Appendix 2: Lessons Learned

- While trying to keep the scope of the report disciplined, there are already many different lines of enquiry to approach the issue of digital technology and health. Inevitably, there are topics that we have only made minimal reference to or excluded entirely. For example, we have tried not to discuss the clinical application of digital technology as this would require a separate investigation.

- We have sourced the majority of our definitions from NHS Digital and this may mean a less than comprehensive investigation of the field.

- Statistics on digital exclusion, uptake of services, and barriers in Birmingham have been extrapolated from national ones, and they are estimates. Calculations are also made by the likelihood of being in a more digitally excluded population group.

- The population of Birmingham has nuanced views on the use of digital technology for health improvement (and health matters in general). There was recognition that digital technology can bring about positive developments. However, there was also dissatisfaction with how the practical application seemed to make residents' lives harder, not easier.

- Stereotypes and pre-conceptions of digitally excluded individuals do not fit the reality of the primary research findings.

- The ethnographic research illustrates that it is very difficult to define an individual as completely excluded from digital technology (even the most avoidant has some engagement). The risk continues to be that the direction of travel is towards digitalisation and that current mitigations may be less effective in future years.

- The primary research focused on the experiences and perspectives of individuals rather than providing quantitative evidence on the level and impact of digital exclusion across Birmingham.

- The topic of social media and its effect on health and wellbeing deserves further exploration and assessment that was not within the scope of this report. However, we have situated the topic within our investigation and discussed social media's role in helping or harming health and wellbeing.