Dr. Idris Thomas is locum Consultant Psychiatrist working in NHS Highland, and has been involved in establishing telepsychiatry clinics since 2018. He has been the lead author on a national policy for telepsychiatry, and has worked with TEC to develop quick reference guides in this field.
What have been the enablers?
• Access to guidance.
• Drive from managers and staff to continue to offer mental health services.
• National team and colleagues.

What’s worked well?
• Ability to assess patients in general hospitals
• New patient and urgent assessments.
• Ability to maintain reviews.

What have been the challenges?
• Patients with a lack of technology.
• Some staff reluctance/uncertainty.
• Staff technology.
• Capacity of Near Me. Groups.

We overcame our challenge by:
• Opening Near Me hubs.
• iPads for staff and teams.
• Near Me updates.

Top Tips
• Inviting other professionals into Near Me meetings as part of MDT reviews of patients.
• Small tutorials to staff on its use from both the clinician and patient perspective.