



Digital Literacy Training for Seniors

Outcomes Evaluation



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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Office for Seniors has partnered with six providers to deliver Digital Literacy Training to 5,000 older adults across New Zealand. The programme aims to equip seniors with the skills and confidence to navigate the digital world, helping them stay connected with family and friends, engage with online services, and keep pace with evolving technology. The programme was designed to support older adults at higher risk of digital exclusion, and, in practice, primarily reached Māori, Pacific, and East Asian communities where barriers to digital access, skills, and confidence are more prevalent.

The Office for Seniors commissioned Dovetail Consulting to carry out an evaluation to ensure the Digital Literacy for Seniors Training Programme is effectively structured and delivered to achieve its intended outcomes. A Theory of Change and a set of evaluation criteria were co-designed with key stakeholders. This evaluation has utilised a mixed-methods approach. Evidence was gathered through a combination of interviews and group discussions with learners, service delivery kaimahi ('tutors'), and service provider leadership, which was analysed alongside a range of programme survey data to capture a diversity of perspectives across all six participating providers.

Outcomes

Building digital foundations

This evaluation found that the programme successfully reached a range of audiences and those who have taken part have shown motivation to continue learning and exploring new tools and devices. Most learners developed basic skills to be online, and some were also confident navigating different platforms across devices by the end of the programme. Tutors customised their classes to the unique devices and starting points of each learner, creating a bespoke approach that allowed learners to get to know their devices and understand how to tailor them to their specific needs and preferences. All learners that took part in this evaluation reported feeling more confident and able to use digital technology independently after the programme.

Digital independence and safety

Moving beyond basic knowledge and skills to navigate and manage online activities independently and safely is an important aspect of digital inclusion. This evaluation found that all learners understood the basic measures they could take to stay safe online and many were using these measures in their day-to-day lives, with a small number still wary of storing passwords or resistant to creating unique passwords across multiple accounts. Learners were also made aware of the potential risks of being online and many shared their own experiences of being targeted or scammed with their groups, raising group awareness and reducing shame. The programme was particularly effective at supporting learners to integrate digital tools in ways that allowed them to be less dependent on others for digital support. While many learners expressed a clear motivation to continue their learning journey, in most cases this was coupled with a desire for some level of continued support from programme or whānau members in the face of rapidly changing technology.

Applying skills in everyday life

Learners who took part in the evaluation were able to use their skills to gain practical, day-to-day benefits by accessing online services including online banking and online shopping; some were confident to do this independently. The programme improved access to health information and services, and many participants grew more confident in booking appointments or viewing health records, although the extent to which some were engaging with digital health tools independently varied. A strength of the programme was supporting learners to integrate digital tools to enhance their quality of life and solve practical

challenges, and all who took part in discussions reported being less dependent on others for both digital and practical support.

Connection, community, and wellbeing

Digital inclusion resulted in broader benefits for participants, including social connection, belonging and increased ability to manage life efficiently and effectively. This evaluation found that learners were able to build social connections with others in the programme and many of those spoken to felt they had become part of a supportive community with relationships that continued post-programme. Digital connectivity skills brought learners closer to their loved ones and allowed them to stay connected with friends and family through social media, video calls and messaging apps. Learners in this evaluation were actively seeking out digital resources to support their wellbeing and life management, reporting their digital skills have ultimately contributed to greater happiness, independence, and quality of life.

Cultural adaptations and tailoring

All six providers of the Digital Literacy Training for Seniors programme adapted and tailored the programme in broad ways to ensure the content, engagement approaches and methods of delivery were appropriate, relevant, and meaningful to the older adults in their communities. For the four providers who participated in discussions, this evaluation found that cultural responsiveness and adaptations were fundamental enablers of programme outcomes, helping learners feel safe, respected and capable, deepening comprehension, and forming the foundations for safe engagement. When the programme was aligned with learners' cultural values and ways of understanding the world, it reduced context lost in translation and strengthened the relevance and impact of the learning.

Learning for future implementation

Several design and implementation factors contributed to the achievement of outcomes and should inform the development of future programmes aimed at improving digital literacy among seniors. These factors included adopting values-based and culturally responsive approaches, integrating training within existing community programmes supported by skilled facilitators, personalising course resources, revision activities and engagement methods, and delivering sessions through local community hubs such as marae and libraries.

There were also areas for improvement in future digital literacy programmes, including:

- Ensuring adequate resourcing to meet the complex needs of target populations.
- Being strategic about programme delivery to meet significant demand for the programme.
- Adapting the Essential Digital Skills framework to meet the needs of target populations.
- Balancing flexibility of delivery with collaborative support between providers and the Office for Seniors.

Conclusion

Overall, this evaluation found that the Digital Literacy Training for Seniors programme achieved all of its intended outcomes. Learners acquired skills in foundational digital technology, online safety, social connectivity and key online services and resources that were transferred into their daily lives. These skills unlocked broader wellbeing benefits, increasing participants' social connections, sense of independence, and opportunities to participate in society. Key areas for improvement have been highlighted to inform future programmes in this space that continue to build digital equity and inclusion among older adults in New Zealand.

1. Introduction

Background

Being online is increasingly important for modern life, but as many as one in four older people do not regularly use the internet. The Better Later Life - He Oranga Kaumātua 2019 to 2034 Strategy identifies Digital Inclusion as a priority action. In 2019, the Office for Seniors was allocated \$600,000 to pilot digital literacy training for seniors over three years. The programme was designed to run over three years, however, delays due to the COVID-19 impacted providers' ability to deliver in-person training. Budget 2022 allocated additional funding of \$1.341 million over three years to expand the programme to support 5,000 more participants and improve sustainability of digital training for older people in Aotearoa.

The Office for Seniors commissioned Dovetail Consulting to design, lead and implement an outcomes evaluation of the Digital Literacy Training for Seniors programme. This report presents the evaluation findings.

About the Digital Literacy Training for Seniors Programme

The Office for Seniors partnered with six providers to deliver Digital Literacy Training to 5,000 older adults across New Zealand from March 2023, with the latest training concluding in October 2025. The programme aimed to equip seniors with the skills and confidence to navigate the digital world, helping them stay connected with family and friends, engage with online services, and keep pace with evolving technology.

The programme was designed to support groups of older adults at high risk of experiencing digital exclusion. While it aimed to benefit Māori, Pacific, and other ethnic communities facing greater barriers to digital access, delivery in practice primarily reached Māori, Pacific and East Asian participants. Given the relatively small scale of the initiative, the intent was not to exhaustively reach all priority populations affected by digital exclusion, such as rural communities or the full range of culturally and linguistically diverse groups. Instead, delivery was weighted towards communities with a known higher prevalence of digital exclusion, within the constraints of feasible contracting and the capacity of the provider market to deliver culturally appropriate training.

Each provider had flexibility to adapt the programme to their community's unique needs while ensuring that participants developed skills aligned with the [Essential Digital Skills \(EDS\) framework](#). To support delivery for Pacific matua (elders), the Office for Seniors partnered with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples to provide 450 digital devices to participants where access to suitable devices was a barrier. A summary of the unique approach taken by each of the six providers is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

This evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to ensure the Digital Literacy for Seniors Training Programme is effectively structured and delivered to achieve its intended outcomes. Beyond evaluating this specific programme, the Office for Seniors seek to gain broader insights into digital literacy and exclusion among older people. These findings may inform future initiatives aimed at addressing digital exclusion, ensuring equitable access to digital opportunities, and supporting the needs of underserved populations.

Key evaluation questions and Theory of Change

Key evaluation questions (KEQs) were designed to guide the evaluation:

1. To what extent has the programme helped participants gain essential digital skills and how has this contributed to the day-to-day lives of participants?

2. How are cultural perspectives incorporated into the design and delivery of the programme, and how have these approaches contributed to programme outcomes?
3. What are we learning about the ways different design and delivery features contribute to the programme's outcomes?

A Theory of Change was co-designed with the key stakeholders in this evaluation. This has been included in [Appendix 2](#). A Theory of Change describes how a programme or policy will bring about change, and shows how resources and inputs such as funding, staff and knowledge support activities undertaken. It also shows how these activities create outcomes that may support wider impacts.

Rubric

A set of evaluation criteria and standards (i.e., the rubric) were developed, in collaboration with key stakeholders, for the evaluation of the Digital Literacy for Seniors programme. This was used when responding to and making judgements around KEQ 1. The evaluation criteria are signposted throughout the evaluation report, and the full rubric is detailed in [Appendix 3](#).

Evidence gathering

This evaluation has utilised a mixed-methods approach to explore the delivery, effectiveness, and outcomes of the Seniors Digital Literacy Training Programme. Evidence was gathered through a combination of interviews and group discussions with learners, service delivery kaimahi ('tutors'), and service provider leadership, capturing a diversity of perspectives across all six participating providers.

- **Learner interviews (n=31):** Five individual interviews and eight group interviews were carried out with learners who took part in the programme. In total, 31 learners participated in data collection from July to September 2025.
- **Delivery kaimahi and leadership interviews (n=21):** Four interviews and three group discussions were held with tutors, along with 12 individual/group discussions with provider leadership (nine preceding data collection to inform the evaluation approach and three at a later stage to align with tutor and learner insights).
- **Documentation and data analysis:** The research team analysed project data supplied by providers and the Office for Seniors. This included 6-month narrative reports from providers, pre- and post-training self-assessment surveys, behaviour change surveys and enrolment data.

All learners who took part in the evaluation received a koha. This evaluation adhered to ethical standards to ensure that all learners were treated with respect and that their contributions were handled responsibly. Participation in the evaluation was voluntary, and all participants were provided with an information sheet outlining the purpose of the evaluation and how their data would be used, stored and reported on. Informed consent was gained for all evaluation interviews and discussions.

Analysis and sensemaking

The analysis for this evaluation has followed a thematic approach, primarily drawing on qualitative insights to understand the experiences of programme participants and providers. All interviews were recorded and transcribed with participants' consent. These were thematically coded against the outcome areas identified in the design phase. A similar process was undertaken to analyse 6-month narrative reports and phase one interviews. Providers' data from pre- and post-training surveys, behaviour change surveys, and enrolment and demographic profiles were aggregated and analysed at a programme level. These were used to triangulate themes from interview discussions.

Limitations

Participation in this evaluation was completely voluntary, and two providers involved in delivery chose not to take part in phase two interviews and group discussions. This evaluation is based on interviews with a small proportion of learners and programme delivery stakeholders, so while care has been taken to ensure a range of perspectives have been considered, the findings do not represent the views and experiences of all individuals in the programme. As aspects of programme surveys were tailored to suit the needs of individual providers' communities, the ability to aggregate programme survey data in this evaluation was variable, which has created inconsistencies in data quality. While quantitative data has been used through this report, it is important to read this in-line with the qualitative findings. A full explanation of data limitations has been included in the survey summary in [Appendix 4](#).

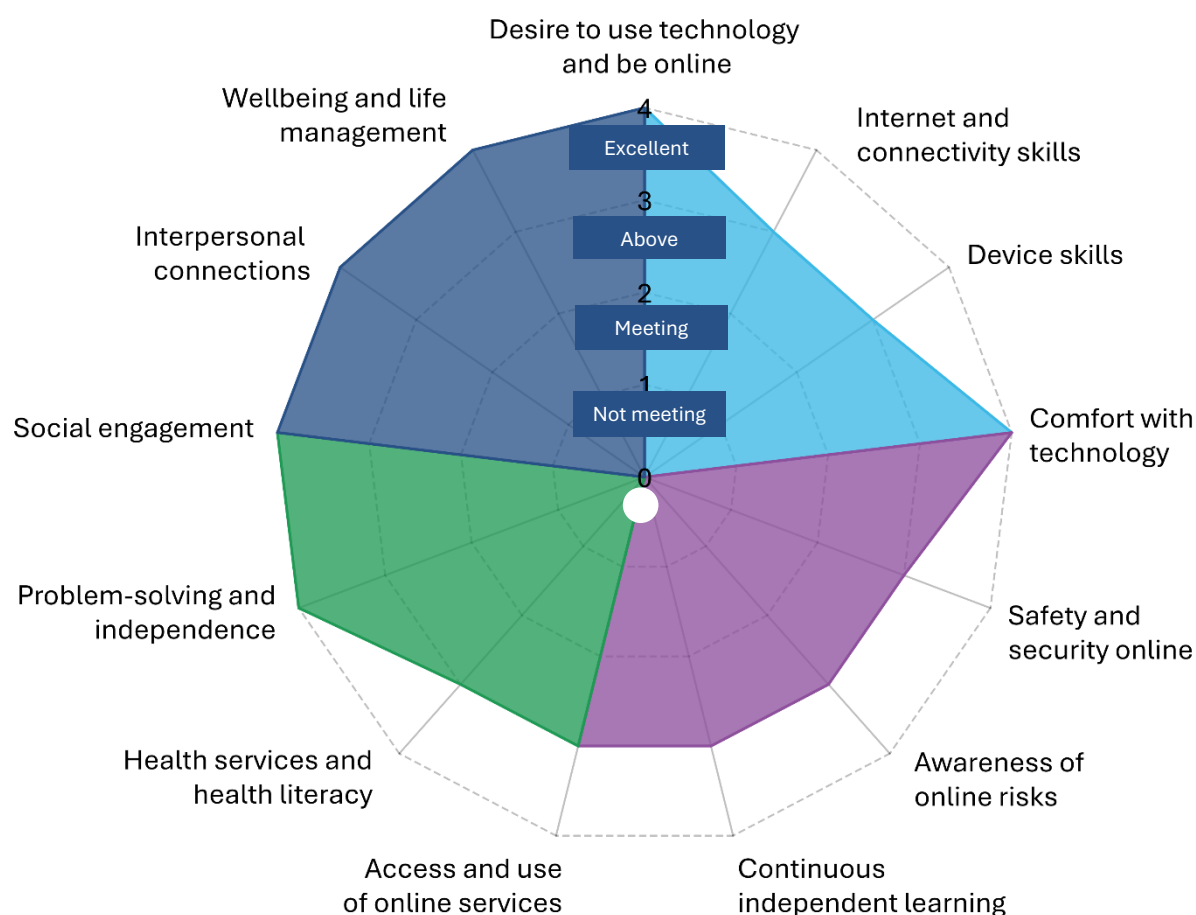
2. Gaining essential digital literacy skills

This section explores the extent to which the Digital Literacy Training for Seniors programme has helped participants gain essential digital skills, as defined by the EDS framework, and how these skills have contributed to participants' day-to-day lives.

Summary of judgements made against outcomes criteria

The following chart summarises the criteria judgements against outcome areas. Overall, all criteria were at least *above expectations* (also referred to as “on the pathway to excellence”). Just under half of the criteria (46%, n=6) were judged as being excellent. The co-designed criteria have been grouped into four themed categories to reflect learners progress from foundational skills through to building community connections and wellbeing.

Overview of outcome achievements against evaluation criteria



Building digital foundations

Access to the digital world begins with having the basic knowledge, skills, and motivation to get online. For many participants, developing a foundational understanding of how to use devices and navigate the internet is the first step toward digital inclusion. This evaluation found that the programme successfully reached a range of audiences and those who have taken part have shown motivation to continue learning and exploring new tools and devices. Most learners developed basic skills to be online and navigate their devices, and some were also confident navigating different platforms across devices by the end of the programme. Tutors customised their classes to the unique devices of each learner, creating a bespoke approach that allowed learners to get to know their devices, and understand how to tailor them to their specific needs and preferences. All learners that took part in this evaluation reported feeling more confident and able to use digital technology independently following the programme.

Desire to use technology and be online

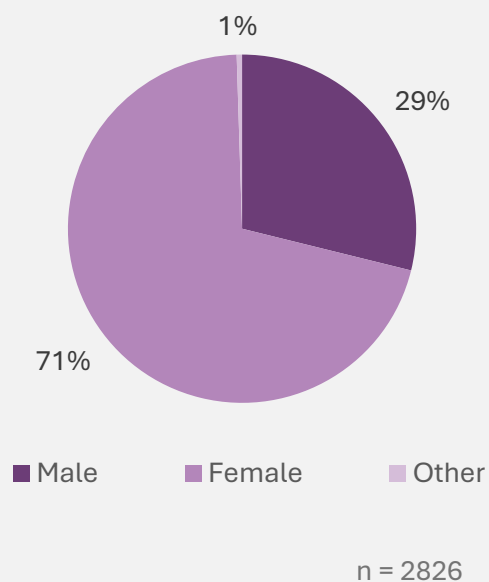
Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners are enrolled in the programme.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners show ongoing motivation to stay connected, explore new tools, and upgrade devices if possible.

The outcome area *Desire to use technology and be online* is rated as excellent. The digital literacy training programme had good enrolment and engagement rates across the providers, with at least 4001 learners enrolling across the three-year period, 3738 of which completed training.

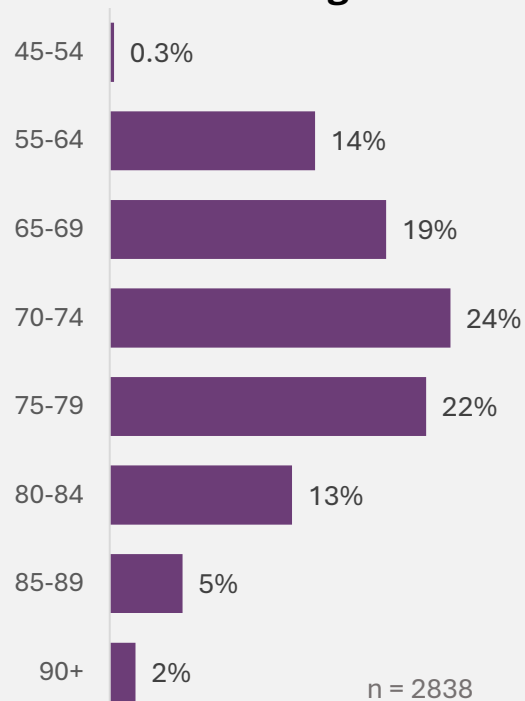
There was diverse engagement across the providers, with learners from a range of target demographics demonstrating a desire to use technology and take part in online activities. 43% of learners who provided demographic information were from East Asian communities, 23% identified as Māori, 19% as New Zealand European and 15% were from Pacific communities. Providers reached a variety of age groups and engaged with learners through 109 unique delivery locations across New Zealand, from libraries and community centres through to churches, marae and learners' homes.

Demographic data

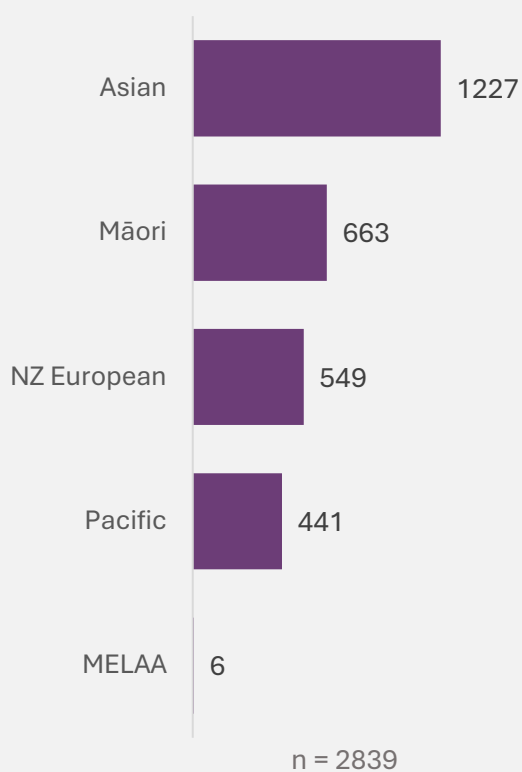
Gender



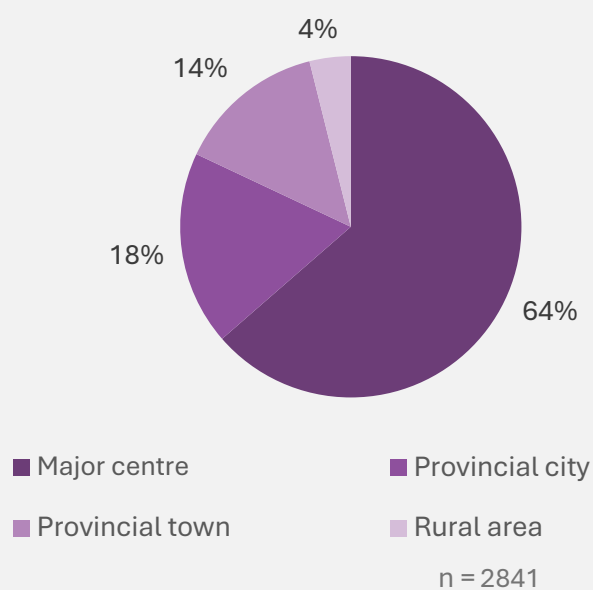
Age



Ethnicity



Region

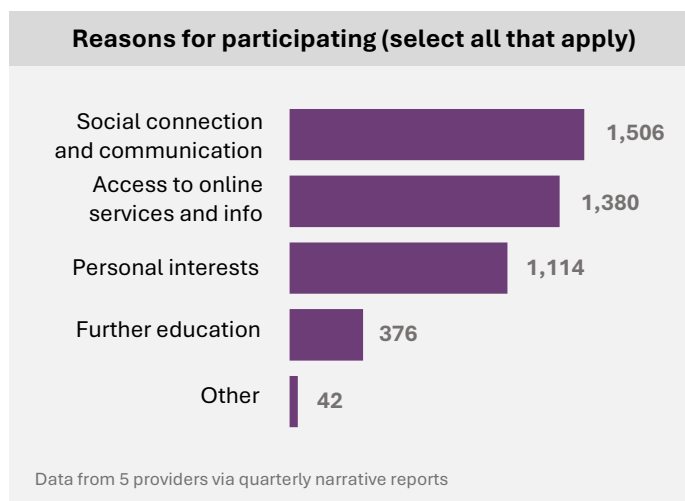


Gaining digital skills was seen as fundamental to learners' abilities to live independently and not be 'left behind' by a society that increasingly functions online.

"Before I started the course, I was paying my bills manually. And then during COVID, you couldn't do that. So when COVID was over and the course came along, I couldn't wait to join." - Learner

"I think there's a whole generation that, things are changing so rapidly. If we don't educate ourselves, we're really stuck in the past and I don't want to be like that." - Learner

Learners expressed an ongoing desire and determination to learn new tools and digital skills. For many, this began in class, as learners commonly repeated lessons or progressed from beginner through to advanced modules. Tutors faced high demand as awareness of the programme spread through their communities, and some found it difficult to balance waitlists with returning participants. Since completing the programme, learners have continued to incorporate technology into their lives, becoming more familiar with their phones and finding new ways to apply their skills.



"I used to use my phone really minimally, you know. But now, I'm more versatile, I can use more and more, day by day." - Learner

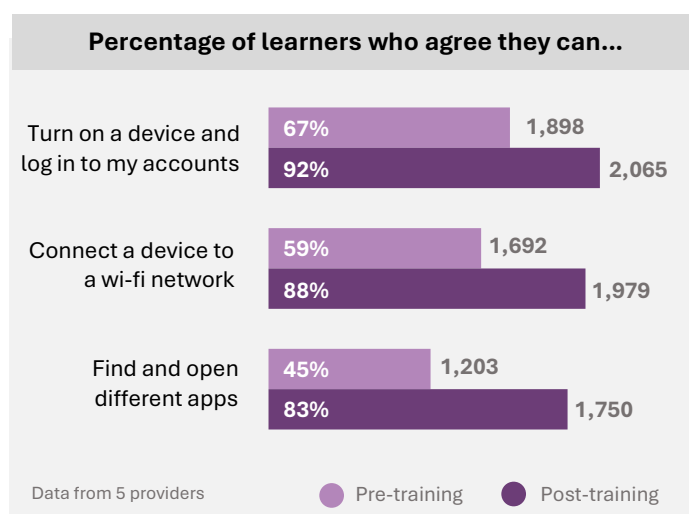
Internet and connectivity skills

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners can turn on devices and log in to accounts and profiles.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners confidently manage accounts across different devices and platforms, navigating independently.

The outcome area *Internet and connectivity skills* is rated as on the pathway to excellence. Tutors took different approaches to training format and provision across providers, but all started with the fundamentals of digital literacy, which included turning on devices and logging into key profiles and accounts.

"It's a logical framework. She teaches people to press the button, turn the power on and off and then she teaches them how to get on the internet." - Leadership

Most participants could turn on and log into devices (70%) and connect their device to a Wi-Fi network (62%) prior to the training, however, this increased substantially (92%) by the end of the



programme. Other basic skills were less commonly held prior to the training. Only 45% of participants felt they were able to find and open different applications on their device, with most able to do so at the end of their training (83%).

Tutors grounded learning in real-world application, which learners valued as beneficial to their skill acquisition and recall. For example, one tutor took their learners to a local café to practice connecting to a public Wi-Fi network, and many focused on functionality specific to the makes and models of the devices of their learners.

Interview participants confirmed that they felt more confident carrying out these basic functions by the end of the programme, having greater knowledge of online connectivity, key terms or words related to devices such as an app or data, and the purpose of each button on their phones or tablets. Navigating accounts across multiple devices remained a challenge for some learners, requiring recall of multiple passwords or more advanced navigation across platforms.

“[We learnt about] connecting to Wi-Fi. They're just really basic things, but half the time I didn't even know what the buttons were for. It was an invaluable course for someone who's not really had any computer training.” – Learner

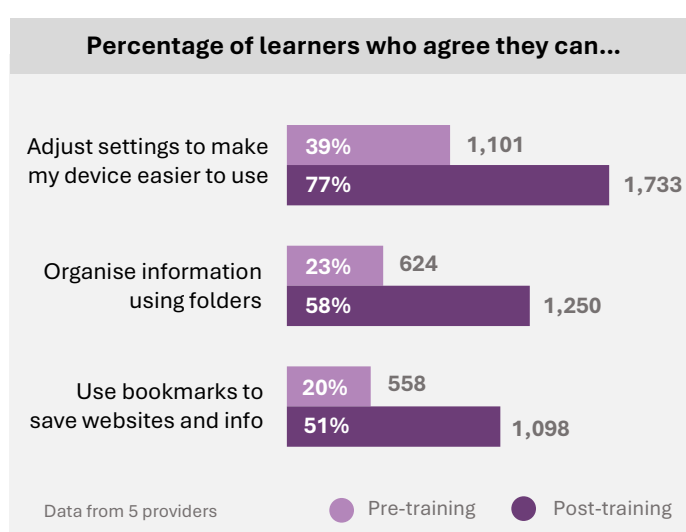
Future iterations of the programme could consider:

- Formalising connections to 1:1 support or expanding tailored materials for learners who struggle with navigating multiple accounts or managing personal log-in information.

Device skills

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners can adjust basic settings and organise information on their key devices.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners feel comfortable optimising device settings for functionality, privacy, and accessibility, and choosing devices and apps that best meet their needs.

The outcome area *Device skills* is rated as on the pathway to excellence. Tutors customised their classes to the unique devices of each learner, creating a bespoke approach that allowed learners to get to know their devices and understand how to tailor them to their specific needs and preferences. Prior to starting the programme, a relatively low proportion of learners felt they knew how to use menu settings to customise their devices (39%), organise files and folders (23%) or use bookmarks to save and retrieve websites and information (20%). Following the programme, confidence and ability to undertake these tasks increased across the board.



In discussions, learners described using calendars and notifications to organise information. They were supported to create emergency contacts, photo-based reminders and learn how to use Apple App or

Google Play stores to find and download their preferred apps. For some learners, outdated devices limited their ability to optimise functionality.

Tutors introduced adaptive tools like text enlargement, text-to-audio, talk-to-text, and styluses and keyboards, which were welcomed by learners who faced functional limitations in their vision or hands. Some learners received a device through their participation in the programme, which were often tablets selected by providers based on accessible and functional features determined to suit the needs of older adults.

“The ones who didn’t have the dexterity in their hands anymore started using these little pens with rubber ends that you can tap with instead. So many of them went to the dollar store and grabbed those.” – Tutor

“One kaumātua who can’t use her hands has learnt how to use the microphone for talk-to-text, and how to flip her phone over to accept or cancel calls.” – Leadership

Future iterations of the programme could consider:

- Developing resources that introduce learners to adaptive tools and information to support their independent ability to select and access technology that meets their needs.

Comfort and confidence with technology

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners are motivated to increase their own confidence with digital technology.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners are more confident and feel able to use digital technology independently.

The outcome area *Comfort and confidence with technology* is rated as excellent. Learners showed a clear motivation to increase their confidence with digital technology through enrolment and continued participation. In discussions, many described being fearful of their devices at the beginning of the programme. Some spoke about not “trusting themselves” with technology and were afraid they would break or damage their device or accidentally delete important files or documents. Others were hesitant about the connection that devices provided and feared they may fall victim to scams.

“The older generation, we’re more reserved. I think it comes from our upbringing. For us, if you failed, it was a bad thing. The young ones just go for it. If they fail, they try again.” – Learner

All learners who took part in this evaluation explained that the programme changed the way they view technology and the level of comfort they now feel interacting with their devices. Some learners explained how mistakes were reprimanded growing up, and through modelling curiosity and inquisitiveness towards their devices, tutors normalised making mistakes and supported learners to ‘unlearn’ ingrained associations between failure and fear. As a result, these learners came away from the course feeling more confident to try new things and comfortable using digital skills to navigate their devices. Some described their phone as “being like their right hand” or like a friend.

“They gained that confidence where they knew they could push buttons and not break something. I think that’s what they saw from me too. If I didn’t know their device completely, I’d just push a few buttons to work out where I needed to go, so they could see that you don’t have to be scared” – Tutor

“I was frightened to pick up the phone, and coming onto the course, it gave me that confidence. I know it sounds stupid, but it's like a friend to me now” – Learner

Digital independence and safety

Moving beyond basic knowledge and skills to navigate and manage online activities independently and safely is an important aspect of digital inclusion. This evaluation found that all learners understood the basic measures they could take to stay safe online and many were using these measures in their day-to-day lives, with a small number still wary of storing passwords or resistant to creating unique passwords across accounts. Learners were also made aware of the potential risks of being online and many shared their own experiences of being targeted or scammed with their groups, which raised collective awareness and reduced shame.

Most interview participants reported that they can access a variety of resources and services online, including banking applications, communication tools and social media. The programme was particularly effective at supporting learners to integrate digital tools in flexible ways, with an underlying focus on teaching foundational skills that would allow learners to continue applying what they had learned. While many learners expressed a clear motivation to continue their learning journey, in most cases this was coupled with a desire for continued support from programme staff or others in the face of rapidly changing technology.

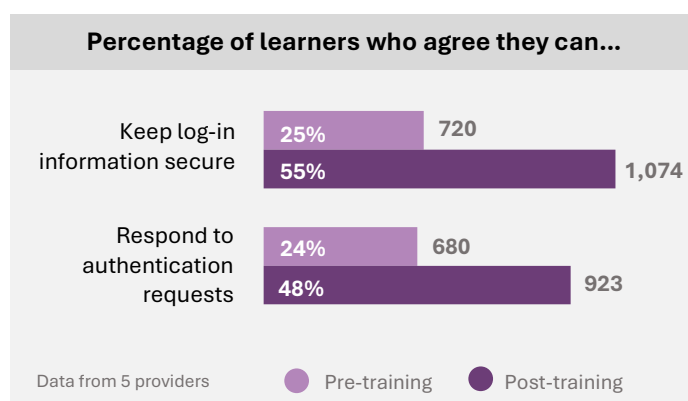
Safety and security online

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners report using basic safety measures, such as password management, and feel generally safe online.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners feel confident, secure, and free from stress when navigating online spaces, handling tasks and managing personal information with a sense of safety and control.

The outcome area *Safety and security online* is rated as on the pathway to excellence. Learners demonstrated an understanding of basic measures to remain safe and secure online such as selecting strong passwords, managing and storing passwords safely and using multi-factor authentication. Before the programme, 25% of participants felt they could keep the information they use to access their online account secure by using different and secure passwords, whereas 55% felt they could do so after the programme. Similarly, 24% of participants felt they could respond to requests for authentication before the programme, which doubled post-programme to 48%.

“If you just add a small letter and a double, it's much less chance and if you add an extra digit at the end, it's like one in six billion chances that anyone will get your password.” – Learner

Some learners reported feeling secure while navigating online spaces; however, others shared that they still feel vulnerable to scammers and prefer to have family members or support present when completing online tasks like transferring



money online. Some learners also reported that they struggle to remember passwords but don't want to save these virtually.

"I've got an alphabetical notebook and everything in it ... Exactly what my tutor said not to do." – Learner

"I put in a password I always use, no, no, that's not your password, you'll have to get a new one. So, I decided in the end that I will just reset my password, and I put that same one in there twice." – Learner

Future iterations of the programme could consider:

- Exploring in greater depth the areas that are needed to build security and confidence in participants when navigating online spaces and securely storing personal information.

Awareness of online risks

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners recognise common risks and know basic protective measures.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners consistently apply online safety practices, enhancing their confidence and sense of security when engaging online and reducing vulnerability.

The outcome area *Awareness of online risks* is rated as on the pathway to excellence. Many learners shared the importance of being safe online, including being aware of common risks and how to safeguard against being harmed or victimised in an online environment. Some participants explained the methods they had learned to recognise risks, including changing passwords regularly, checking email addresses, keeping devices updated and knowing the signs to look out for. Some learners also displayed growing awareness of the risks of artificial intelligence (AI).

Percentage of learners who agree they can...



"We learnt all about phishing. One thing that really stuck with me was learning about email scams, people pretending to be someone they're not. We were shown how to look closely at an email address to check if it's real... If it doesn't have the proper domain, it's probably a scam." – Learner

"I didn't know anything about AI, but now I'm getting closer to GPT and what can I ask, how much I can trust and how much I can share with other people" - Learner

Some had their own experiences of being personally victimised or targeted by a scam or knew someone close to them who had. Tutors created safe spaces to share personal experiences, which helped to reduce shame or embarrassment and deepen group understanding as learners worked together to identify risks and plan protective action in real-life situations. Tutors described the need to approach this topic carefully to teach risks to older adults without instilling fear.

“I think our group is so cool because we all talk like we are now. For example, one person gets up and goes, I've been scammed, and I've been ripped off, this bastard, and then we all start giggling and it's like, well, you're not the only one.” – Tutor

“You've got to be careful because this generation is very trusting and you want to make them aware that they're very trusting and that's a good thing, but also that it places them in a high-risk category” - Tutor

In some cases, learners had moved beyond their lessons to help family members and friends stay safe. Some kaumātua (Māori elder/elder) had taken to posting about common scams on their community Facebook page to aid awareness. One learner described how she was able to use what she learned in class to identify a scammer targeting her sister, ultimately stopping her from losing a large sum of money.

Overall, most learners felt their confidence growing and explained they now have the skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe online, but some remain cautious and uncertain due to previous negative experiences with scammers or past mistakes.

“I think I will strengthen the online safety part of our programme because we do encourage all our elders to learn the skills there. I think it's so important because a lot of our elders already know they are not skilled enough to be able to navigate this space.” – Leadership

Future iterations of the programme could consider:

- Strengthening the online safety content within aspects of the programme that some learners commonly avoid or may associate with heightened fear, such as banking and shopping online.

Continuing to learn independently

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners show some confidence in continuing to explore new digital skills independently.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners are confident, self-directed in learning, and express a clear ability to continue their digital journey.

The outcome area *Continuing to learn independently* is rated as on the pathway to excellence. Learners showed confidence in exploring how to apply digital skills in their own contexts, from searching for online recipes and messaging group chats, to navigating digital bus timetables and booking overseas holidays. Tutors introduced platforms such as ChatGPT and Perplexity to help with trouble-shooting and problem-solving, with an underlying focus on teaching foundational skills that would allow learners to continue applying what they had learned.

“At the end of the day, I'm trying to teach them to fish. I'm not fishing for them.” – Tutor

Interview participants described areas they would like to explore more, such as spreadsheets for budgeting, Trade Me, or Zoom for virtual meetings; however, the extent to which learners are self-directed in their learning varied, as many expressed a desire to continue building their skills with additional support. In the context of rapidly changing technology, some voiced uncertainty over their ability to learn independently as platforms and systems continue to evolve. Tutors became seen as trusted supporters and sources of information, which enabled deep engagement and progress with learners, but in some cases led to a preference from learners to call tutors outside of programme hours as opposed to troubleshooting independently.

“Even though we can learn through the YouTube, lots of information there. Still sometimes we need a physical meeting, person to person, face to face. We are analogue generation, not digital generation.” – Learners

Some methods of delivery enabled access to support outside of the programme. Trainings delivered in libraries and community hubs connected learners to external drop-in sessions where they could receive continued support, and group chats created during class became spaces to share questions and seek guidance from peers.

Future iterations of the programme could consider:

- How to formalise connections with alternative pathways that learners could access following course completion.

Applying skills in everyday life

Translating digital skills from theoretical concepts into practical, day-to-day benefits is an important step in improving participants’ functioning and quality of life. This evaluation found that learners who took part in this evaluation were able to use their skills to access online services including online banking, online shopping and government websites, and some were confident to do this independently. The programme improved access to health information and services, and many participants grew more confident in booking appointments or viewing health records. While the virtual health and financial management content was highly valued by learners, the extent to which learners were independently engaging with these tools varied. A strength of the programme was supporting learners to integrate digital tools in flexible ways to enhance their quality of life and solve practical challenges. All participants who took part reported a restored sense of independence that meant they were less dependent on others for both digital and practical support, an outcome that was highly valued by everyone in this evaluation.

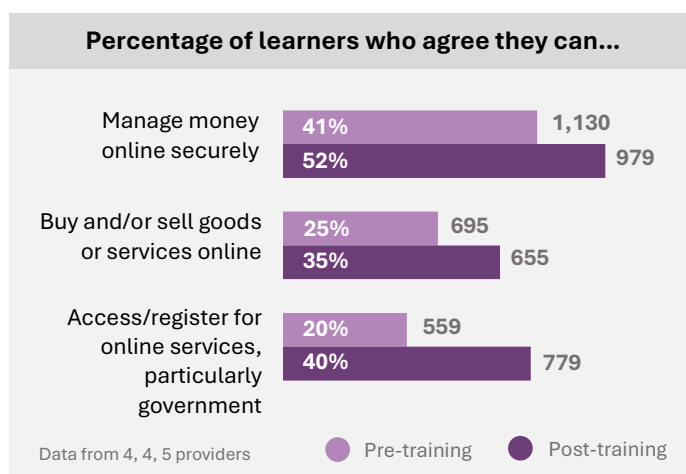
Accessing and using online services

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners use online services and resources occasionally, including online banking, online shopping and government websites.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners confidently and independently access a variety of resources and services online, improving their convenience and access to daily needs.

The outcome area *Accessing and using online services* is rated as on the pathway to excellence, as most interview participants reported they can access a variety of resources and services online. A key area of value was online money management, with many learners reporting increased ability to pay their bills, check their balances and view financial statements online. These skills were highly valued, as they simplified day-to-day tasks by removing the need to wait on hold on the phone or travel to central locations to access bank branches. One learner described how helpful it was when her tutor taught her how to collect bank account details from whānau while organising koha (contributions) for a tangihanga (funeral), compared to the difficulty that usually came with coordinating the process previously.

“I find phone banking so much easier than the computer. You don’t have to answer your phone to get on your computer. It’s quicker doing it on your phone than on your computer.” – Learner

A number of learners were also using their devices for online shopping, accessing clothing brands, Facebook Marketplace, and purchasing gifts for their grandchildren. Pre- and post-training survey results show a 10% increase in learners who can buy or sell online. Grocery shopping was commonly mentioned, with online delivery enhancing convenience, access, and quality of life for learners with reduced mobility. Many were using online storefronts to research and compare prices, find discounts, and write shopping or grocery lists to complete in-person.



“I use it for looking at prices if I want to compare one store to another, which I never did before.” – Learner

Some learners reported remaining fearful or apprehensive over managing and spending money online. A small number described being wary of peer-to-peer sites like TradeMe and overseas sites like Temu and Shein, due to the risk of potential scams or making a mistake while purchasing an item. Others described selectively engaging in certain aspects of online banking or only feeling safe to do so on a home computer or with the support of a family member.

“What I don’t do is transfers. Even though we were taught how to do them, I just don’t, because I made an error once. I’m not going to lose my money. Now, I just make [bill] payments, and that’s all I do.” – Learner

“I did online banking once, I know how to do it, but I’m so scared, so my son or my moko can do it while I watch. As a 70-year-old, you might have a digit wrong.” – Learner

The largest shift in pre- and post-training survey responses with regards to accessing and using online services was in accessing or registering for online services, including government services, which doubled from 20% to 40%. While a small number of interviewed learners reported using their skills and knowledge to access government services online, this wasn’t seen as a priority in comparison to other areas of online services such as finances or health. In some instances, learners reported using their smartphone to access information about how to get in touch with Work and Income New Zealand or learn more about applying for a Gold Card.

Future iterations of the programme could consider:

- Mapping and explicitly sharing the range of government services that older people may benefit from accessing online.

Improved access to health services and health literacy

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners access basic health services, such as booking appointments or viewing health records.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners confidently use digital health tools to monitor, manage, and enhance their health and wellbeing.

The outcome area *Improved access to health services and health literacy* is rated as on the pathway to excellence. Learners reported increased confidence accessing health tools and services online, such as using Manage My Health to check online medical records and results, book health appointments and order repeat prescriptions. Tutors helped learners become more prepared for medical events by teaching them how to locate their NHI (National Health Index) numbers and save them to their phones. Learners were supported to set up the numbers of known doctors and emergency contacts, as well as download health apps that encourage daily mental activity and physical exercise.

“Well, we had one called NymbL... which is an online exercise programme, I think ACC have it. It's for balance and not falling.” – Learner

For some learners, the programme improved their access to health services more practically by supporting their ability to engage with doctors and advocate for themselves in health-related settings. Tutors from one provider noted how teaching the Manage My Health content revealed learners in their community who were not enrolled in a GP, while others had no email address to be able to send medical documents, and the session provided an opportunity to deliver information and support these gaps in connection. Learning how to use translation software on their devices was deeply valued by learners from East Asian communities, who described no longer having to ask their children or professional translators to accompany them to doctors' appointments, reducing both familial and financial strain.

“When teaching patient portals like health consent, you can only register with a patient portal with a GP, and we found that in Kaitia not all participants were connected to a [GP] clinic.” – Tutor

“Before taking this course, I asked a Japanese translator to see the doctor. But now I don't have to. I can handle it myself to communicate, not just in English.” – Learner

While the health content was highly valued by learners, the extent to which learners were confidently engaging with digital health tools varied. Registering for and navigating patient portals required a range of digital skills, and some learners were limited by the timeframes available to cover this material.

“I think we could have done better in our sessions around the health content. We do explain and include patient portals, how to access, how to use on a digital device, and then we provide health websites they can access for free. But some weren't able to register in a patient portal during the programme.” – Tutor

Future iterations of the programme could consider:

- How to support meaningful engagement with the health content within limited delivery timeframes and for those not registered with a GP or Manage My Health.

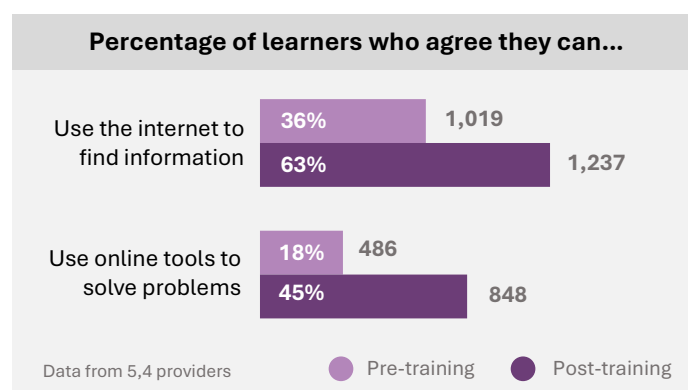
Using digital tools to solve practical, everyday challenges

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners use digital tools for simple everyday tasks (e.g., finding information, maps).	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners integrate digital tools in flexible ways to enhance quality of life and solve practical challenges, reporting being less dependent on others for digital support.

The outcome area *Using digital tools to solve practical, everyday challenges* is rated as excellent, as all interview participants reported going beyond a desire to learn digital skills and were integrating technology in their day-to-day lives. Before the programme, 36% of participants felt they could use the

internet to find information, whereas 63% felt they could do so after the programme. Similarly, confidence in using online tools to solve problems grew substantially, increasing from 18% to 45%. Learners reported checking the news, weather or traffic conditions ahead of planning daily activities, researching potential purchases or holiday destinations, and comparing prices on groceries, cars, and other services. Many described Google and AI platforms as dependable and easy ways to source a range of information, enabling learners to answer questions and enhance their decision-making.

The skills to use translation and navigation apps significantly improved learners' abilities to operate independently. Some groups reported applying Google Translate, Google Lens, or culturally specific translation apps to many aspects of daily life, to translate street signs, grocery products, government and medical letters, and public transport timetables. Others described using Google Maps to help in instances where they had gotten lost, or to track buses on their phone. As a result, these learners described feeling more empowered, confident and less anxious to travel independently.



“Somebody had fiddled with my CD on my car. It was all in Japanese and, because of these lessons, I was able to use a translator.” – Learner

As their skills grew, learners described becoming less dependent on others for digital and practical support. A key motivation for joining the programme was to be able to use technology independently, without having to constantly lean on family members for support.

“Of course, young people are all busy, busy, busy, and so older people ask three, four times they don't like it. All the time asking, asking, need, need, need. No, I don't want to do that. I learn and then I do myself. It's best way. We have to be independent ourselves.” – Learner

As they progressed through the programme, learners were able to regain control of daily digital tasks, such as managing their own bank accounts, updating their devices and connecting socially online. For those with limited mobility, digital skills enabled them to order groceries or use public transport. Ultimately, these skills helped to restore learners' confidence, independence, and sense of control over their lives.

“Some of the men who came to the group had lost their wives, and their wives had always managed things like the banking and looked after everything. They were having to learn how to function on their own.” – Tutor

“I am totally independent now. I don't have to ask anyone to pay my bills. That kind of annoyed me that I had to ask my husband. I was passing money over and I thought, you don't have any privacy.” – Learner

Connection, community, and wellbeing

Digital inclusion can result in broader benefits for participants such as social connection, belonging and ability to manage life efficiently and effectively. This evaluation found that learners were able to build social connections with others in the programme and many spoken to felt they had become part of a supportive community with relationships that continued post-programme. There were many examples of

learners using their new technological skills to stay connected or reconnect with friends and family through social media, video calls and messaging apps and feel closer to their loved ones. Learners were actively seeking out digital resources to support their wellbeing and life management, reporting that their digital skills have ultimately contributed to greater happiness, independence, and overall quality of life.

Being part of a cohort strengthens engagement and fosters social connections

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners build social connections with others in their cohort.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners feel part of a supportive community that reduces social isolation and supports continued learning.

The outcome area *Being part of a cohort strengthens engagement and fosters social connections* is rated as excellent, with all participants in the evaluation agreeing that social connection was a core outcome of the programme. Group environments gave learners an opportunity to meet new people, socialise, and overcome feelings of shyness and hesitation. Learners reported forming friendships and connections, which were strengthened through aspects of delivery such as group chats, shared homework exercises, and scheduled breaks with opportunities to share kai and talk before or after sessions. Tutors observed learners consistently supporting their peers and classes wanting to advance together as opposed to progress individually.

“We are gathering together over 65 and that is important, to socialise. We can share our experience or our lives, everything we can share.” – Learner

Shared learning environments helped participants feel comfortable and motivated to continue learning. Learners described their groups as safe, supportive, and non-judgemental, and valued learning alongside others who shared the same skill levels and challenges as them. One provider explained that, while a desire to learn digital skills motivated initial attendance, the group’s shared sense of community became what learners valued the most.

“Just being able to be with other people and having that same mindset and learning ability... being comfortable around everyone to be able to have your opinions and not be judged. There was none of that going on, because we were all in the same situation.” – Learner

“It made a real impact to our community, this programme. Beyond skills acquisition, it's friendships, it's community bonding, it's life discussions, it's shared grieving when somebody passes.” - Tutor

Participating in the programme connected learners to their local communities. For trainings delivered in libraries and community hubs, learners were exposed to IT and library staff who could provide future support. Some tutors noted how learners had been part of the same cultural or church communities previously but only got to know one another when brought together through the training. These connections were seen to support continued learning and a reduced sense of loneliness for participants.

“One of the tech guys from the library used to come occasionally, so we saw a familiar face and because he works down in the other library as well, it gives you points of contact.” - Learner

“We built a relationship in these sessions. I kind of missed them after that, because we got to see each other for six weeks and then all of a sudden, I didn't see them until Sunday [church]” – Tutor

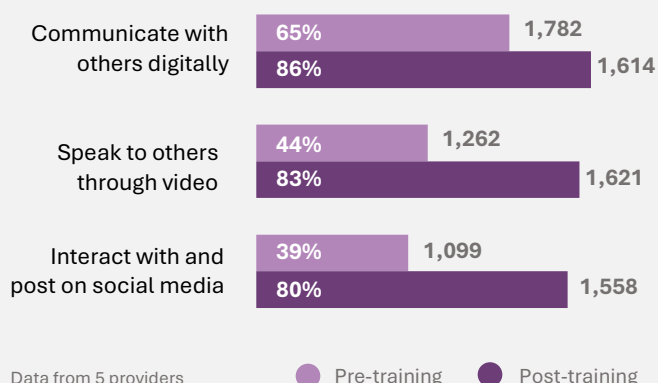
Building and maintaining interpersonal connections

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners occasionally use digital tools to stay connected with friends and whānau.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners experience enhanced social connections through engagement into digital social networks and feel less isolated.

The outcome area *Building and maintaining interpersonal connections* is rated as excellent.

The programme taught learners digital connectivity skills and how to communicate through platforms such as Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp and WeChat. Many knew how to communicate digitally ahead of the programme (65%) however the majority could do so by the end (86%). Less than half could speak with others through video tools (44%) or use social media (39%), and the proportion of learners with these skills rose significantly by programme completion (to 83% and 80%, respectively).

Percentage of learners who agree they can...



These skills enabled learners to enhance their social connections through engaging in digital networks, producing significant wellbeing benefits. Learners reported communicating more frequently and easily with their loved ones, and reconnecting with old friends and families who live abroad. Many described the joy and reduced sense of isolation that came with being able to share photos, video-call their children, and stay updated on family affairs and important milestones. Knowledge of popular platforms also supported intergenerational connections as learners engaged virtually with their grandchildren.

“Our grandson, over in Australia, went skateboarding, hit a rock and he broke his arm very severely and he was waiting in hospital, and I texted him to see if he was okay and we just had this coming and going. It was just plain wonderful because he didn’t have his mum with him or anything like that, it helped us both” - Learner

A small number of learners began the course initially uninterested in social media and virtual connectivity due to the perceived difficulty of digital platforms or fear of the financial cost of long-distance calls, but exposure and in-class practice supported significant shifts in opinion, with some voicing disbelief at the ease of digital communication.

“I would have never bothered with WhatsApp, but because we needed it for class, I downloaded it. I’m glad I did, because now I’ve had calls with my sons over in Australia, and a couple of my grandkids have been able to contact me too.”- Learner

“One learner was like oh I just answer my phone, that’s it, I don’t send texts, and so we sat with him, and he sent a lot of texts and now he said he wakes up and texts his kids every morning and he’s a quite elderly Samoan man, he loved it” - Tutor

The programme also supported connection and reduced isolation for those with additional barriers such as reduced mobility or financial constraints. Connection via online video-calls was a skill highly valued by these learners, overcoming the cost of travel for families living apart, and enabling cultural reconnection

for those whose health no longer allowed them to see their villages or countries of birth in person. One provider described the impact that learning a phone number had for a learner in their community:

“Being able to actually call her whānau for the first time after her stroke was absolutely massive. Her family were just so thankful for that because now they knew that if their mum really needed them, she had a way of calling them. Nobody knew that she had the capacity to remember numbers even though she didn't have the capacity to remember words or letters.” - Leadership

Wellbeing and life management

Not yet meeting	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Below the level outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> .	Learners occasionally access online information for life management and wellbeing support.	Between the levels outlined for <i>meeting expectations</i> and <i>excellent</i> .	Learners actively seek out digital resources to support their wellbeing and life management, reporting that their digital skills have contributed to greater happiness, independence, and overall quality of life.

The outcome area *Wellbeing and life management* is rated as excellent. The programme supported learners in their life management by building foundational skills that widened their sense of being able to contribute to society in several ways. Some learners identified the applicability of computer, email and digital notetaking skills in preparing them to return to work. One tutor noted how many kaumātua in their programme were able to continue to connect with their community by applying their technology skills in their volunteer work as Māori Wardens. Having the technical skills to organise social calendars and stay up to date with community events enhanced learners’ abilities to integrate into their communities.

“I'm hoping to go back for a few days selling real estate, so that's harder now because you're competing with younger people. There's not much I don't know about properties, but you know, you've got to be more switched on, they all use their computer for doing open homes, emails, or anything like that... [What you learn in these courses] all makes a difference.” - Learner

Some tutors described discussions naturally extending beyond digital skills to ground topics in local contexts. Learners were encouraged to reflect more broadly on the integration of technology in their lives, and how they can use their digital skills to support decisions related to their health and wellbeing.

“Along with a lot of direct teaching, there's a lot of indirect teaching which is relevant to their lives. We'll have a conversation around health and go, OK, there's no afterhours here anymore, everybody has to go to the emergency department if you get sick. Obviously, you don't want to get sick. So, how do you better manage your health? And then we can talk about that.” - Tutor

Learners stated that their digital skills have since made their lives more meaningful, enriching, and that this programme “makes life possible”. Having greater access to a variety of information and services has empowered learners with independence and a sense of control over their lives, with many already beginning to share their knowledge with others. Learners expressed pride in their learning achievements and how far they had come from being reliant on their loved ones for digital support. Ultimately, learners reported that increased digital inclusion has supported their happiness and enhanced their quality of life.

“We can help other people now. Our friends that are all the same age and struggling, yeah, we can say how easy it is, not to be frightened.” - Learner

“I feel like my life has become more meaningful and it's more shining. That makes me happy.” - Learner

3. Cultural perspectives in design and delivery

This section explores how cultural perspectives were incorporated into the design and delivery of the programme, and how these approaches have contributed to programme outcomes.

Cultural adaptations and tailoring

All six providers of the Digital Literacy Training for Seniors programme adapted and tailored the programme in broad ways to ensure the content, engagement approaches and methods of delivery were appropriate, relevant, and meaningful to the older adults in their communities. For the four providers who participated in discussions, this evaluation found that cultural responsiveness and adaptations were fundamental enablers of programme outcomes by making learners feel safe, respected and capable. Adaptations strengthened trust, deepened comprehension, and helped sustain learners' confidence and participation in the programme.

Values-based approaches and cultural frameworks built safe foundations

Across providers working with Māori, Pacific and East Asian communities, each tutor intentionally led with values and cultural frameworks that aligned with their learners. For some Pacific providers, this meant leading with Talanoa (a Pacific method of dialogue and storytelling) to scaffold learning and build a sense of inclusion, reciprocity and community. The Pacific learners of one provider were also encouraged to invite grandchildren or younger family members along as a way of upholding intergenerational learning practices and embedding knowledge and skills in learners' home environments. For one Māori provider, the programme was delivered within a long-standing Kaupapa Māori organisation, where digital learning is woven within the delivery of broader whānau-ora and wellbeing kaupapa. The provider's core values, such as whakapapa, manaakitanga, wairua and whanaungatanga, underpin all of their services, and provided a culturally grounded foundation that enabled the tutor to meet kaumātua where they are and respond to their holistic needs.

"The design itself is from a cultural framework and the name itself... the concept was to be in the home where younger family members are." – Leadership

"The other thing is that's not her only job... making sure they've got what they need. She's providing a huge wraparound [support], and she's connected to the families as well, it's not just the kaumātua. She does a massive job." – Leadership

For East Asian groups, tutors incorporated values of respect, patience and celebration in line with preferred learning styles; explaining that, for example, while Korean learners responded well to structured, formal learning environments, Japanese learners preferred smaller, conversational spaces. Values-based approaches and familiar cultural frameworks were seen to create environments of cultural safety, which helped learners to feel supported emotionally, socially and spiritually.

"I'm younger than them. I'm always kind, nice, patient, showing respect." – Tutor

By incorporating the values of reciprocity, hospitality, and shared practices into their lessons, providers explained their intention to make classes feel safe, welcoming, and foster a sense of belonging among participants. For some groups, classes were opened with prayer, karakia, a shared blessing or a song, while one class of Japanese learners began by following a familiar radio-based exercise programme. Celebrations of progress and achievement were also grounded in shared cultural practices, with some groups given a koha to plan graduation celebrations, and others receiving certificates and small tokens at more formalised ceremonies.

Providers described kai as a cultural practice that was central to building relationships, with many sharing kai before, during, or after sessions. For one Pacific provider, kai was also a way to include

whānau, with leftovers taken home and larger meals held to mark milestones. For Japanese, Korean and Chinese learners, tea breaks and shared lunches played a similar role, creating warmth and connection.

Diverse locations and flexible delivery schedules aligned with specific needs

Providers selected locations that were close, accessible and familiar to learners. The programme was delivered across marae, churches, community centres, public housing facilities, libraries, and the individual where of learners and their whānau; locations which were described as learners' "own environments". Providers selected locations that resonated with individual learning styles and remained flexible to changes. For example, when one tutor identified that most Korean and Chinese learners lived far from their library-based classes, a new library was selected in closer proximity to these cohorts.

Remaining flexible in delivery was seen to remove physical and mental barriers to learning and skills acquisition. Group-based training brought together members of shared communities, such as members of the same church congregation or housing unit, and participants explained that learning alongside familiar faces reduced feelings of shyness and sustained their motivation to attend.

"And also, some people very shy, even though they don't know how to do it, but they too shy to ask. If you're sitting with somebody who knows you, then you're a bit more open to that person than that person who doesn't know you. Yeah, so the shyness with Pacific Islanders." – Learner

Providers working with kaumātua explained that for some learners, a formal learning environment did not align with their kaupapa and the values of their learners, and some learners did not feel comfortable or have the physical mobility to attend group-based lessons. In response, the tutor from one provider visited kaumātua in their homes to provide personalised, one-on-one training, and another provider actively worked to reassure learners that their sessions were informal, relational, and non-judgemental.

"It also lets me know what's going on for her too. See if we were in a group, she might not get her word out... This way, I get to learn what's going on for the individual" – Tutor

Providers also aligned delivery schedules with learners' practical realities. Classes were scheduled to accommodate family and childcare commitments, such as avoiding school holidays for learners from cultures that commonly involve grandparents in childcare roles. Tutors avoided overlapping with cultural calendars, church activities and community events, and selected times based on group preferences and accessible transport times (such as Gold Card travel hours).

Community-based tutors and delivery staff brought diverse knowledge and skills

Across the programme, the tutors, volunteers and other kaimahi (staff) involved in delivering the training had deep knowledge and connections to learners' own communities, which helped to increase recruitment and sustain participation. Some tutors held existing roles as community connectors or were providers of wider community-based programmes. One provider recruited volunteers who spoke the same languages as learners, and another created a 'navigator' role, whereby churches selected younger members of their own congregations to become trainers who were already known and trusted. Both learners and tutors described the positive impacts of being taught by familiar faces from their own cultural communities.

"I was actually hesitant, but then I know [my tutor]. We are in church, so that is one of the reasons I can push myself for coming in, otherwise maybe I don't want to go." – Learner

"Everyone in the Tongan community know [navigator]. Everyone in the Samoan community know [navigator]. So, for them to have the two navigators, I didn't see anyone have trouble as an elderly person. I think they all put down their guard and were vulnerable to learn." – Tutor

The existing trust held by one tutor with the kaumātua in her community was described as pivotal in the success of the programme, where delivery was embedded in wider wraparound support, and both learners and the tutor described one another as ‘like family’. This whānau-centred approach also unveiled deeper impacts of limited digital literacy such as cases of financial abuse for some learners, which may not have been uncovered in more formal learning environments.

“It's not a job and it's not just normal people walking in, we're all like family. Somebody that you trust and awhi, you'll have them in your home.” – Tutor

Accessible, tailored materials and relevant content ensured cultural responsiveness

Many providers selected bilingual tutors who could teach in learners’ first languages and tailored training materials to suit language and accessibility needs. For example, one provider developed step-by-step picture-based workbooks to overcome literacy and language barriers, while another produced short, instructional videos and printed materials in several East Asian languages.

“Our [learners] don't really like sitting there and reading and there's a language barrier. We made it easier for them and made it just pictures.” – Leadership

For many learners from Pacific and East Asian communities, learning in their own language enabled greater comprehension, and for learners with no or limited English, it made participation possible. Lessons in their own language helped learners feel relaxed and able to fully engage by removing the need to translate complex ideas and reducing the fear of “getting it wrong”. One learner described how they decided to remain in the programme after the English-speaking instructor of their class swapped with another who could speak Cook Islands Māori.

“When we first started at the library, it wasn't [the tutor we have now], it was another guy... we didn't really understand much. Later on, when we moved here, things changed. When it's explained in our own language, we learn much, much quicker.” - Learner

“We can learn the fine detail about it – we can learn with confidence, relax, and don't need to translate every detail.” - Learner

Class content was also tailored to remain culturally grounded and transferable, with emphasis placed on different areas or skillsets that were meaningful to learners. Different East Asian groups were taught specific communication apps most used in their own cultural networks, such as Kakaotalk, Line, WhatsApp and WeChat. Tutors explained how for many Māori learners, social connectivity skills were most valued and sought after, and in response trainings focused less on other areas. Similarly, some digital services and portals were less prioritised among East Asian cohorts, with one tutor giving the example of most learners in their class already engaging with the same Korean GP. This responsive approach allowed learners to gain skills that enabled greater participation in their cultural communities.

“The structure is provided from the office, but then we designed for each language, each community, what they need. It's really mixed with daily life.” – Tutor

“Her niece passed, and as part of the healing, I went round and showed her how to use InShot, and we made a video [of photos of her niece] because this lady takes 50 million photos. She sat there and made one herself. She shared it with her whānau, and it made it extra special, because she said to her brother, this is what I've done.” - Tutor

Together, these approaches formed the foundations for safe engagement with learners. Cultural responsiveness created a sense of belonging that supported learners to feel respected, capable, and able to fully engage in the programme.

4. Learning for future implementation

This section reflects on what has been learned about how the programme's design and delivery features support older people's digital learning and where there is room to strengthen this further. It begins by outlining the key enablers that underpinned positive outcomes, such as features that build confidence and create a safe learning environment. It then sets out four areas for improvement, highlighting practical changes that could enhance reach, accessibility, and the depth and sustainability of digital skills in future.

Enablers that support positive outcomes

This evaluation found a number of features that were key to enabling the success of participants, both in the core design of the programme and the tailored approaches to delivery taken by providers:

Safe, respectful and relational environments

Tutors led with patience, kindness and humour, which created environments that felt safe and respectful for learners. Embedding cultural practices, normalising mistakes and modelling curiosity and exploration helped learners feel emotionally and psychologically safe to engage openly without fear of judgement.

Group- and community-based delivery models

Group-based learning was highly valued by learners, creating a sense of solidarity and shared success. The social connections formed in class motivated ongoing attendance, with classes seen as a source of joy, fun, and community. Tutors observed learners growing in confidence as they used their skills to teach other classmates and sharing personal experiences which grounded content in real-life and deepened group understanding.

Tutors embedded in community settings

Tutors were active members of the communities they taught, which proved beneficial both in participant recruitment and in sustaining connections with learners through ongoing, informal interactions. For trainings embedded in wider community programmes, tutors and learners had already formed trusted relationship with one another which supported early engagement.

Facilitation and interpersonal skills

Learners described their tutors as skilled, passionate, and knowledgeable facilitators. Many brought valuable previous experience in areas such as digital technology, mental health or community support provision, which deepened their abilities to remain flexible. The human qualities of empathy, respect, warmth and fun were seen to be just as important as technical skills in supporting success.

Individualised support

Participants joined the programme with a spectrum of knowledge and learning needs. Having additional volunteers, support persons, or reduced class sizes ensured participants received individualised support and felt comfortable asking for help without feeling as though they were interrupting the group or relying on nearby peers. Inviting family members as 'buddies' or including whānau in other ways extended knowledge of digital skills to learners' home environments. One provider invited graduates of the programme to come back as volunteers. In some cases, drop-in clinics or one-on-one sessions were arranged to meet additional support needs.

Flexible, adaptive teaching methods

Tailoring the content to have clear relevance and visible applicability to learners' daily lives was described as key to sustaining learners' interest levels and motivation to upskill. Repetition and revision were frequently requested by learners and flexible delivery schedules helped to accommodate these requests.

Multiple modes of learning

A range of learning modes including workbooks, digital videos, and a balance of practical and theory-based content helped to reinforce learners' memories and extend learning beyond the class. Homework activities and shared group chats motivated learners to apply new skills in real life, creating opportunities for success that strengthened learners' independence and confidence in their abilities.

Free participation and resource provision

Offering free participation, learning resources, and in some cases, devices, removed practical barriers to participation and supported digital equity. Workbooks, hard copy PDFs, and step-by-step visuals were commonly highlighted by learners as one of the most valuable resources of the programme, helping learners reinforce content covered in class.

Local community venues

Venues were chosen based on their familiarity and accessibility to learners, taking into consideration parking and public transport options and mobility needs. Delivering in local spaces enabled the programme to leverage existing networks in recruitment, and exposed learners to further resources and supports that they could continue to access post-programme such as library staff and drop-in sessions.

Cultural responsiveness

Incorporating cultural perspectives into materials, locations, delivery schedules and content supported a sense of belonging for participants, deepened comprehension, and formed the foundations for safe engagement with different communities. This area is explored in more detail in section 3 (above).

Recommendations for future implementation

Ensure adequate resourcing to meet the complex needs of learners

Providers in this evaluation reported significant variation in the demographics of class attendees. Ages ranged significantly from those in their early 60's through to individuals in their 90's, which had implications for individuals' exposure to technology and how quickly they were able to pick up new skills. Providers also pointed to the variation of cognitive and physical abilities, with disabilities such as dementia, arthritis and differences in cognitive ability impacting the ways that tutors were able to teach, and the levels of tailoring and repetition needed within each group. There were also a variety of socio-economic backgrounds within groups which meant some participants had devices with less capability than more expensive, modern devices, all of which required extra tailoring and individualised support.

Tutors also faced practical complexities in implementation. Variable class sizes created challenges, with some providers feeling they weren't able to provide the tutor-to-learner support needed at times. Two providers spoke about the challenge of having to work with both Apple and Android devices, which meant having to sit with each learner individually at times and learning how to work with a new operating system. Tutors also spoke about the volume of administrative work required to run classes, which at times required a lot of paperwork and reporting that went beyond their expectations.

Ultimately, tutors were very busy and felt the responsibility of balancing the needs and sensitivity of learners with the need to keep classes moving and meet contractual obligations. A few tutors spoke about receiving calls from learners outside of class time or working additional hours to adapt materials to meet specific needs. One organisation recruited volunteers to support delivery as the FTE allotted was not enough to meet the diverse needs in class. Another established a drop-in clinic for learners needing extra help, and some collected donations from participants to help cover refreshments to ensure the environment was welcoming, which were additional to funding received in contracted delivery.

“Sometimes they would ask about topics unrelated to the class, which could slow down progress. It’s also important to be sensitive to their feelings, as they can be easily upset if not approached with care.” – Tutor

Recommendations for future implementations

- Funding adequate to match expected contract volumes without the need to ask for unpaid support from communities.
- Consider including contract lines for refreshments to ensure facilitators are able to create welcoming environments.
- Support the promotion and visibility of existing connections between programmes and local alternative support pathways (i.e., drop-in clinics) as options for ongoing support.

Ensure a strategic approach to programme delivery to meet demand

Participating delivery providers all reported experiencing high demand for course offerings, particularly in communities with high unmet needs. Some providers had long waitlists and fully booked classes, despite the only promotion for the programme being word-of-mouth. Demand stretched further than delivery areas, with individuals from rural parts of the country asking for classes to be run in their areas. Tutors believe there is value in supporting and meeting this need in more remote locations and expanding the programme to support other priority and ethnic groups.

As waitlists grew, providers experimented with alternative approaches to meeting demand. Some expanded their class sizes, which created challenges with balancing quantity of learners with individualised support. Others reduced the length of classes but spoke about the long distances that some learners were traveling to take part and the additional burden that this placed on them. There was also a need identified to streamline classes to cater to different levels.

In some cases, providers also found it difficult to move graduated learners on from the course, as many saw their groups as a source of weekly socialisation. Learners’ frequent need for revision and repetition resulted in many returning for additional support, with some re-enrolling to cover the content a second time. This challenged providers who had to balance contracted participation targets with ensuring learners who graduate have gained a true grasp in the material and can apply this independently. Setting clear expectations about course eligibility and length was seen to be key to supporting learners to graduate from the course in order to open up additional spots. Those who ran courses in libraries or community hubs found that they were able to upskill staff members to provide ongoing support to older people in the community as needed. Providers also spoke about setting clear expectations about course attendance, to ensure attendance commitment from learners.

Recommendations for future implementations

- Initial testing and class streaming to ensure learners have similar needs and class sizes are the right size for tutors to be able to meet these needs.
- Formalise a social programme that seniors can graduate to, e.g., a local social club that self-organises through an online group chat. This could be facilitated through the tutors with a funding line in contracting.

Adapt the Essential Digital Skills framework for the needs of older learners

The Essential Digital Skills framework was viewed by providers as a good starting point for the programme however, providers heavily tailored many aspects of the programme to ensure it was appropriate for the different needs of learners. Tutors often found that learners entered classes without some of the foundational skills needed to engage with course materials, which are not specifically designed for older audiences. This meant classes couldn't be planned ahead of time and some providers broke students into groups based on their skill levels to enable additional foundational learning to be brought into the course. Some organisations found it was more effective to treat classes as an opportunity for learners to bring their specific challenges and workshop solutions as a group, while others ran drop-in clinics after classes, which were well attended. These reflexive and fluid ways of teaching were seen as vital to supporting learners to pick up the essential skills in the EDS framework.

Providers noted that the foundational course material had some limitations. Privacy concerns meant that a few tutors were unable to support learners with online banking and setting up RealMe logins. In these instances, tutors instructed learners work through the process with family members, and participants shared disappointment that this was something they did not cover in class.

Providers also adapted course materials to be more culturally- and location-appropriate. This included adding karakia and waiata, and tea breaks for shared conversation and bonding. A few tutors highlighted a gap in New Zealand-based video resources or Pacific community-focused apps and websites, which reduced the relevancy of content they could draw on.

Recommendations for future implementation

- Explore potential to align EDS content with the specific needs of older people.
- Create New Zealand specific content, such as videos and resources to support older people to work through relevant and familiar examples.
- Create course material for target populations so that examples and activities are relevant and familiar for example specific ethnic communities.
- Develop materials for banking and other areas that can't be covered that learners can take home and work through with a family member.

Balance flexibility in delivery with OfS support and collaboration

Providers highly valued the flexibility provided by the Office for Seniors in implementing the programme. Having the freedom to customise courses to the needs of communities was important and providers felt they were able to do this through the contracting arrangements. One provider also spoke about the flexibility provided during COVID as many learners were compromised and unable to continue lessons.

However, one area where providers would have benefitted from more support and collaboration with the Office for Seniors was in monitoring and reporting. The evaluation team observed that delays to commissioning the evaluation meant that programme delivery had been underway for over one year. An outcome of this was that there was not the opportunity to co-design and adapt the monitoring and evaluation tools provided by Office for Seniors with providers or participants. This led to providers adapting the Office for Seniors materials to work for their specific audiences, which created an administrative burden for some providers and meant there were inconsistencies in monitoring data across the programme.

Some providers also felt the tools, even after adaptations, were not well-suited for learners and their specific needs and contexts. Challenges of the standardised data collection and monitoring approach

highlighted by providers included complexity of language and topics in surveys, confined response choices (yes/no) and follow up timeframes for tracking behaviour change that were not well aligned with the lived realities of their older learners.

Recommendations for future implementation

- Implement a coordinated and ideally co-designed approach to monitoring that will work for target communities and providers.
- Regular feedback on quarterly reporting from providers and collation of data into an overall report so providers can see the collective impact of the programme.

5. Final reflections

Overall, this evaluation found that the Digital Literacy Training for Seniors programme achieved all of its intended outcomes. Learners acquired skills in foundational digital technology, online safety, social connectivity and key online services and resources that were transferred into their daily lives. These skills unlocked broader wellbeing benefits for older adults who took part in the programme, increasing their social connections, sense of independence and self-empowerment, and opportunities to participate in society, which were ultimately found to enhance learners' levels of happiness and quality of life.

This evaluation highlighted a number of key delivery and design features that enabled or contributed to the success of programme outcomes, many of which touch on the unique approaches and considerations required to teach digital literacy to older learners. The programme was met with high demand from target populations, and many participants in the evaluation voiced their support for the continuation and expansion of digital literacy support provision for older adults. Key areas for improvement have been highlighted to inform future programmes in this space that will continue to build digital equity and inclusion among older adults in New Zealand.

Appendix 1: Summary of provider approaches

360 Tautua Trust: Matua go Digital

Matua go Digital provides culturally tailored digital literacy training to meet the needs and priorities of Pacific matua (elders). The programme weaves together cultural traditions, languages, and beliefs - such as faith, blessings, and talanoa - to build trust and foster engagement. It emphasises group learning and building confidence and digital skills in a safe, culturally familiar environment. Their key values and ways of working include:

- **Pacific languages and values at the core:** Digi Champs (trainers) deliver sessions in learners' first languages for comfort and ease of understanding. While many participants speak English, they feel more confident learning in their mother tongues. Workbooks, translated by The Pacific Languages Centre are provided as personal manuals for future reference and lifelong learning.
- **Tailoring for relevance:** Tablets, chosen for their portability larger screen size, and simplicity, are practical for everyday tasks like attending church or staying connected with family. Within the OfS programme framework, content is tailored to the needs of Matua (Elders). For example, for many, communication with family 'back home' is crucial for well-being. Digital skills also provide access to cultural resources and services, enhancing connection to heritage.
- **Community-centred learning through partnerships:** The programme works closely with local Digi-Connectors (referrers), churches, and community groups for referrals and outreach to those most likely to benefit. Trainers (Digi-Champs), often local themselves, provide ongoing support and Health and social service providers sometimes participate in graduation ceremonies, reinforcing the communal learning experience.
- **Ongoing connection and support:** Learners stay engaged through follow-up tasks that encourage applying new skills in real-world contexts. Recapping and reviewing ensures skills are retained. Matua go Digital maintains contact through email, sharing success stories and offering troubleshooting or warranty support. On request and where possible, refresher sessions or additional support are provided.
- **Honour and celebration:** Celebrating learners' success is a vital part of the programme. Graduation ceremonies are held to honour participants in front of their families and friends, offering formal recognition through certificates and testimonies. The celebrations emphasise the significant contributions elders have made to their communities. Hearing from carers and family members reinforces the value of the skills gained through the programme.
- **Reducing barriers:** To ensure accessibility, sessions are held in familiar community settings, like churches, with transportation and meals provided. Tablets, funded by the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, are supplied along with a one-off credit. Small group sizes create a safe, supportive environment that accommodates individual learning styles.

Age Concern Auckland Asian Services: Digital Literacy Training

The Age Concern Auckland (ACA) Digital Literacy (DL) Training programme is designed to meet the specific needs of non-English speaking East Asian communities, offering sessions in Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, and Korean. Minimising language and cultural barriers and ensuring learning environments are safe, comfortable, and inclusive, and fostering social and service connections and are central to the approach. Key values and ways of working include:

- **Responsiveness to diverse cultural needs:** Each stream of the programme is tailored to address the diverse needs of the three communities to foster trust and engagement. For instance, ACA recognises that Japanese learners often prefer smaller groups sizes, creating a more intimate and comfortable learning environment. While for Chinese learners, session

schedules are designed around childcare responsibilities, acknowledging the caregiving roles many of these seniors play within their families. This responsiveness supports the DL Training Programme's focus on building learner confidence and engaging seniors in ways that reflect their lived realities and cultural norms.

- **Lifelong learning:** Lifelong learning is an important value in East Asian cultures, with education seen as fundamental to personal development and wellbeing, particularly as individuals age. The programme reflects this by fostering an environment that encourages ongoing learning and stimulation. Sessions are generally delivered at Auckland Libraries and Age Concern premises in response to preference for more formal, classroom-based learning settings. Each group uses familiar Apps and platforms to extend learning beyond the classroom, such as WeChat for Chinese participants, KakaoTalk for Korean learners, and Line for Japanese groups. These platforms also provide spaces for ongoing interaction and information sharing, allowing seniors to practice their digital skills, ask questions, share experiences, and stay socially connected.
- **Peer support and group work:** Group learning is central to the model and encourages peer support and fosters social connections. Learners are grouped based on shared characteristics, such as living in the same area, enabling them to support one another during and outside of sessions, reducing isolation and fostering a sense of community among participants. Previous learners are often invited back as mentors, providing new learners with guidance and support from someone who shares their background and has already navigated the programme. Volunteers from within communities also offer one-on-one support during sessions.
- **Service connections:** The programme exposes seniors to other Age Concern services by holding sessions at the same venues and times as other offerings, helping participants become more comfortable engaging with these resources. Promotional materials for Chinese services include QR codes linking to WeChat groups, where seniors can ask questions, provide feedback, and stay updated on other programmes. Coordinators monitor these groups, identifying needs, and when required passing on information and referring seniors to relevant services.

Moana Connect: DIGIFALE

The DIGIFALE programme is grounded in a Pacific worldview and values. Sessions are delivered in learners' first languages and/or English, based on their preference, and are smartphone-based for accessibility and relevance to participants' everyday lives. Elders receive a smartphone and credit to further enhance accessibility. The programme creates a safe, culturally familiar learning environment, incorporating faith-based elements, Talanoa, shared meals, leadership development, intergenerational support, and community-led approaches. Key values and ways of working include:

- **Community-embedded:** The DIGIFALE programme is grounded in the principle of "by community, for community". Working with local partners from community, faith-based and cultural organisation sessions are delivered by trainers and facilitators (navigators) drawn from a range of demographics within learner's communities. This approach meets participants where they are and ensures they are learning in comfortable settings and from facilitators who understand their cultural context.
- **Leadership development and community capacity building:** Chief Navigators, selected by the community, are embedded within the cohort, fostering trust and engagement. They also play a key role in supporting the development of other trainers, particularly younger navigators, by mentoring them on session delivery and facilitation. This approach cultivates leadership development and long-term capability within the community.
- **Intergenerational support and flexibility:** DIGIFALE's reciprocal, intergenerational learning model encourages the sharing of knowledge across age groups, with trainers and volunteers representing both older and younger generations. Volunteers play a key role in programme

delivery, and previous participants are encouraged to return as mentors to new cohorts, following a Tuakana-Teina (older/expert – younger/less expert) model. The flexibility of the Chief Navigator role, which adapts to the specific needs of each group, ensures that the training remains relevant and responsive to participants' evolving needs.

- **Fostering relationships and access to resources:** The programme focuses on building social connections within the cohort, with navigators, and through partnerships with community organisations. By delivering shared learning sessions in familiar community spaces, relationships and sense of belonging are strengthened, isolation is reduced, and participants are linked to community resources.
- **Maintaining connection:** Embedded within elders' communities, navigators can provide support outside of and beyond scheduled sessions if needed. The programme also maintains ongoing engagement with learners through regular check-ins and email updates, including reminders of weekly modules and tasks; ensuring that participants remain connected and supported throughout their learning journey.
- **Reciprocity and respect:** Reciprocity and relationships of mutual respect are central to the DIGIFALE approach. Koha is offered to acknowledge the time, expertise, and commitment of facilitators and champions. The knowledge and experiences participants bring is also recognised, creating space for this expertise to be shared and celebrated. The Tuakana-Teina model further supports this kaupapa, enabling former participants share their learning.

Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa: Better digital futures for seniors

Better Digital Futures for Seniors is delivered through a federation approach, where Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa (DIAA) leverages community knowledge, relationships and infrastructure to provide tailored skill building support to diverse communities when and where they need it. The programme is open to all seniors, while community partners use their networks to ensure that the training reaches those who will benefit from building digital capacities and confidence. Key values and ways of working:

- **Extensive and diverse partnership network:** At the core of Better Digital Futures is a community-embedded approach that relies on the trusted relationships of local organisations and individuals. DIAA works with a broad range of delivery and referral partners, including libraries, retirement villages, social housing providers, community centres, social service organisations, and marae. These trusted partners have strong connections within their communities, ensuring the programme reaches seniors in ways that feel familiar and supportive. Partners are often sustainable organisations with the capacity to continue providing support well beyond DIAA's direct involvement.
- **Flexible and tailored learning pathways:** The programme offers six designated learning pathways, including a multi-choice option that allows learners to customise based on personal needs and interests. Each programme is tailored to specific needs of the cohort, and additional modules or drop-in sessions allow for further exploration of particular apps or skills. Local partners can adjust session timeframes and course content to align with learner needs, providing customised, contextualised learning. Group chats and online learning platforms further foster engagement and ongoing learning.
- **Capacity building for sustainability:** DIAA uses a "train-the-trainer" model, equipping local partners with an online curriculum to standardise and streamline delivery. This replicable model provides partners with the flexibility to adapt the curriculum while ensuring they have ongoing operational support. Promotional materials are also customisable, helping partners effectively engage their unique communities.
- **Outreach model for equitable access:** To reach rural and underserved communities, DIAA uses an outreach model that includes DORA, a mobile, connected classroom. DORA brings digital

learning to areas without connectivity or other training options. Partnerships with co-funders such as Spark NZ provide additional resources, like modems and internet access, to ensure connectivity for digitally isolated seniors.

- **Inclusive, group learning environment:** The programme's group learning model embraces an Ako ethos, where everyone learns from each other. Small groups of 6-8 learners allow for personalised support in a comfortable environment, enabling seniors to build confidence and skills alongside peers. Connections formed in these sessions often extend beyond the programme, fostering ongoing peer support and community bonds.

Katoa Connect: Kaumātua Senior Connect

Kaumātua Senior Connect adopts a strengths-based, mana-enhancing approach to supporting digital literacy for Māori and Pacific seniors. The delivery model centres on language, culture, and community connections to create an environment best suited to enable upskilling in alignment with new and emerging technologies. Using a coalition model with local community partners and facilitators, the programme ensures cultural relevance and accessibility. Key values and ways of working:

- **Centring language and culture:** The programme is designed to be Māori and Pacific centred, promoting the use of Te Reo Māori, Pacific languages and local protocols to create an engaging, comfortable and respectful learning environment. Sessions are held in familiar settings such as marae, churches, and community hubs, where learners feel most at ease. Facilitation and training guides are provided in learners' first languages.
- **Individualised learner support:** Flexibility and personalisation to each cohort and learner are central to the delivery model. During registration, each learner develops an individual learning plan, allowing them to identify learning goals and aspirations and reflect on achievements on conclusion of the programme. Graduations on completion of the programme acknowledge and celebrate participants' progress and accomplishments.
- **Small group learning for comfort and mutual support:** Group learning fosters a supportive environment where learners feel comfortable and can work at their own pace. Small class sizes allow for tailored support, enabling participants to build confidence and skills within a familiar group setting, often with people they know. The supportive connections formed in these groups frequently extend beyond formal sessions, with ongoing peer support and information sharing often continuing online.
- **Locally led coalition model:** In collaboration with local referral and delivery partners, Katoa Connect draws on local expertise to hold sessions in culturally relevant spaces and formats. Facilitators are from within the community, creating a "by and for community" model that allows learners to work with familiar faces in settings that are known and comfortable and honour local tikanga or protocols. This coalition approach relies on Katoa Connect's extensive network of community relationships and resources, building on trusted local knowledge and connections.
- **Technology access and resources:** Each learner receives a tablet, a device chosen for senior usability based on feedback from previous programmes. The curriculum is customised for tablet use, and participants receive a data subsidy, tablet case, and training guide. Upon completing the programme, learners retain their device to support ongoing digital engagement and independence.

Takiri Mai Te Ata Trust at Kōkiri Marae: Kaumātua Programme – Digital Literacy Support

Kōkiri deliver a Digital Literacy support programme (DLSP) that is grounded in kaupapa Māori, and available to local kaumātua (Māori elders) regardless of ethnicity. It is embedded in their Kaumātua Programme, that regularly brings together kaumātua from the local communities in culturally familiar

environments to socialise, share kai, learn, play, and connect. Kōkiri deliver short, focused presentations to build awareness and interest in digital skills, challenges or concerns during Kaumātua Programme group sessions. These presentations are reinforced by 1:1 individual support sessions, according to their needs, goals, and abilities. The programme focuses on learning for use and following the pace and interests of kaumātua, therefore there is no pre-defined curriculum or completion point of the DLSP. Key values and ways of working include:

- **Guided by learners:** Kōkiri are responsive to and led by learners' needs, goals, and abilities. Content and topics follow the pace and interests of their kaumātua, focusing on skills and knowledge that is relevant to them rather than a predetermined curriculum. The DLSP acknowledges that their kaumātua have varied abilities and confidence with digital technology. Some are tech savvy; others face multiple barriers and causes of lower digital literacy. Each kaumātua builds notebook with steps of skills and knowledge they want. Kōkiri also recognises that there is not a linear path to digital literacy or competency for their kaumātua. It is natural for abilities and confidence to fluctuate and to be significantly impacted by their health. Kaumātua may drop in or out of attending the Kaumātua Programme sessions, and their digital literacy needs and goals may change over time.
- **Digital technology used as an enabler for wellbeing:** The goals of the DLSP focus on the ways that digital literacy and competency can enable wellbeing of kaumātua, and their whānau, especially social connection, independence, safety, and resilience. When registering someone for the DLSP, kaimahi personalise the outcomes and goals for each kaumātua. These outcomes typically connect to their broader goals and interactions across Kōkiri services and programmes. Kōkiri recognise that developing digital literacy can enable kaumātua to access support services from the government and community providers that, in turn, support overall wellbeing. It can also provide be a prevention and protection from technology-facilitated elder and financial abuse.
- **Holistic, wrap-around, whānau-centred:** Kōkiri works to understand what kaumātua need and weaves services together to wrap around them. Support to develop digital literacy, competency, and confidence is one of many services Kōkiri offer. The DLSP is integrated into the Kaumātua Programme activities and outreach. The Kaumātua Programme provides a stable, trusted, and consistent touchpoint through which kaimahi can connect with kaumātua. Kaimahi can deliver skill building and support sessions during Kaumātua Programme group sessions or during 1:1s. The DLSP is also integrated into other established programs and services as well. Kaimahi working with kaumātua from other programs can share background context information about kaumātua. This helps DLSP kaimahi tailor the digital literacy support topics and timing to best support kaumātua. It also helps kaimahi to connect kaumātua to other support services within Kōkiri as needed.
- **Valuing relationships and trust:** Kōkiri and their kaimahi recognise the time and effort needed to build strong relationships that enable trust. Kōkiri value and hire staff that have existing relationships and that can build trust with kaumātua and whānau. Kaimahi build on previous interactions and connections and see kaumātua as whānau. For some kaumātua, the challenges they face can be embarrassing or fearful to admit, including being scammed or experiencing controlling or abusive behaviour by whānau or others. Kaumātua need to feel safe to trust kaimahi to be vulnerable about their needs, goals, and challenges.

Appendix 2: OfS Digital Literacy Training Theory of Change

Seniors have sufficient opportunities to engage, contribute, and thrive in a digital society

Impact							
When we sustain these outcomes long-term and at scale we will contribute to...	Greater independence	Strengthened social connection	Increased opportunities to contribute to society	Greater access to health and other Govt/social services	Enhanced wellbeing: thriving - emotionally, physically and spiritually		

Seniors are applying and expanding their digital skills, integrating technology into daily life to meet their needs and enhance wellbeing

Medium-term outcomes								
We will know we're achieving the right things when we see...	Greater safety when engaging online	Able to use government websites	Able to access essential resources (e.g., online shopping, support services)	Improved access to health services and health literacy	Can manage money online	Using digital tools to solve practical, everyday challenges	Building and maintaining interpersonal connections	Accessing information needed for wellbeing and life management

Seniors are building the knowledge and skills to confidently use digital technology

Short-term outcomes							
We will know our programmes will deliver outcomes when we see...	Understand the fundamentals of getting online	Build knowledge of devices, and the ability to customise to meet individual needs	Confidence in using digital technology increases	Desire to use technology / be online increases	Being part of a cohort strengthens social connections	Increased awareness of online risks and enhanced skills to securely access and manage personal information	Gain confidence and ability to continue building skills independently

Activities							
The things we do with our resources and inputs...	Capability building of delivery partners to provide training	Learner goals and needs are identified	Delivering the learning sessions	Delivery at locations accessible and comfortable for learners	Acknowledgement of completion of programme	Support for continued learning	

Resources								
What we need to carry out our mahi	Language, skills and knowledge for culturally appropriate delivery	Local trusted delivery partners	Referral partners and community connections	Funding	Devices and other training materials	Platforms and tools for registration and delivery	Appropriate venues with right equipment for delivery	Data collection tools to self-evaluate and track impact

Values and ways of working							
What underpins practices and approaches	Culturally grounded and/or culturally responsive	Foundation of relationships and trust	Community-led and locally embedded	Group learning model – grounded in connection and the ako ethos of learning together	Adapting delivery and content to learner needs, goals and abilities	Delivery in familiar, culturally safe spaces	Maintaining connection to support sustained learning

Appendix 3: Rubric for Digital Literacy Training for Seniors

This section outlines the criteria and standards (i.e., the rubric) for the evaluation of Digital Literacy Training for Seniors Programme.

Below expectations	Meeting expectations	On the pathway to excellence	Excellent
Building digital foundations			
[below the level outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’]	Learners are enrolled in the programme.	[between the levels outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’ and ‘excellent’]	Learners show ongoing motivation to stay connected, explore new tools, and upgrade devices if possible.
	Learners can turn on devices and log in to accounts and profiles.		Learners confidently manage accounts across different devices and platforms, navigating independently.
	Learners can adjust basic settings and organise information on their key devices.		Learners feel comfortable optimising device settings for functionality, privacy, and accessibility, and choosing devices and apps that best meet their needs.
	Learners are motivated to increase their own confidence with digital technology.		Learners are more confident and feel able to use digital technology independently.
Digital independence and safety			
[below the level outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’]	Learners report using basic safety measures, such as password management, and feel generally safe online.	[between the levels outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’ and ‘excellent’]	Learners feel confident, secure, and free from stress when navigating online spaces, handling tasks and managing personal information with a sense of safety and control.
	Learners recognise common risks and know basic protective measures.		Learners consistently apply online safety practices, enhancing their confidence and sense of security when engaging online and reducing vulnerability.
	Learners show some confidence in continuing to explore new digital skills independently.		Learners are confident, self-directed in learning, and express a clear ability to continue their digital journey.
Applying skills in everyday life			

[below the level outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’]	Learners use online services and resources occasionally, including online banking, online shopping and government websites.	[between the levels outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’ and ‘excellent’]	Learners confidently and independently access a variety of resources and services online, improving their convenience and access to daily needs.
	Learners access basic health services, such as booking appointments or viewing health records.		Learners confidently use digital health tools to monitor, manage, and enhance their health and wellbeing.
	Learners use digital tools for simple everyday tasks (e.g., finding information, maps).		Learners integrate digital tools in flexible ways to enhance quality of life and solve practical challenges, reporting being less dependent on others for digital support.
Connection, community, and wellbeing			
[below the level outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’]	Learners build social connections with others in their cohort.	[between the levels outlined in the criterion for ‘meeting expectations’ and ‘excellent’]	Learners feel part of a supportive community that reduces social isolation and supports continued learning.
	Learners occasionally use digital tools to stay connected with friends and whānau.		Learners experience enhanced social connections through engagement into digital social networks and feel less isolated.
	Learners occasionally access online information for life management and wellbeing support.		Learners actively seek out digital resources to support their wellbeing and life management, reporting that their digital skills have contributed to greater happiness, independence, and overall quality of life.

Appendix 4: Aggregated programme data

This section presents aggregated data collected from participants throughout the three-year delivery period, including data from self-assessment surveys designed to be completed by learners on their first and last days of the programme, a behaviour change survey designed to be completed three months following a learner's last day of the programme, and demographic data collected upon enrolment.

Data collection tools were adjusted by providers in different ways throughout the delivery period. Some changed the response scales by replacing or adding additional response options alongside yes/no categories, and some excluded certain questions from surveys. For providers who delivered content in 'modules' as opposed to one course of six to eight weeks, learners completed multiple post-training surveys. Feedback highlighted potential confusion around certain words such as 'Messenger' being read as 'messaging', which may have influenced responses in pre-training surveys.

Two providers chose not to collect behaviour change data, and of the remaining four, behaviour change surveys were completed at varying times following programme completion, the earliest anecdotally being on the last day of class. Five out of six providers supplied demographic data on all participants, while one larger provider supplied demographic data that represented 46% of their participants.

One provider's pre- and post-training data was not included in aggregated results due to being completed based on tutor observations as opposed to learner self-assessments. All data that was available to be aggregated was included in the evaluation; however, the results were triangulated against qualitative findings from learners, tutors and provider leadership, and 6-monthly narrative reports.

Pre- and post-training self-assessment survey results

The aggregated self-assessment data below includes data collected by five out of six providers.

Figure 1: Foundational digital skills

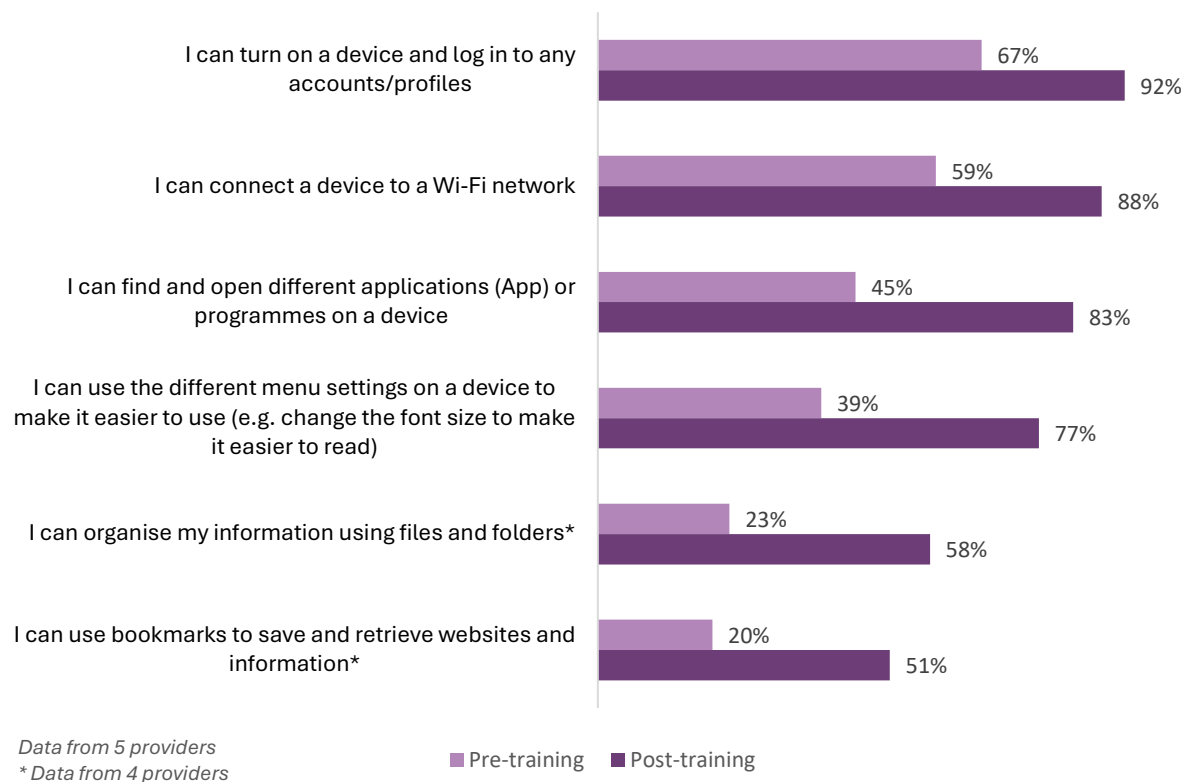


Figure 2: Skills to carry out online activity and services

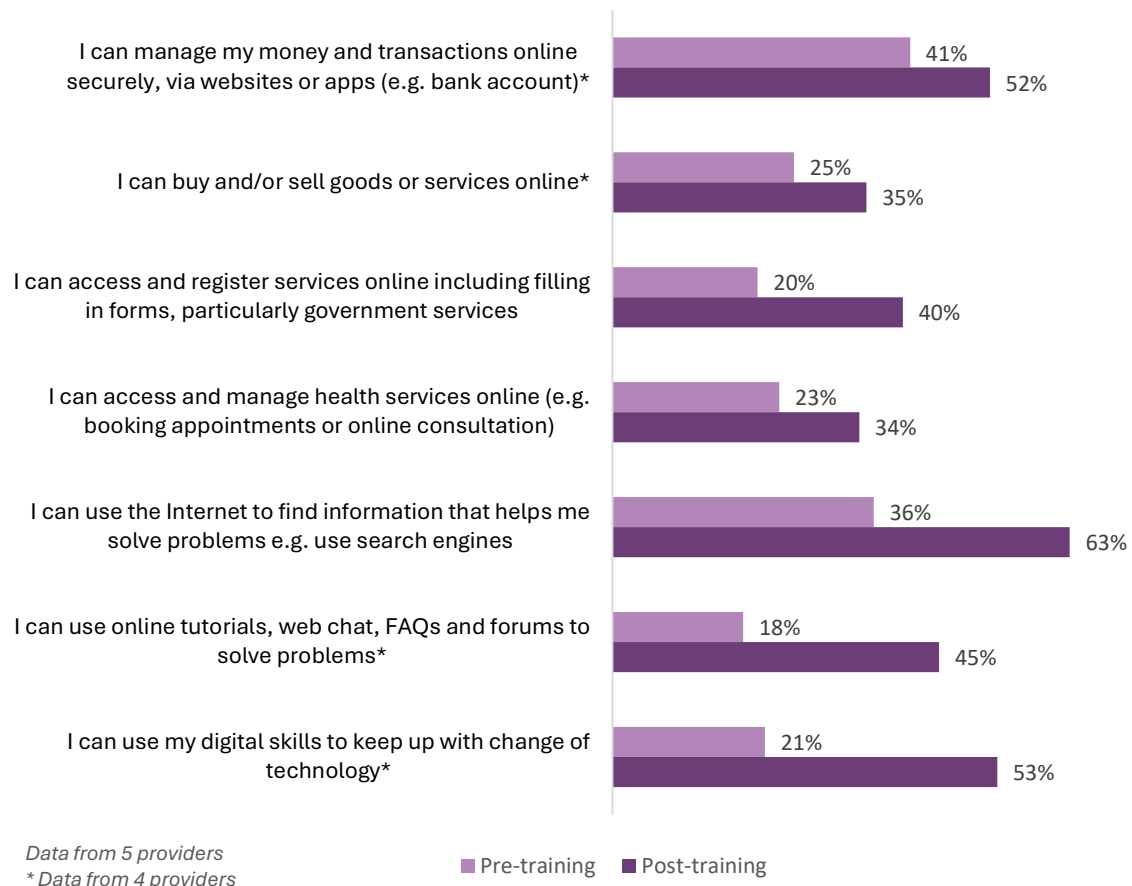


Figure 3: Social connection skills

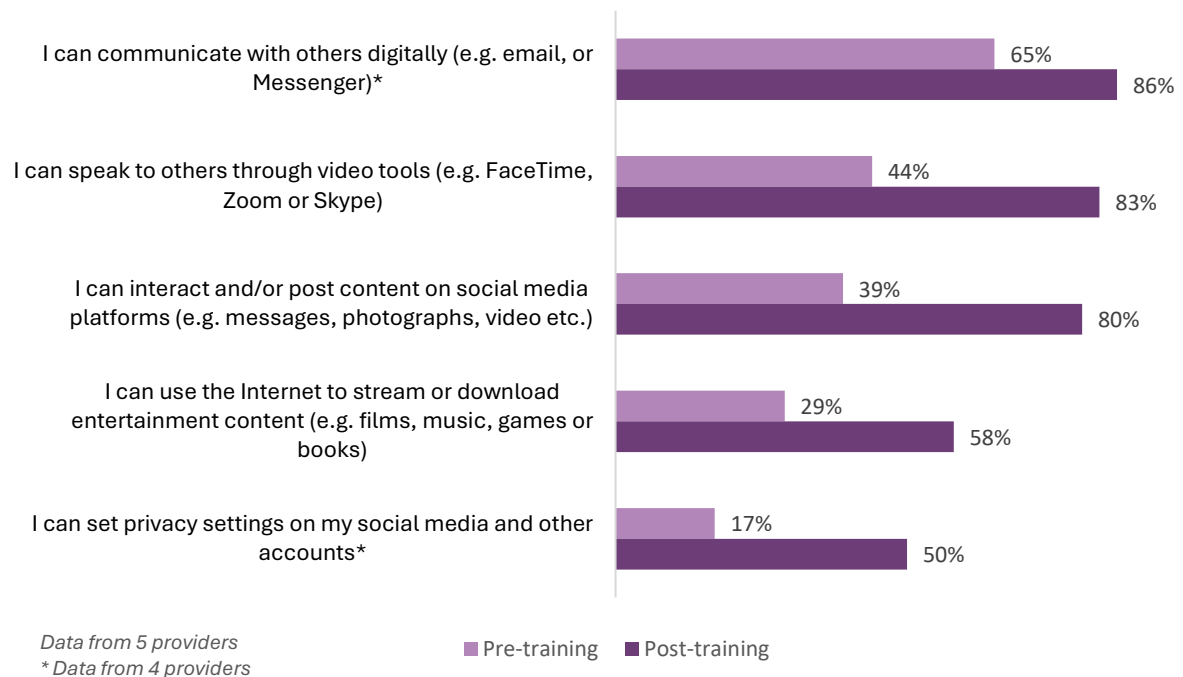
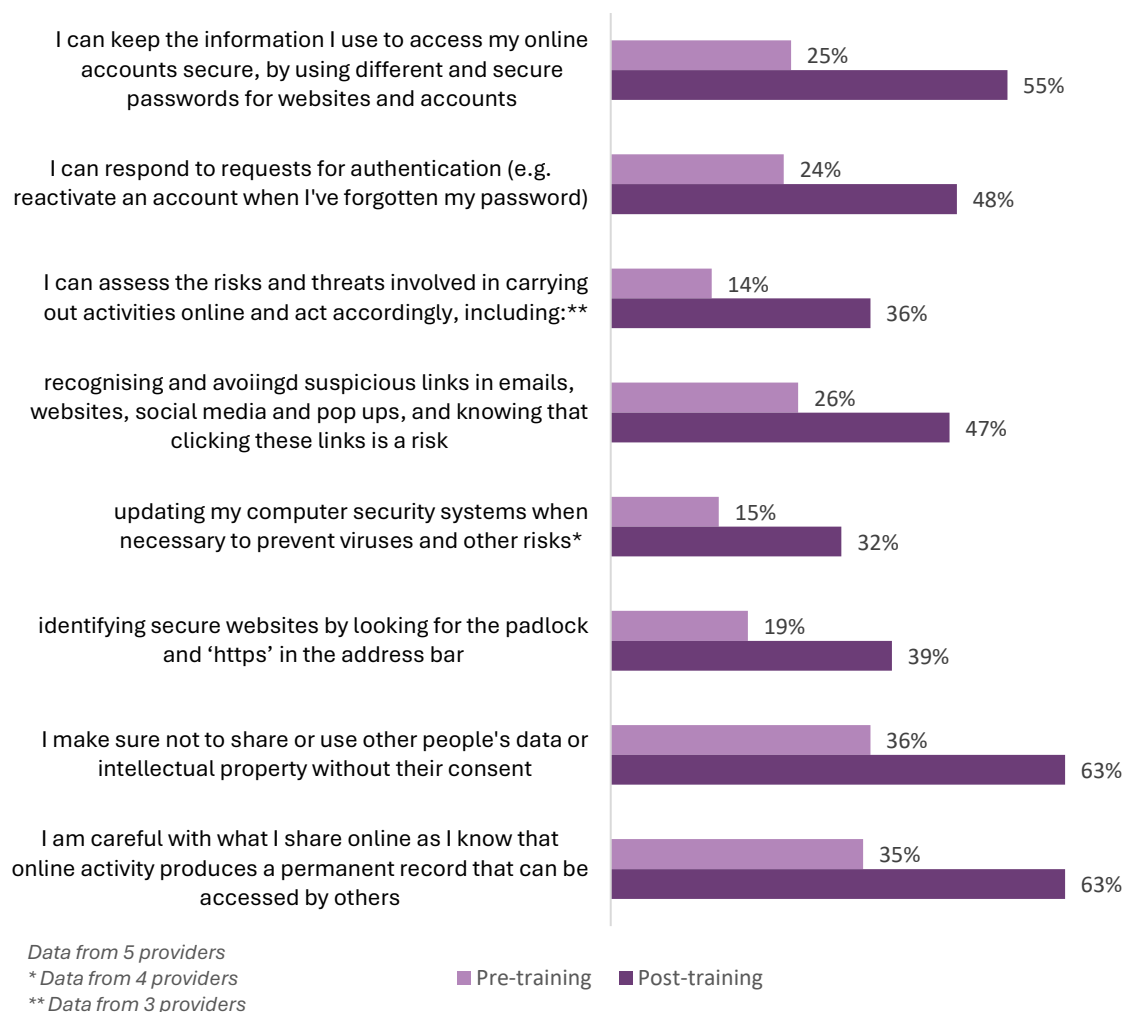


Figure 4: Skills to be safe online



Behaviour Change survey results

Four out of six providers collected behaviour change data. Figure 7, illustrating changes in participants' confidence levels, represents data from three providers as the fourth used an adjusted scale that could not be aggregated.

Figure 5: Activity online in the three months following programme completion

I have carried out online activity, transactions, and services in the last three months (e.g., banking, Manage MyHealth, MyMSD, etc)

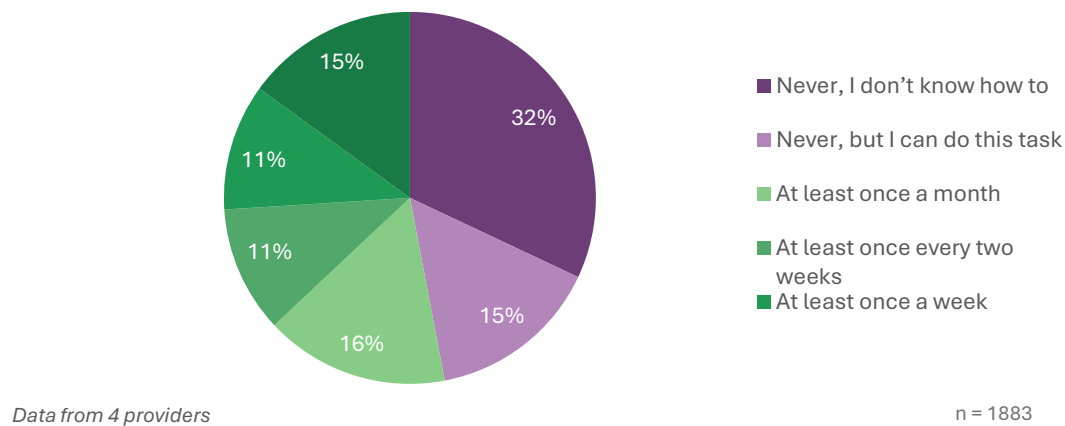


Figure 6: Social connection online in the three months following programme completion

I have used online platforms/channels for social connection and entertainment in the last three months (e.g., email, messengers, Zoom, FaceTime, photos, music and videos, games and books)

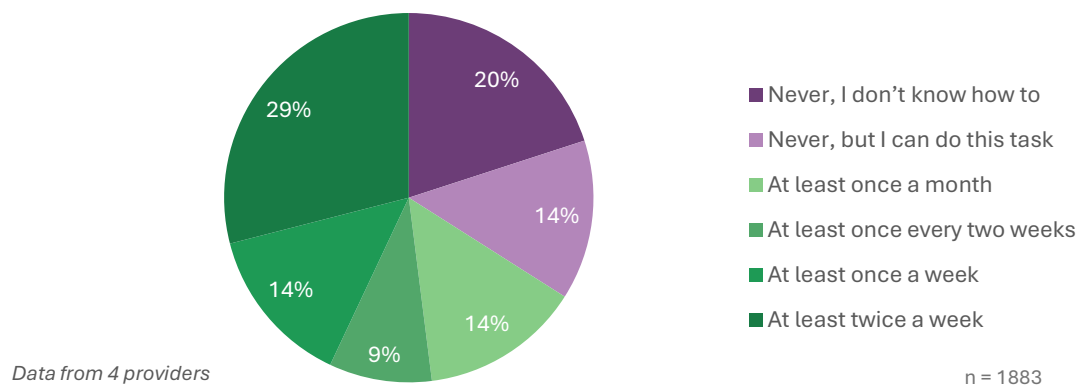
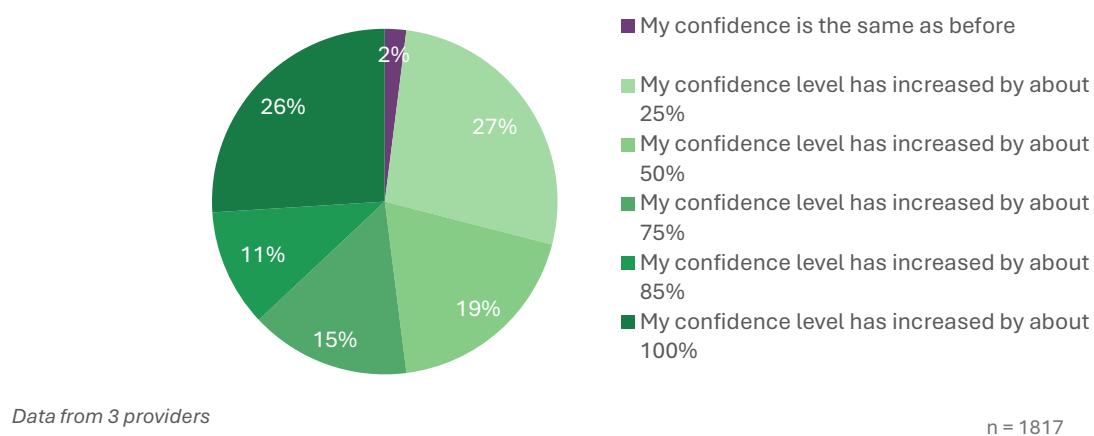


Figure 7: Participants' confidence levels after the training

I am more confident about being online and using a digital device after the training



Participant demographic data

All providers collected demographic data on participants. Figures 8, 9, 10 and 11 illustrate data collected from the commencement of the programme across all providers. Figures 12, 13, and 14 were additional questions added mid-way through the three-year timeframe.

Figure 8: Participants' age at the time of enrolment

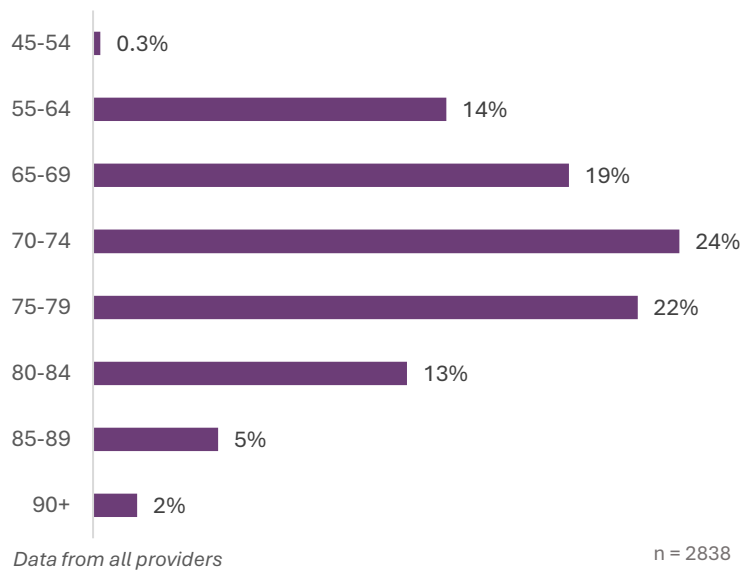


Figure 9: Participants' gender identities

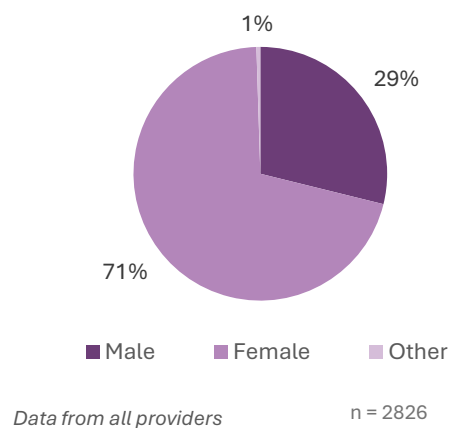


Figure 10: Participants' ethnic identities

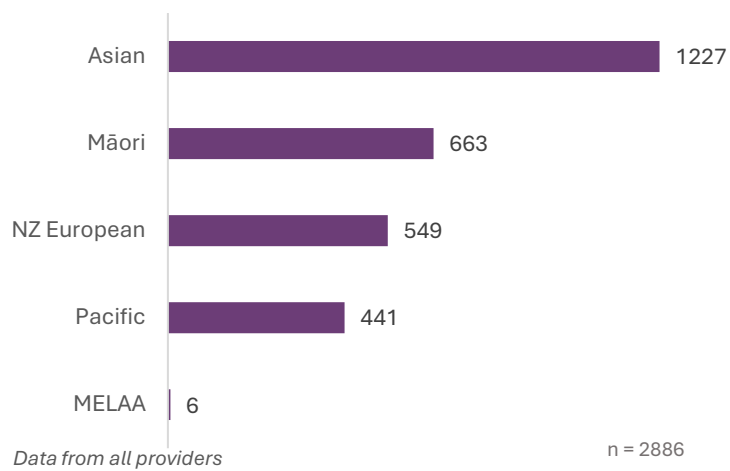


Figure 11: Location of programme for participants

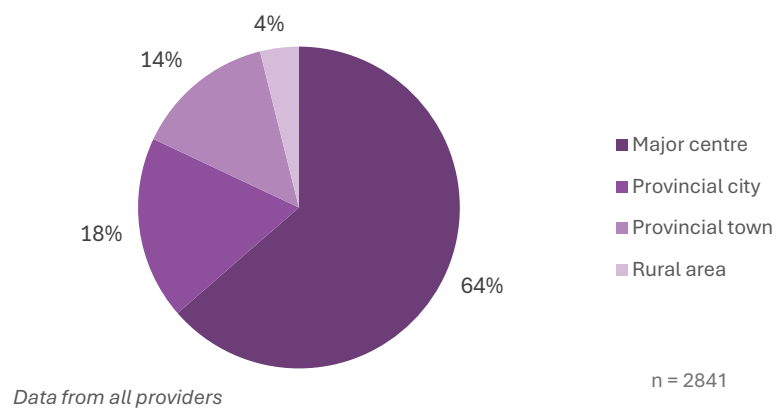


Figure 12: Participants who identify as having a disability



Figure 13: Participants' households

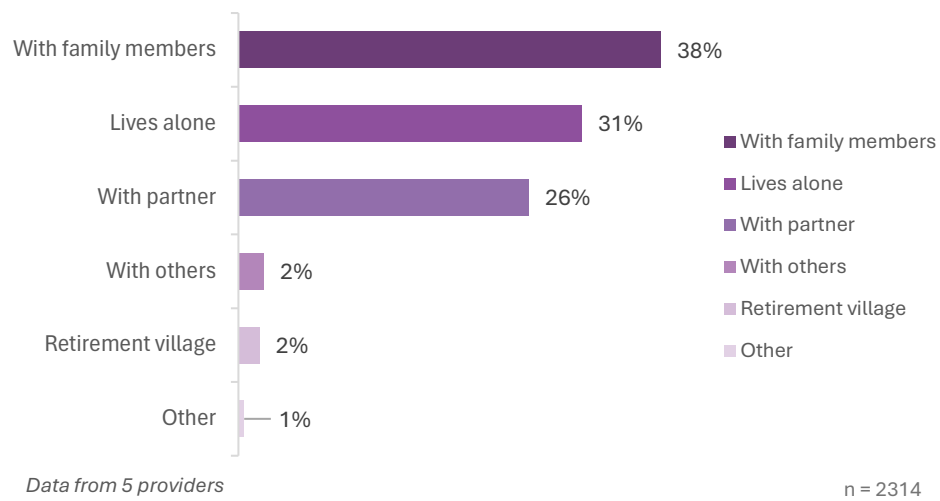


Figure 14: Participants who identify as a carer

