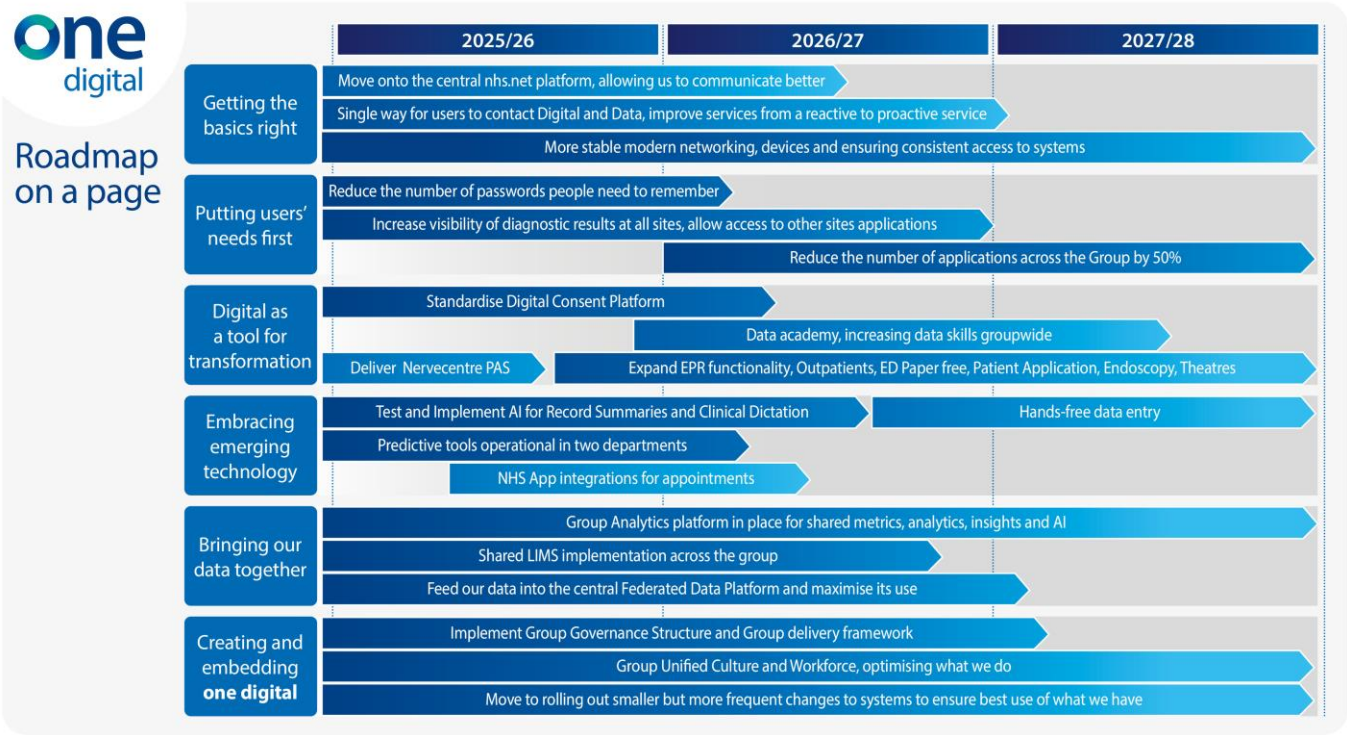
Establishing a Group PMO structure, streamlining governance and processes
We will create a unified **one digital** Portfolio Management Office (PMO) to ensure clear decision-making and shared priorities across UHL/UHN. This approach will improve predictability, transparency, and delivery speed by focusing on fewer, high-impact initiatives. Data-driven decisions will guide resource use, ensuring that all systems are safe and consistently effective.

By standardising processes, we will reduce silos, improve procurement, and align transformation efforts. Streamlined workflows will make collaboration easier, increase efficiency, and ensure all digital and data projects deliver safer and better service outcomes for the Group.

Capability roadmap 2025 - 2028

Our strategy requires fundamental shifts in how we build, deploy, and maintain **one digital** services across our Trusts. This roadmap outlines how we will move from site-specific solutions to group solutions, and maintain operational effectiveness. By focusing on shared capabilities first, we can rapidly demonstrate value while building the foundations for more complex integrations.

The roadmap balances releasing immediate benefits against strategic initiatives that will transform how we deliver digital services across the group



How we will monitor progress

This strategy will be underpinned by a roadmap detailing a broad range of programmes, initiatives and enablers associated with each goal and objective. Delivery progress and performance will be overseen by our **one digital** Portfolio Management Office (PMO), reporting to Digital Hospital Board.

All initiatives will be financed through a combination of funding sources, including the allocated 2025/26 digital budget, match-funding programs such as Microsoft 365, strategic partnerships with third-party vendors, and central NHSE funding streams, such as the Digital AI Programme and Digital Productivity Funds which saw NGH become an NHS Centre of Excellence due to its Accelerator programme in automation. To effectively measure our digital transformation journey, we will track progress through established industry frameworks and key performance indicators. This includes monitoring our digital maturity scores using recognised standards, alongside measuring patient and staff satisfaction and digital confidence through regular surveys. We will particularly focus on system usability metrics for core platforms like our Electronic Patient Record (EPR), aiming to demonstrate measurable improvements in both technical capabilities and user experience over the strategy period. These quantitative and qualitative measures will provide objective evidence of our progress and help identify areas requiring additional focus or support