

The UK's National Health Service (NHS) wanted to enable patients to proactively address non-urgent health issues.

An avatar-based mobile health tool offered unique potential.

## A CASE STUDY

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How the NHS Collaborated with Sensely to Deploy a Digital Access Point.



# Tackling the Immense Opportunity of Mobile Engagement

## THE CHALLENGE

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In recent years, the NHS as a whole has devoted much discussion and attention to the role of how technology can activate and engage its large, diverse patient population. The West Midlands Integrated Care Alliance is responsible for the provision of urgent care for over 4,500,000 citizens. The Alliance understood that enabling patients to address health issues digitally has become a critical aspect of its ability to continue to deliver healthcare efficiently and successfully. In addition, they recognized that patient adoption was contingent on both ease of use and clinical value offered. Finally, the Alliance was well aware of the privacy and clinical governance requirements for any patient-facing technology offering.

## THE STRATEGY

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After an extensive global technology evaluation process, the Alliance decided to partner with a California-based technology company, Sensely, to develop a co-branded mobile health application called Ask NHS. The application's development involved the incorporation of accredited clinical algorithms from a trusted clinical information provider, as well as direct integration with several critical NHS IT systems. The initial rollout was supported through a multi-channel marketing approach, including digital marketing campaigns across social media and local engagement with physician practices.

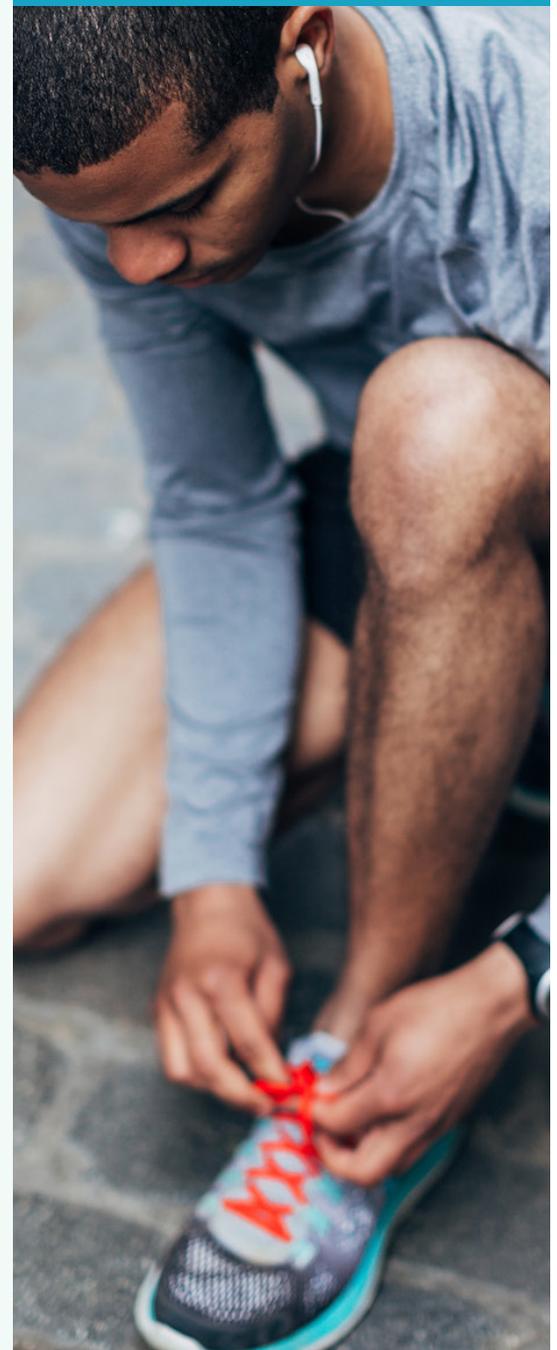
## THE SOLUTION

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Ask NHS, available for both iOS and Android, enables users to access an avatar-based symptom checker that performs a clinical triage protocol that can be completed using the user's choice of voice response or text input.

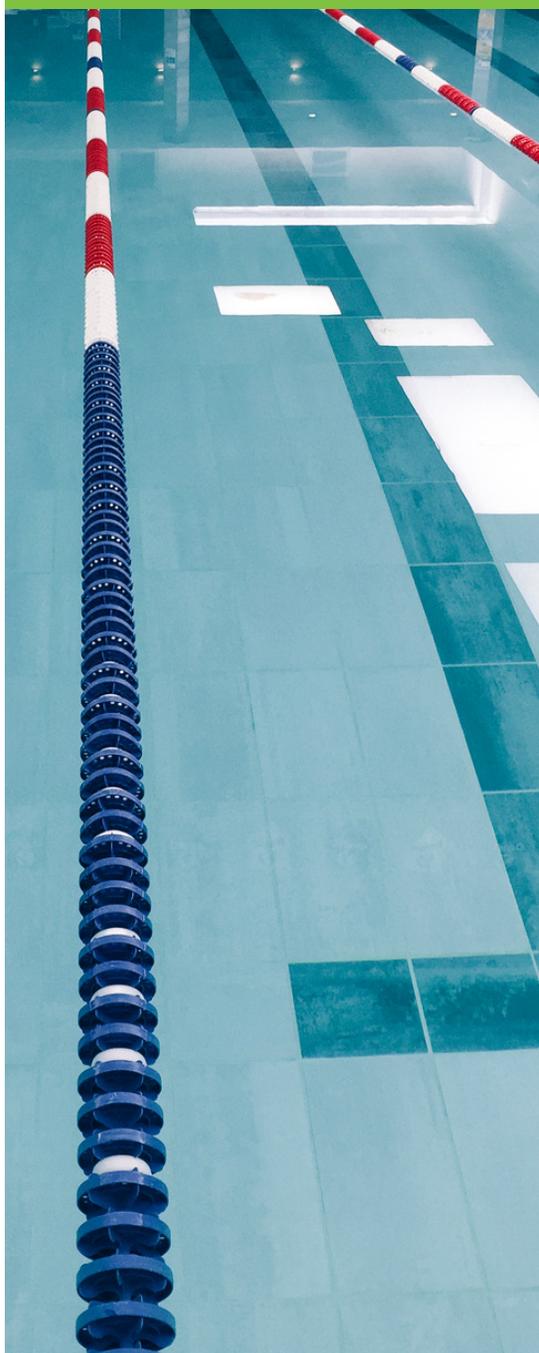
"The Ask NHS app provides patients with on-demand access to NHS services 24/7. We want to make it as easy as possible for patients to obtain medical advice in the way that best suits them. Offering patients a choice is important and we believe Ask NHS helps us do that."

RACHAEL ELLIS, CHIEF OFFICER,  
WEST MIDLANDS INTEGRATED  
URGENT CARE ALLIANCE



“The NHS must learn from the way online services help people to take control over other important parts of their lives, whether financial or social, such as online banking or travel services.”<sup>1</sup>

THE NHS BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE:  
A CALL TO ACTION, JULY 2013



Following the symptom checker protocol, the user is directed to one of four outcomes:

1. Self-Care information
2. Appointment booking
3. Emergency Care services
4. Request a clinician call back for non-emergencies

If the user does not desire to enter symptoms, Ask NHS also supports direct access to freestanding modules for locating clinical information, booking an appointment with participating practices, and accessing a directory of local healthcare services.

## THE RESULTS



As of Spring 2019, Ask NHS has approximately 200,000 registered users.



Ask NHS has a rating of 4.6 out of 5 on Apple's UK App Store.



Each completed symptom checker is estimated to save the NHS approximately £7.23. In addition, according to post-usage survey data, Ask NHS can save the NHS approximately 14.4% of its spend by shifting patient utilization towards lower cost, more efficient services.

## ABOUT NHS

Founded in 1948, the NHS is the public health arm of England, Scotland, and Wales. The NHS employs 1.6 million people, and is the largest and oldest single-payer healthcare system in the world.

## ABOUT SENSELY

Sensely directs your patients to the healthcare resource they need, when they need it. Offering an avatar and chatbot based clinical platform, Sensely intelligently connects your patients with clinical advice and services, enhancing access without compromising empathy.

## LET'S TALK

We're excited to explore how Sensely can bring immediate benefit to your organization. Email us at [info@sensely.com](mailto:info@sensely.com).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/nhs-belongs.pdf>