

# FINNISH NURSES ASSOCIATION'S DIGITAL SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES STRATEGY

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# Foreword

The aim of the Finnish Nurses Association (FNA) is to support good quality and client-oriented care through digital health services and multi-channel service models. Nurses are developing the information society and the FNA is updating its eHealth Strategy, published in 2015. Its aim is to increase the national debate on the role of nurses in developing and running digital services and strengthening public participation.

For almost 30 years, Finland has been systematically developing digital services in the social and health sector. Nurses work with information systems and digital applications. The role of the public has become more active in the health and social services sector. They have access to the Omakanta service, among others, which is also an excellent tool for cooperation between nurse and client. The EU and national strategies have highlighted the need to ensure that staff have adequate digital skills. The FNA supports this work.

Nurses are the largest professional group in healthcare and we want to be actively involved in the development of digitalisation together with other professional groups and the public. The FNA will boost its communications efforts to provide nurses with the best possible information to promote the use and development of digital services.

The 2020-2021 period of the coronavirus pandemic has shown that there is a great need for digital services in the social sector and for strengthening the public's information literacy. Nurses play a key role in engaging the public in health communications. Increasingly older people are using digital services and are actively involved in their own care. Strengthening public participation in the use and development of health and social services is therefore a common thread in the strategy. The strategy supports the strengthening of nurses' skills as providers, users and developers of digital services.

Nina Hahtela



The working group of the Finnish Nurses Association's Digital Social and Health Services Strategy:  
Outi Ahonen, Pirkko Kouri, Sanna Salanterä, Pia Liljamo, Ulla-Mari Kinnunen, Kaija Saranto, Jari Numminen, Annika Aho-Konttinen, Anna Herukka and Camilla Zewi-Kallioma.

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# INTRODUCTION

The updated version of the e-Health Strategy of the Finnish Nurses Association is called the Digital Social and Health Services Strategy, the aim of which is to describe the changing nature of nursing and the changing work environment of nurses from different perspectives. The strategy is addressed to nurses, nurse entrepreneurs, organisations and their partners in the social and health care sector, as well as to the FNA's partner organisations. The strategy is part of a national and international digitalisation and technological development, which includes both external and internal changes in working methods and the digitalisation of services to make them user-oriented. The updated strategy aims to strengthen the role of nurses in developing and running digital services as part of nursing care and in strengthening citizen participation in self-care and self-care management. The health information required for peoples' mobility and freedom of choice require cross-border information exchange and closer European cooperation on digital information management. This necessitates a smooth, secure and customer-informed exchange of information and multidisciplinary cooperation between different actors.

To achieve these objectives, it is essential to use social and health data to anticipate and prepare for the future. The strategy uses the Finnish concept of digital health services to refer to eHealth. Technology is understood as one of the tools for delivering digital health services. Data management means the use of technology and information systems to collect, process, store and share timely information. Nurses need data management and online literacy skills to provide safe care and services to clients and to manage services and resources. Robotics is also increasingly becoming part of the nurse's work environment. For the purpose of this strategy, the term 'client' also refers to the patient. Data management skills are also needed to develop your work and to generate research knowledge and apply it in your work. The increasing use of digital health services also brings challenges in terms of management, the use of ever-increasing digital information and information management.

The FNA strategy for digital health and social services consists of six different areas: 1) Technology to support client involvement, 2) Digital services as part of nurses' work, 3) Safety and ethics in the digital environment, 4) Digital health services and skills, 5) Management of digital health services, 6) Research and development of digitalisation of health services. The strategy also describes the ways it is to be implemented.

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# Digitalisation supports client participation

Digital social and health services support the participation of clients and their role in decision-making that concerns them. Data on client health and well-being will be equally accessible to customers and professionals. The aim is to support joint decision-making between clients and professionals.



## **Goal 1: Clients have access to information provided by nurses**

- Nurses guide the client to use and benefit from digital health services.
- Nurses provide the client with health and well-being information in an understandable and clear format.



## **Goal 2: Clients are an equal provider of data and this is available to the professional in a timely manner**

- Nurses encourage and guide clients to produce data.
- Nurses use the data provided by clients as part of their care.



## **Goal 3: Clients know what digital services are available and can select the right service for their situation**

- Nurses guide clients in selecting the right service.
- Nurses bring their own expertise to assist clients, regardless of the service used.

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# Digital health and social services as part of nurses' work

The range of digital services is expanding, increasing the opportunities to support health and well-being. It is not enough to have the skills to use digital services alone; nurses need to support clients in using these services and use them as part of their care. Targeting timely services to the client requires the active involvement of the nurse in the assessment of activities and the need for change.



## **Goal 1: Nurses make use of digital services at different stages of the client service process**

- Nurses possess the skills to work in a digital environment.
- The nurse can assess the quality and reliability of the health information provided by the client.



## **Goal 2: Nurses promote equitable interaction in digital services**

- Nurses recognise the clients' potential and ability to use services and encourage their use.
- Nurses are able to use evidence-based guidance and interaction methods in services.



## **Goal 3: Nurses bring relevant expertise to the multidisciplinary content of digital services**

- Nurses contribute to the production, use and evaluation of client-oriented service content in a multidisciplinary team.
  - Nurses are committed to the change in practice required to use the services.
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# Security and ethics in the digital environment

Nurses' ethical competence is based on value choices and involves the ability to act ethically, to recognise what is morally correct and good, and to distinguish between wrong and evil. Ethics and safety are essential in the use and development of digital services. Legislation and ethical guidelines for nurses guide their actions in digital health and social services. Nurses ensure and contribute to the provision of health and social services that are in line with the client's capabilities and support human dignity, self-determination, inclusion and well-being.



## **Goal 1: Nurses ensure that digital services are safe for the client and that privacy is respected**

- Nurses regularly strengthen their ethical, data protection and security skills, keep up to date with developments in health technologies, including robotics, and identify the ethical challenges involved.
- Nurses recognise and take into account privacy, data protection and information security and related risks in their activities and working environment.



## **Goal 2: Nurses are able to act in a digital work environment in a morally sustainable way, in agreement with the client, and to value and respect the will and experience of clients**

- Nurses are reflective about their work and take into account the client's culture.
- Nurses recognise ethical issues related to digital services and, where appropriate, include issues such as data security for discussion.



## **Goal 3: Nurses provide digital services equitably and fairly**

- Nurses take into account the opportunities and limitations of the digital environment in relation to the individual resources, life situation and needs of clients.
- Nurses identify the benefits and risks of available services or technologies.

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# Digital health services and skills

Increased digitalisation in the health and social care sector has broadened the job description of nurses and the work requires new skills. Digitalisation in nursing is, among other things, modernising processes and practices in patient care and services. The use of these new services requires adequate IT skills, equipment and network connectivity. It also requires clients to be active and willing to familiarise themselves with new tools and services.

All nurses will study in the core competence area of their nursing education (180 credits) content linked to information technology and digitalisation (Annex 1. SH,180, definition of competences). During training, nurses will develop the competences to enable them to work in multidisciplinary cooperation in the development of digital services. They must be able to use and exploit different applications in a secure way in order to provide the most appropriate overall service to the client at different stages of the care pathway.



## **Goal 1: Nurses can safely use their organisation's information systems, digital services, including databases and reporting tools, as required for their work**

- Nurses are responsible for using the services and regularly assess their competence in the use of these services.
- Nurses participate in training courses on the use of the various services.



## **Goal 2: Nurses are active and motivated users as well as developers of the patient data system, digital health services, databases and reporting tools**

- Nurses regularly update their knowledge of data management.
- Nurses have the resources and desire to use and develop services.



## **Goal 3: Nurses' expertise is valued and utilised in multidisciplinary research and development teams**

- Nurses deepen their knowledge through specialisation studies, university of applied sciences, and university studies. This enables them to work as specialists and/or researchers in clinical work, teaching and research.
  - Nurses can demonstrate their skills by applying for a specific qualification in nursing information management from the FNA.
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# Digital social and health services and management

Nurse managers play a key role in the development of social and health services, both within their organisations and nationally. Nurse managers are also expected to understand how digital services can increase people's involvement in their own care and how services can be accessible to all, regardless of where they live.

The skills of professionals are properly resourced, ensuring that their knowledge, skills or attitudes do not limit the multichannel services available to clients. In management, core competencies include leading with knowledge and producing quality information. The well-being of employees in a digital work environment is key. In addition, the manager actively uses digital information resources to ensure high quality and safe care for the client. Information that reflects nursing outcomes strengthens nurses' commitment and job satisfaction.

## **Goal 1: The nurse managers support and ensure that the organisation's strategy takes into account the provision of digital services to clients**

- Managers are involved in the strategic work of the organisation and ensures the implementation of services as part of the client care process.
- Managers assess the ethical, economic and safety implications of services from the perspectives of client care, staff and operations at all levels of the organisation.

## **Goal 2: Managers ensure that staff skills are utilised in the development of digital services and that services are part of evidence-based, quality and safe care**

- Managers ensure that nurses are able to actively develop services in multi-professional collaborative networks locally, nationally and internationally.
- Managers use evidence-based knowledge and nursing recommendations in developing service content and practice.

## **Goal 3: Information generated by digital services supports informed management and decision-making**

- Managers promote the definition of the data content and structure of services to enable the re-use of information.
  - Managers use service monitoring and reporting systems that support structural, process and performance data.
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# Research and development of digitalisation of health services

Digitalisation is the process of transforming practices, internal processes and services through the use of technology. Research and development is about how digitalisation and technology can be used to develop and change the way care is delivered. Meeting and listening to people is still very much part of a nurse's job description. Work no longer takes place on a purely face-to-face basis. Digital services and technology can facilitate and accelerate encounters in many ways.



## **Goal 1: Nurses provide research and evaluation data and support the development of digital health services**

- Nurses are involved in the planning and coordination of services and lead research and development of social care services based on their training and experience.
- Nurses make use of the information collected in information systems, and analyse and use the data to develop, for example, care processes.



## **Goal 2: Nurses participate as experts in the development, testing and implementation of information systems and in knowledge management in multidisciplinary teams**

- Nurses work in multidisciplinary teams to develop solutions for digital services as part of wider health and social care reform work.
- Nurses provide reliable information for the development of social services and good care and actively use and develop digital solutions for care and service processes.



## **Goal 3: Nurses participate in national and international networks, share research and good practice and use the knowledge generated by others to develop their work**

- Nurses actively participate in international networks promoting the development of digital services in multidisciplinary collaboration efforts.
  - Nurses' participation is supported in international cooperation in Europe and worldwide.
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# Putting the strategy into practice

The FNA has a key role in implementation and realisation of the strategy for digital social and health services. We emphasise the important role of nurses in different networks of cooperation with professional, social, research, educational and digital stakeholders. We will promote a positive attitude towards digital services and support the development of nurses' skills.



**Goal: Curricula at different levels of education to include content on digital health services and information management.**

- We will raise the issues of services and information management as a strategically important area for different stakeholders, including university partnerships.



**Goal: Nurses need sufficient digital skills.**

- We will encourage a positive attitude that supports the promotion of digital services. We will communicate the importance of this to nurses through different communication channels.



**Goal: Nurses play a key role in promoting digital health services.**

- We will support nurses to take up the services through various trainings.
- Our expert members work together nationally and internationally with different actors to promote digital services, for example in the form of joint projects or strategy-based campaigns.

If you wish to provide feedback on the strategy please go to:

<https://link.webropolsurveys.com/Participation/Public/178e539c-dffb-4b23-85fc-09588d4f6f7d?displayId=Fin2290632>

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