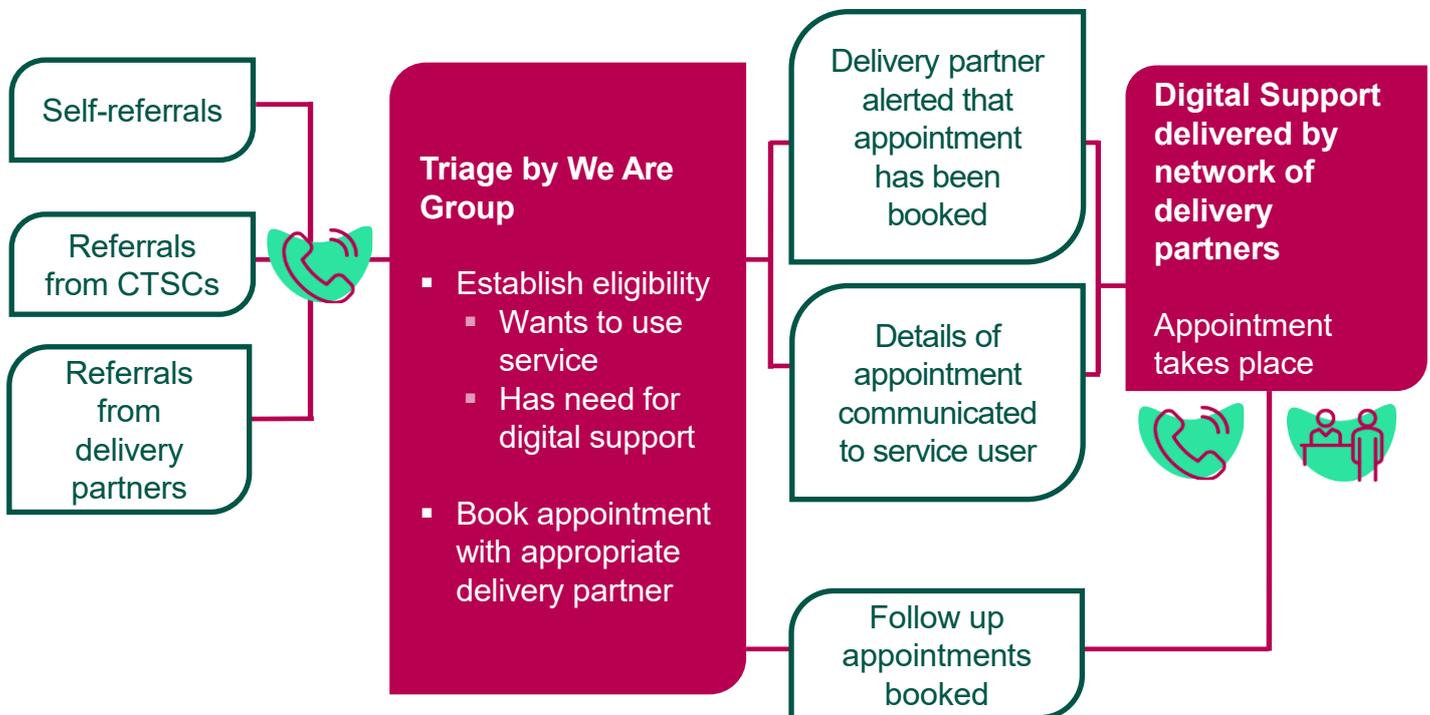


# National Digital Support Service (NDSS) Evaluation Findings

## Typical user journey through the NDSS:



## Take up of the National Digital Support Service (NDSS)



**10,214 individuals were triaged** by the NDSS between November 2022 and January 2025. Some users had multiple cases, so the total number of cases was 10,419.



**90%** of the cases triaged were for users of the **Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) service**.



**9,005 individual service users were supported during an appointment** between December 2022 and the start of February 2025.



**84% of closed appointments were marked as having provided support** (73% fully supported and 11% partially supported).

# Service user background and reasons for needing digital support

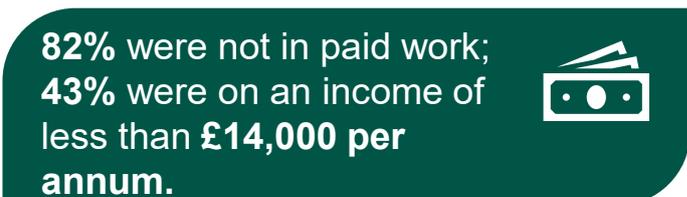
## Demographics of service users



46% were 55 or older.



89% had health conditions which lasted more than 12 months.



18% were from ethnic minority groups other than white, 79% were white.



37% had no formal qualifications, and 5% had 5 or fewer GCSEs.

The need for digital support is complex and often overlaps with other needs.



**One-in-five service users** (20%) had low digital capability. Others had at least moderate digital capability but had contacted the NDSS because they were worried about the potential complexity of interacting with HMCTS services.

## Experiences of triage

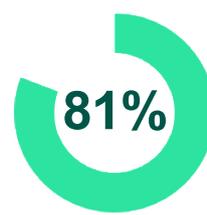
Service users most commonly sought digital support (85%).



However, they were also often seeking legal (74%), procedural (69%), or emotional support (43%).



91% of service users agreed the triage adviser understood their needs.



81% agreed that it was easy to get through to an adviser.



The way she talked, her manner, her professionalism...it wasn't like she was a machine sitting in an office going through the motions. It felt as if she did care. I can't say that enough... very good, very professional.

**SSCS service user**



## Appointment experiences

**94%** needing help accessing the form received this help.  
**84%** needing advice on the content of their case received this help.  
**72%** needing emotional support received this help.



**Three-quarters (77%)** of service users felt **clear about next steps** after the end of their support from the NDSS adviser (following their appointment and any further contact) but **a fifth (20%) were not clear.**



**Online forms** were submitted during appointments for three-quarters (75%) of service users.

Just under a **fifth of service users (18%)** reported they **would not have submitted the form at all** without the support from NDSS.

A **further fifth (19%)** reported that they **would only have been able to submit it on paper.**



**80%** of service users reported that receiving the NDSS support made the process of completing their form easier.



## Satisfaction with the NDSS

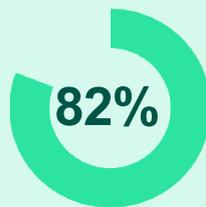
**Most service users (86%)** were satisfied overall with the support they received. **Only 5%** were dissatisfied. Dissatisfaction was linked to rushed appointments or issues not being resolved.



**Just over two-thirds (68%)** of service users reported the support they received was better or matched their expectations of what the NDSS would provide.



The majority of service users found their adviser:



knowledgeable



professional



understanding



100 times better [than expected]. I didn't expect it to be as easy or as nice. The main thing was that it felt as if somebody did care about what was happening with me.

**SSCS service user**



## Implications for improvement

### More awareness raising around the NDSS.



Very little is known about them... there's not really any information on how they can support you... It's just very generic information about the number and when the phone line is open.

**SSCS service user**



Allowing delivery partners to **triage walk-in appointments themselves**.



More training for staff around Online Civil Money Claims (OCMC) and **supporting service users with sensory disabilities**.



More time for **explanations and re-wording of questions** in appointments.



Ensuring **appointments are conducted privately**. Better signposting around support and next steps at the end of the appointment.



Delivery partners **working more closely** and directly with HMCTS.



A **review of the delivery partner fee structure** and the current definition of 'digital support'.

### Further information or clarity at the triage stage for service users around:



- The possibility of face-to-face appointments,
- What they would need to bring to the appointment,
- Appointment confirmations (over text or email),
- Directions to face-to-face appointments.