Leveraging User-Centred Design to Drive Service Transformation in Healthcare

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Context and Approach:

- Healthcare services in Wales suffer from siloed work and fragmented systems, creating problems for both patients and healthcare professionals. While digital transformation addresses some of these issues, it's not enough. We need broader changes in how we approach service transformation, collaborate effectively, and share knowledge. There is a need to focus on empowered professionals.
- User-centred design (UCD) offers a way to change how we work, but Wales lacks enough UCD professionals. My project focuses on how we can embed a user-centred approach, work better together, and understand each other's needs and motivations to design services that are easier to deliver and use.
- Technology can only be useful if we have the right foundations in place. For service transformation to succeed, we need to follow shared standards. Without them, digital solutions won't work effectively. No technology can fix our problems unless we take a more holistic approach to our services and ways of working.

Planned Activity:

Research:

Research question: How can we leverage UCD to drive service transformation in healthcare?

To answer that question I plan to:
- Work with digital teams to improve collaboration with clinicians and business teams to build products/services that meet needs of internal and end users
- Map various digital service transformation initiatives across Wales to create a list of case studies to share with others.
- Understand what good looks like across the public sector, investigate how can we scale best practices.
- Be an exemplar and champion user-led service design.

Leadership:

- Advocate for the meaningful adoption of Digital Service Standards for Wales.
- Build a network of people involved in service transformation initiatives in healthcare in Wales to share knowledge and support each other.
- Lead by raising the profile of user research and service design in healthcare.

Education/teaching :

- Show NHS Wales staff how everyone can adopt UCD principles to improve how services are designed.
- Focus on doing the right thing instead of making the wrong thing more efficient.
- Provide guidelines and templates to help healthcare staff collaborate more effectively with digital teams.
- Raise awareness of the value of user research for internal services.

Progress to date:

- Identified a strong call to action for UCD practice in NHS Wales.
- Started building a network of people involved in digital service transformation in Wales.
- Identified successful and challenging transformation projects in Wales to start building case studies.
- Working on establishing user research as a recognised function within Public Health Wales.
- Working in the open, sharing updates via Weeknotes and a Medium publication "UCD in Wales" to document findings and insights.
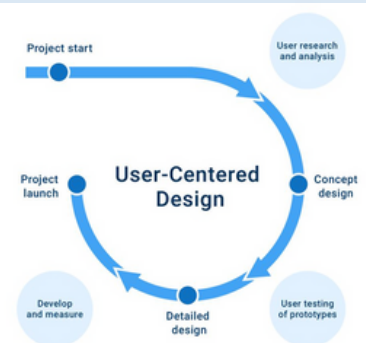
Reflections:

- I need to keep growing my network to stay up to date with service and digital transformation initiatives across the public sector in Wales. Communication about these projects is often scattered, so expanding my connections helps me stay informed.
- Writing weeknotes helps me reflect regularly. I see my two-year plan as a flexible framework rather than a rigid roadmap, allowing me to be agile and adjust based on new findings.
- I need to consider how or if Digital Service Standards for Wales can address challenges specific to the healthcare sector.
- I changed the title from "digital transformation" to "service transformation" to better capture the holistic nature of the challenge and change. True transformation requires addressing both digital and non-digital elements to ensure meaningful and lasting improvements in services.

Digital Service Standards for Wales

The Standard shows what good public services look like in Wales, and how to achieve them.

Meet user needs
1. Focus on the current and future wellbeing of people in Wales
2. Design services in Welsh and English
3. **Understand users and their needs**
4. **Provide a joined-up experience**
5. Make sure everyone can use the service

Create digital teams
6. Have an empowered service owner
7. **Have a multidisciplinary team**
8. **Iterate and improve frequently**
9. **Work in the open**

Use the right technology
10. Use scalable technology
11. Consider ethics, privacy and security throughout
12. Use data to make decisions