

# The SCAFFOLD ePortfolio: an insight into the results of a multidisciplinary research project in Flanders (2020-2023).

**Background:** ePortfolios have become indispensable in current healthcare education. They are considered appropriate tools to support competency-based pedagogical approaches and promote lifelong learning. Notwithstanding the rapid development of designs and platforms, effective ePortfolio use in practice remains difficult.

**Aim:** Since 2020, researchers from different disciplines have been conducting research to design an evidence-based ePortfolio prototype appropriate for generic use in different healthcare educational programmes. The SCAFFOLD ePortfolio aims to optimally support self-regulated learning and to promote and facilitate continuous competency development considering the complexity of the workplace.

**Methods:** We used an educational design research approach.<sup>1</sup> Design research is conducted with two main goals: creating an intervention (e.g. ePortfolio) that solves problems in practice, and producing theoretical understanding.

**Results:** The participants were ePortfolio users from different healthcare educational programmes in Flanders. During the analysis and exploration phase, the researchers mapped good practices, barriers and needs among ePortfolio users (students, mentors and educators) using focus group interviews. This resulted in a design document with common requirements. The insights gained from the focus groups were complemented by literature reviews (user training<sup>2</sup>, ePortfolios supporting healthcare education<sup>3</sup>, legislation) and Delphi studies<sup>4-6</sup> to incorporate in the prototype evidence-based decisions. The design of the prototype was conducted in three sub-cycles, each with a different focus: 1) feedback formats; 2) competencies and learning artefacts; 3) assessment and user guide. Each sub-cycle consisted of three phases: 1) analysis with stakeholders, 2) software development of a prototype, and 3) evaluation with users. The results were documented in reports and in scientific publications.

**Discussion:** The results of this project show the complexity of designing an ePortfolio that fits current competency-based education evidence. Considering the workload challenges that healthcare professionals face, all stakeholders agreed that a lean and technologically innovative ePortfolio is needed to facilitate workplace learning without losing its educational value.

**Implications and future perspectives:** Creating a state-of-the-art ePortfolio that scaffolds learning for multiple healthcare professions needs multiple perspectives including technology, user design, user training, legislation, ethics, competency-based education, interprofessional education and care.

## References

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