Healthcare Improvement Scotland

Continuity of Care and Frailty Cluster Session:

Opportunities beyond the DES to improve Continuity of Care as a Cluster

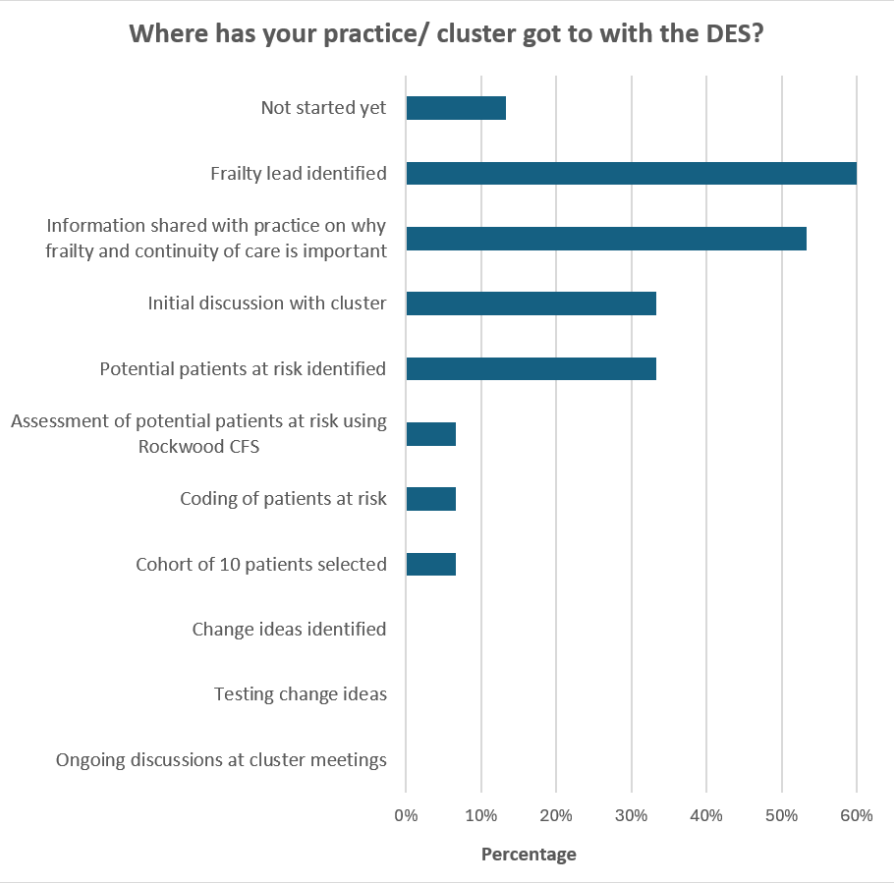
27 October 2026
04 November 2026

Summary

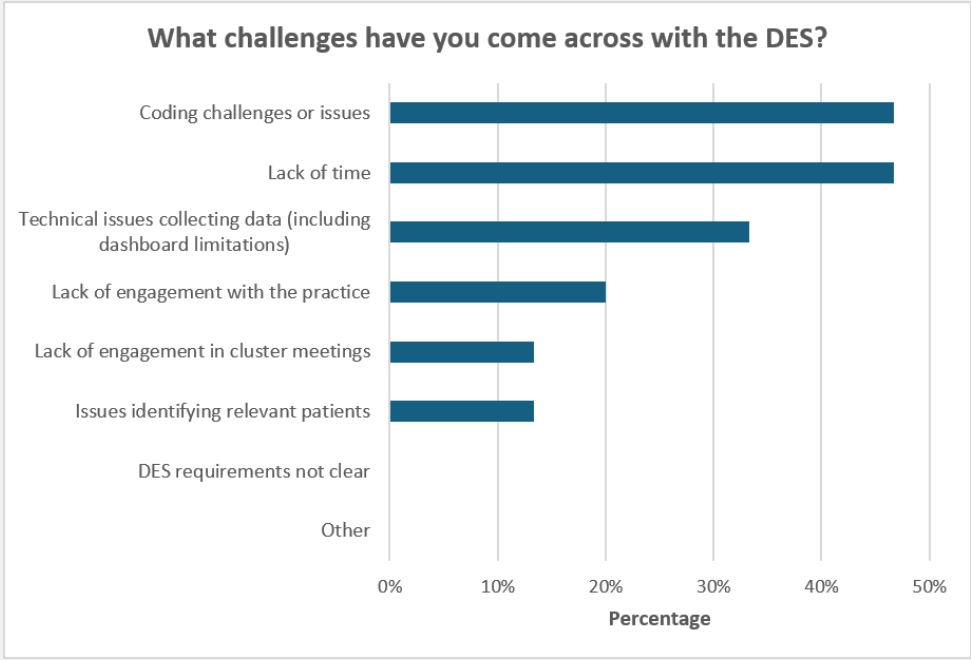
Cluster Quality Leads (CQLs) and **Practice Quality Leads (PQLs)** were invited to attend any of the two cluster sharing and learning sessions to share experiences on initiating a quality improvement approach to the Continuity of Care and Frailty DES.

The sessions were chaired by **Dr Paul Baughan,** GP National Clinical Lead. The sessions started with two polls to understand attendee's progress and challenges with the DES. This was followed by a discussion with guest speaker CQLs, including **Dr Nico Grunenberg** (NHS Tayside), **Dr David Wilson** (NHS Tayside) and **Dr Jennifer Jennings** (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde), who shared their approaches to the Frailty and Continuity of Care DES within their clusters and their learning so far.

Poll to understand where people have got to with the DES



Poll to understand challenges with the DES



Engagement

30 people registered for these sessions from **12 NHS boards**. This included **17 CQLs**, **6 PQLs** and other roles (GPs, GP registrar and clinical director). **19** were able to attend.

Key points from the CQL sofa discussion

Approaches to cluster engagement

Use of toolkits and QI tools

- Reviewing and discussing the RCGP Continuity of Care toolkit as a cluster.
- Developing a driver diagram to visually represent a shared theory of change.
- Process mapping pathways for each practice and compare approaches at a cluster meeting
- Use an effort-impact matrix to prioritise change ideas.

Tips for engagement

- Starting with small wins to build engagement.
- Using local data and visual quality improvement tools to identify improvement opportunities.
- Inviting guest speakers to cluster meetings to inspire action.
- Create opportunities in cluster discussions and 1:1 conversations to understand where less-engaged practices' concerns and resistance come from.
- Creating the conditions for psychological safety so practices feel comfortable sharing challenges and successes.
- Creating opportunities for the wider team to exchange tips, approaches and learning that improve continuity.

Change ideas shared

Communication with patients and the public

- Developing cluster communication on the importance of continuity for practice websites and social media.
- Developing a script for admin staff to promote continuity of care to patients.
- Invite targeted patient groups (i.e. frequent A&E attenders) into practice to explain continuity of care.

MDT approach

- A dedicated continuity receptionist for DES patients.
- Involve the wider team with continuity of care discussions.

Arrangements to prioritise relational continuity

- Create continuity appointments
- Introduce a usual GP pop-up in Vision
- Schedule planned reviews for patients in the DES cohort.
- Establish a GP buddy system.
- Encourage admin and clinical staff to ask patients who they last saw and, where appropriate, support booking with the same clinician.

Coordination with care homes

- Standard template to improve information sharing between practices in the cluster and care homes

Resources shared

QI related

- QI zone has useful resources to skill up cluster members in QI tools (e.g. process map, driver diagram, effort-impact matrix)
- Scottish Patient Safety Fellowship is an advanced QI training programme that could be of interest to quality leads.

Continuity of care related

- Patient information sheet and patient leaflet to explain continuity of care created in Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership and shared by Dr David Wilson.

Evaluation

- Small number of responses to evaluation form (5 responses)
- **100 %** confirmed the sessions were useful/very useful.

> '***useful session and feel motivated to get going with DES work now***'

Next steps

- **Share** resources available to support QI work from the DES
  - Recordings of the sofa discussions with guest CQLs
  - List of useful resources to support work related to DES
  - Driver diagram
  - Tool to manually calculate Continuity of Care(e.g. if wider MDT members supporting people living with frailty, if more than one GP assigned to support continuity of care)
- **QI support drop-in sessions** will be scheduled in December and January
- **DES Cluster sharing and learning sessions** to be scheduled in spring to share progress and learning from the DES on frailty and continuity of care.

Thank you to all participants and speakers!

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