



**Open letter from AHP Professional Bodies to the Chief AHP Officers in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and Chief Therapies (AHP) Adviser in Wales**

During the COVID-19 pandemic it has become increasingly clear that digital healthcare has a leading part to play in meeting the ongoing and additional demand for AHP services. The pace and scale of platform implementation to offer services remotely was unprecedented. However, these new ways of delivering services are not based on solid foundations. We often lack the access to systems, meaningful data or AHP digital leadership to support the service transformation needed.

In the maelstrom of the pandemic there has never been a more important time for us to be able to demonstrate the value and impact of AHP services. We, as a group of UK AHP professional bodies, agree on the three ambitions below and ask you to confirm these as priority strategic aims, committing to work with us and other stakeholders to deliver against these ambitions. With ubiquitous access to systems, AHPs would be able to capture and utilise meaningful data to convey the value of their services giving us the opportunity to analyse, scale up and share good practice locally, regionally and nationally. It would also enable us to evidence our impact, support quality improvement and service transformation to help us to understand and respond to demand and unmet need.

We are therefore calling on you, the UK Chief AHP Officers and Chief Therapies (AHP) Adviser, to confirm the priority you place on ensuring:

1. All AHPs have **access** to electronic health and care record systems that are fit for purpose
2. All AHP services are collecting, using and sharing **quality AHP data**
3. **AHP digital leadership** at all levels to develop these foundations

We need collective UK action and leadership from you to support us to meet these priorities. A number of the AHP professional bodies have identified data, digital and technology as key strategic areas and have appointed leads in recognition of the importance of providing expertise and leadership to their members. It is our view that a UK-wide AHP network, comprising the digital and data leads from each nation and representation from each of the professions, could rapidly progress these three ambitions.

We acknowledge the success in recent years in Scotland with the work on the AHP Operational Measures dataset, in England with the Community Services Dataset, in Northern Ireland with Encompass and in Wales with the establishment of an AHP National Information Development Board. More coordinated work like this will accelerate transformational change in AHP services.

As a first step, we would like to propose that we meet as a group to better understand the current challenges and opportunities, and identify how to work together to ensure better systems, better data and better digital capability for our professions.

Nicolette Divecha from the AHPF will collate responses and arrange initial follow up meeting between the professional bodies and the Chief Officers and Adviser.

Yours sincerely,

British Dietetic Association	Andy Burman Najia Qureshi Chloe Adams	Chief Executive Director of EPP Digital Lead
British and Irish Orthoptic Society	Veronica Greenwood	Chief Executive
British Association for Music Therapy	Andrew Langford	Chief Executive
British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists	Lynne Rowley	Chair
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy	Karen Middleton Euan McComiskie	Chief Executive Digital Lead
College of Podiatry	Steve Jamieson Katie Collins	Chief Executive Digital Lead
Institute of Osteopathy	Maurice Cheng Danny Orchard	Chief Executive Digital Lead
Royal College of Occupational Therapists	Julia Scott Suzy England	Chief Executive Digital Lead
Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists	Kamini Gadhok Kathryn Moyse	Chief Executive Digital Lead
Society and College of Radiographers	Richard Evans Kevin Tucker	Chief Executive Digital Lead