Working with Older People

Age UK and the Centre for Ageing Better

OneDigital

A good news story..

Figure 2: Recent internet use in 2011 and 2017 by age group, UK

● 2011   ● 2017
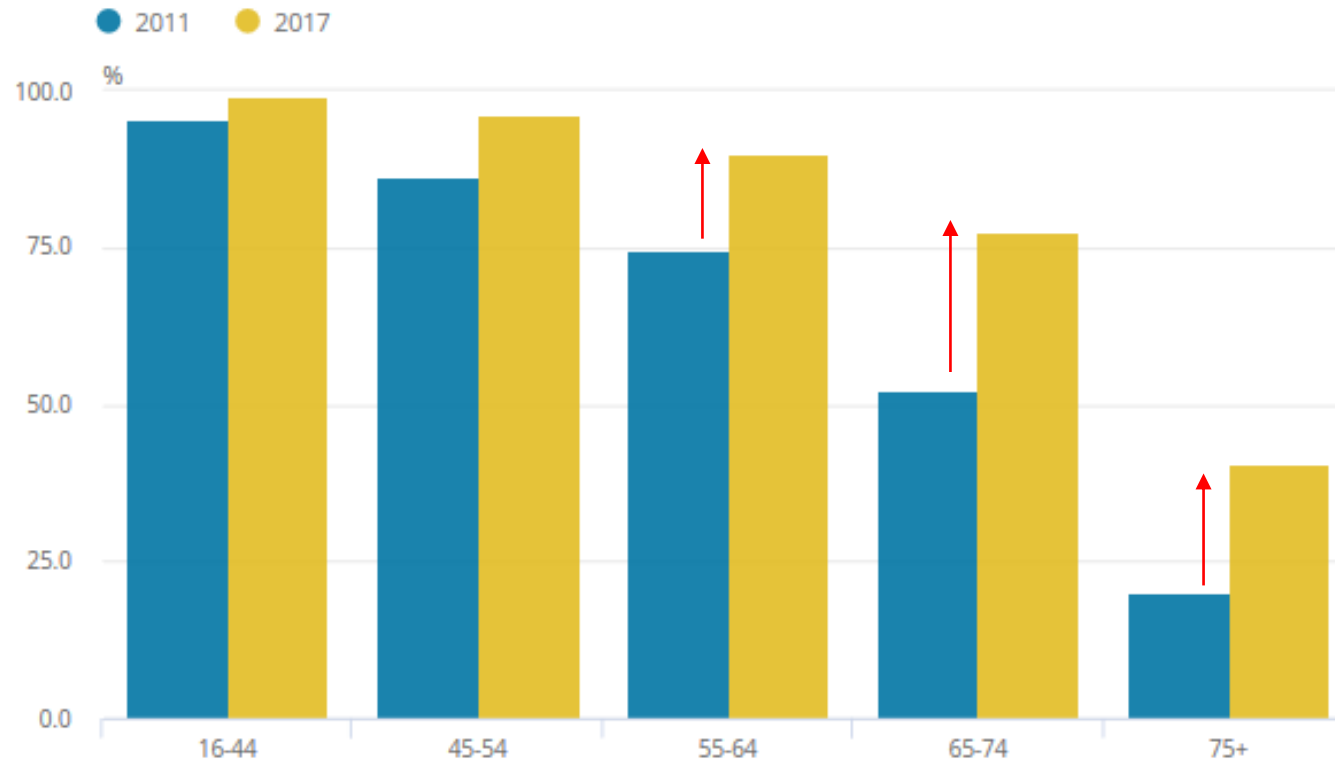
Source: Office for National Statistics

Twice as many over 75s online in 2018 than 2011

Internet usage in later life

4.2m people over the age of 55 have never been online
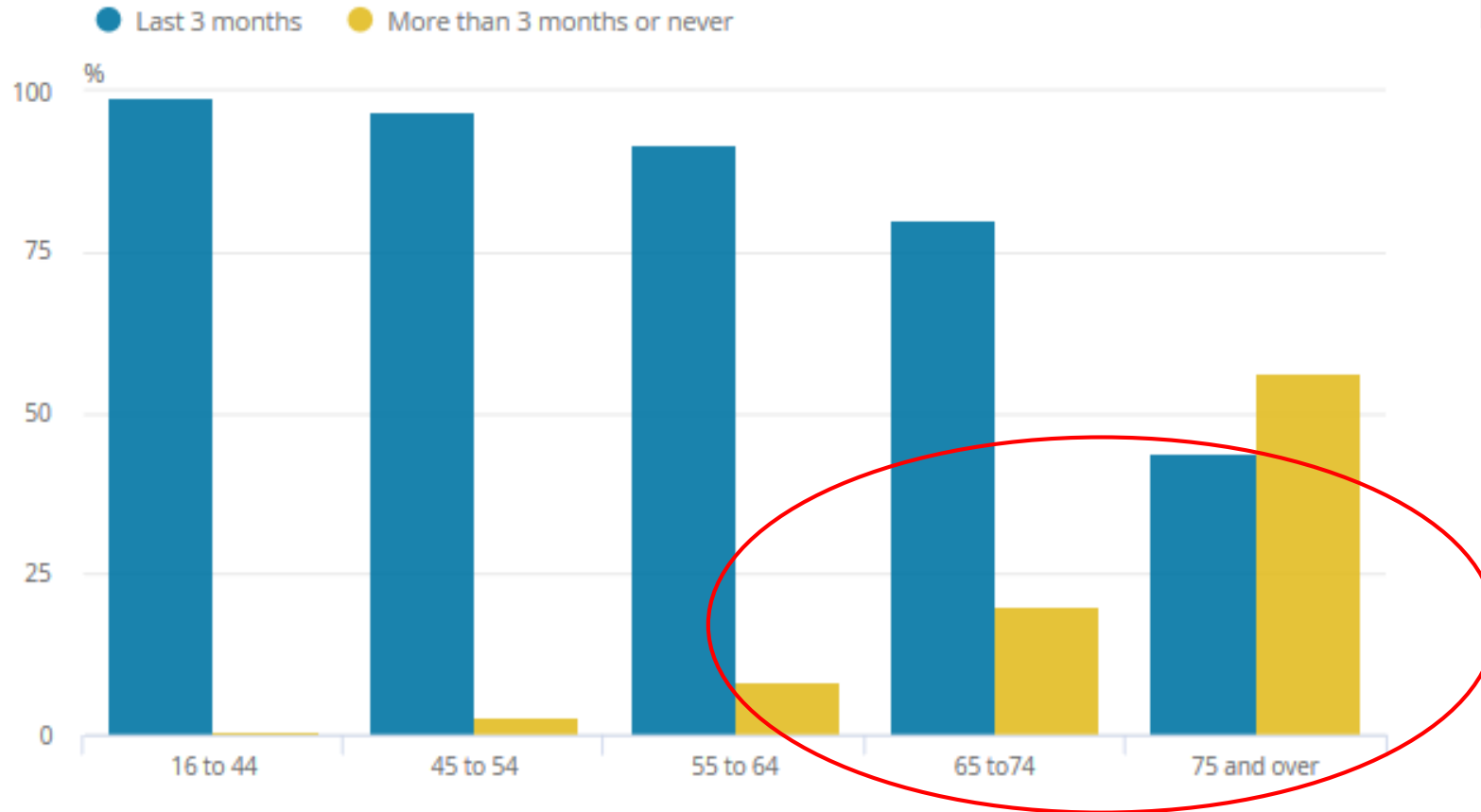
94% of all those who have "never been online" (4.5m people) are over 55

684,000 over 55s used to be online but no longer are

But millions in later life are still not online..

Figure 1: Internet users by age group, 2018, UK

Last 3 months ● More than 3 months or never ●

Source: Office for National Statistics

4.8m
over 55s
not online

And this isn't something that will disappear in the future

The current cohort who are not online will remain offline for many years

Many people under the age of 55 have had limited exposure to the internet

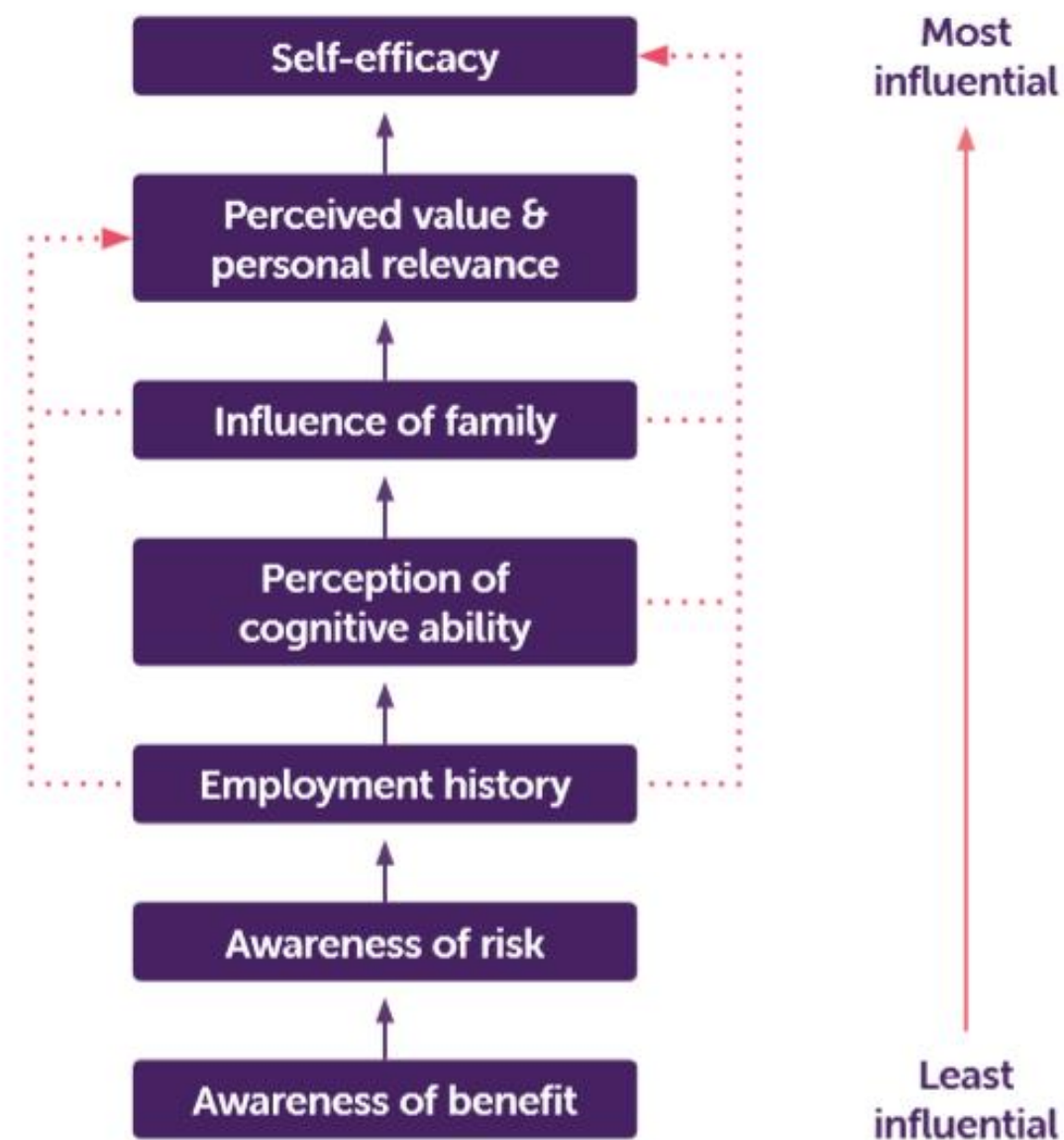There is a residual core who will always struggle to get online

Digital technology is continually developing and will leave people behind

Digital exclusion will become less about whether you are online and more about what you are doing online

Figure 1: Factors influencing internet usage in later life

One Digital at Age UK

Local Age UK's   **Partner Organisations**   **Digital Champions**   **Older People**

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Learnings from delivery

1. Group sessions
2. 1-2-1 sessions
3. Creative approaches
4. Flexible delivery
5. Ongoing support

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What works?
Findings from the Centre for Ageing Better's report The Digital Age

Best practice in delivering support

1. **Flexibility and relevance**: structured, skills-focused courses won't work. Concentrate on helping people to do the things they need and want to do online.

2. **The right pace:** older learners will pick up information and will progress their learning at different paces – responsive approach is key

3. **Repetition and reflection**: creating space for repetition and reflection on success is vital to success

4. **The right language:** avoid jargon and focus on the task, not the tech

Best practice in delivering support

5. **One-to-one support:** a strong tutor-pupil relationship is key to building confidence.

6. **Time to build relationships:** time to build communication and trust helps to maintain learners' interest in digital and increase their self efficacy.

7. **Ongoing support**: support needs to be open-ended, allowing learners to return with questions and problems.

8. **Co-design**: involve a wide range of users in the shaping and design of all services, new and existing, to ensure their relevance and effectiveness.

What works for practitioners –from workshops run by Centre for Ageing Better and One Digital

Delivery skills

- Ability to cater to different learning styles
- Able to make it fun
- Able to clarify / simplify
- Ability to be honest
- Ability to create a safe atmosphere
- Confidentiality
- Able to create / keep boundaries
- Ability to see informal opportunities to embed digital
- Creativity / solution focused
- Able to improvise and go with the flow
- Person centred

Soft / interpersonal skills

- Patience & persistence
- Customer service
- Ability to build trust
- Patience
- Persistence
- Empathy
- Listening
- Encouragement
- Communication
- Understand barriers

Resources and Tools

Existing resources & tools

- One Digital

- Digital Unite technology guides

- Digital Champions Network

- Learn My Way

- Online Centres Network (to include toolkit on working with older people from April 2019)

- Good Things Foundation research and publications

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Existing resources & tools

- AbilityNet

- Age UK Report - *Age UK Digital Inclusion Evidence Review*

- Centre for Ageing Better report *The Digital Age*

- Good Things Foundation report *I Am Connected*

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Get in touch

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