Crown Commercial Service

Service design and co-design for health and care services

G-Cloud 15 service definition

Healthia®

Service co-design

Service co-design explores ways someone's interaction with an organisation to achieve a goal can be efficiently and effectively designed.

We synthesise research insight into simple, intuitive user journeys and service concepts. Through service mapping, sketching, prototyping and testing, we iterate concepts to improve user experience across end-to-end journeys and online/offline channels, cognizant of technology and policy constraints.

We work collaboratively, using co-creation and co-design workshops to build on the expertise of SMEs / stakeholders and invite users' input.

Research informs design improvements, e.g. solutions for assisted technology, to ensure intuitive, joined-up journeys, effective and cost-effective services and consistent UX. We work on services that are usable, inclusive and accessible.

- We are experienced in using a range of prototyping tools, depending on the project needs, as well as GOV.UK Design System, GOV.UK Prototype Kit and NHS Prototype Kit, utilising robustly tested and accessible components and design patterns
- We take an agile approach to user research and user-centred design, in line with GDS and NHS service standard, to enable iterative improvements, quick changes and rapid delivery
- We work in the open as one team to drive decisions collaboratively, taking every opportunity to share knowledge, upskill, build internal capabilities and enable sustainable benefits
- We take a user-centred approach. We are technology agnostic and help shift mindsets to focus on user needs over technology, avoiding costly investments
- We bring in experience from 50+ SD projects for public sector clients, including the Cabinet Office, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, NHS England, NHS Gloucestershire CCG and Scope

Inclusive research + co-design

We take an inclusive approach to our work to ensure all voices are represented. This reduces the risk of missing opportunities and fits with our ethos of leaving no-one behind.

We make it easy for people to participate in research, adapting to specific needs or requirements. Recent research has included people with autism, people with no fixed abode / address, and people with English as an additional language.

We have developed ways to effectively engage with diverse groups to co-create and co-design solutions in a collaborative and transparent way, helping design accessible services, policies and places that work for everyone.

We are experienced in researching, collaborating and designing with complex stakeholder groups including staff, local authorities, communities, charities, businesses, partner organisations and technology providers.

Seldom-heard and under-represented groups

- We include diverse, seldom-heard, under-represented and marginalised communities in our research as standard, including low digital literacy
- We include people from outside the mainstream and across socio-economic backgrounds, so we can design for people with markedly different lives and needs
- We have created a guide to conducting research around sensitive topics with vulnerable users to ensure the wellbeing of both participants and our researchers. Please contact us for a copy
- Through experience we have developed a number of techniques for recruiting from these groups which we tailor to each engagement

Co-creation and co-design

We use co-creation and co-design techniques to design with stakeholders, communities and service users.

Running co-creation / co-design sessions with stakeholders and service users is a great way of ensuring we tap into existing expertise. Through a combination of collaborative workshops, sketching, prototyping and user research, we help generate, validate, adapt or discard ideas.

We involve users across the design process, identifying and working through challenges together. This builds trust and an understanding of the lived experience.

We advocate for inclusive research and design practices, and use various methods to ensure all voices are heard, reducing the risk of overlooking needs and missing opportunities. We have deep experience co-designing with seldom-heard and under-represented users.

“Healthia provided an exemplary discovery and alpha project to NCSC. By having seasoned and independent researchers and designers assist us, we were able to canvas the community comprehensively in order to construct a long term development plan for the service.”

- Programme manager, NCSC

“They spend time to include you at each step of the way and work collaboratively where appropriate. In true partnership, they are open to working in different ways”

- **Insights and engagement manager, NHS BNSSG**

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is fundamental to our approach. We use innovative ways of keeping disparate and time-poor stakeholders involved.

We put effort into creating an effective and inclusive engagement plan to understand individual perspectives, wider context, priorities and build on their valuable expertise.

We have extensive experience collaborating with SMEs and stakeholders at all levels and adapt our communication to meet technical and non-technical needs.

Through our work with government and NHS clients, we have developed ways of effectively engaging with complex stakeholder groups across organisations and government departments. We bring stakeholders together to align priorities and collaboratively drive evidence-based decisions.

“They are capable of liaising with and managing stakeholders at all levels so for us they’ve interacted with people at board level all the way down, sensitively and empathically building relationships with customers who are often at a point of crisis. That can be quite a difficult thing to do and those softer skills really matter”

- **Service owner, Cabinet Office**

“They work openly and collaboratively with stakeholders to plan, execute and act on the research and design. This is so important when you are looking to transfer skills into the organisation and unlike other agencies or consultants we have worked in the past they do not exclude clients from the process or take specific parts of the project, work on it and then deliver a finished product.”

- **Insights and engagement manager, NHS BNSSG**

Varying fidelity prototypes

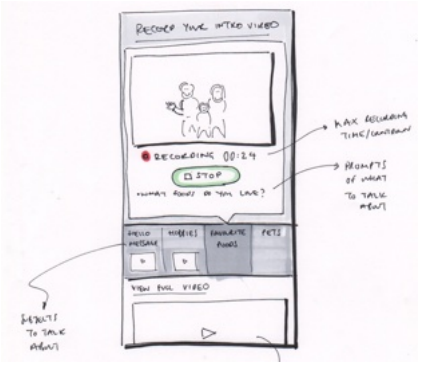
We use a range of prototypes depending on the stage and needs of the project, from hand sketches to clickable HTML prototypes.

Prototyping is a powerful and low-risk technique to quickly test and refine ideas based on user feedback. Prototyping early means we avoid building costly solutions that don't meet user or business needs.

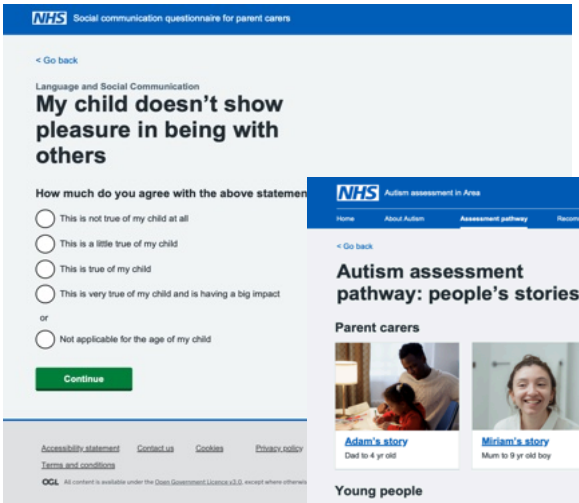
Sketched concepts communicate early thinking, encourage discussions and capture initial ideas. Clickable HTML prototypes enable realistic interactions with users to test concepts, journeys and content, and inform design direction.

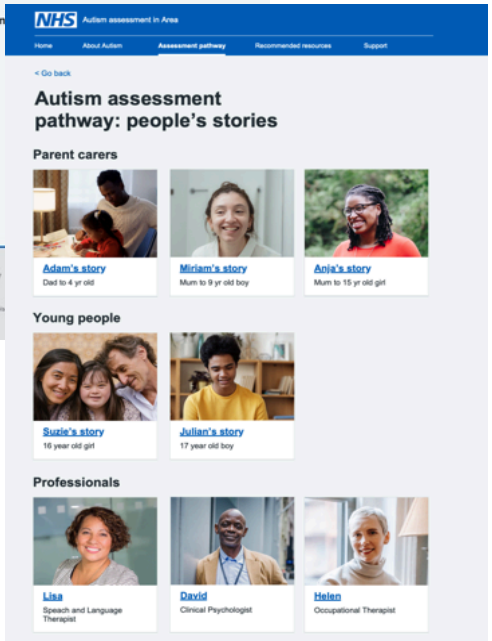
"The prototype looks awesome, you helped the teams understand the importance of great UX and made it integral to development."

- **Service design director, Cabinet Office**









Service co-design approach

Activities:

- Sketching concepts
- Storyboarding
- Co-creation / co-design workshops
- Service mapping
- Journey mapping
- Prototyping
- Concept and prototype testing
- Design iterations
- Next steps workshop

Outputs:

- Storyboards / experience map
- Service prototypes covering the end-to-end service and offline / online channels
- Proof of concept
- As-is and to-be service map
- Service blueprint
- Navigation structure / IA
- Draft content
- Research reports
- Prioritised service roadmap

Our experience

We are service design partner for NHS England's Digital Prevention Services Portfolio. There are more examples of our work here.