

MY TOP FIVE

Apps for UK-based general ophthalmologists

The way we interact in society is changing as more of us are becoming 'digital natives': individuals who are in close contact with the internet and expect to integrate smart devices with our daily lives. This was stereotypically a term reserved for younger cohorts who belong to generation Y (1981-1996) and generation Z (1997-2012), however, an increasing number of healthcare professionals are using smart devices like portable computers to improve patient care and individual workflow. The case is no different for ophthalmology, which is a technophilic speciality with constant improvements in lens, surgical and imaging technology.

In this article, we explore the top five applications (apps) that are available for portable devices, both smartphones and tablets, that can enrich your workflow. We have avoided specialist apps on purpose and focussed mainly on apps for a broader audience, whether you are running a clinic or undertaking a practical procedure. Please note, the following list of apps is by no means extensive, but primarily aimed at highlighting user-friendly and multidisciplinary apps that are applicable to multiple settings; these contenders serve the standard for thorough app design. For more comprehensive and evidence-based reviews, there is plenty of work to explore [1-3].

References

- Chhablani J, Kaja S, Shah VA. Smartphones in ophthalmology. *Indian J Ophthalmol* 2012;**60**:127-31.
 - Zvornicanin E, Zvornicanin J, Hadziefendic B. The Use of Smart phones in Ophthalmology. *Acta Inform Medica* 2014;**22**:206-9.
 - Yang M, Lo ACY, Lam WC. Smart phone apps every ophthalmologist should know about. *Int J Ophthalmol* 2020;**13**:1329-33.
 - Ginger Labs, Notability: <https://www.gingerlabs.com>
 - Induction Healthcare, MicroGuide: <https://inductionhealthcare.com/guidance/>
 - Lord K, Cloud 9 Development, Eye Handbook: <https://eyehandbook.com/EHBweb/>
 - Harding I, Easilog medical logbook: <https://easilog.com/>
 - Cultured Code, Things: <https://culturedcode.com/things/>
- (All links last accessed June 2021)

AUTHORS



Dr Yarrow Scantling-Birch,
Royal Sussex County Hospital.

Mr Rajagopal Govindan,
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, UK.

Dr Hasan Naveed,
Royal Surrey County Hospital, Surrey, UK.

Notability [4]

Documentation is the bread and butter of most healthcare encounters. So why not make it a pleasurable experience? As we slowly start to transition to a digital NHS, Notability will prove a strong contender for note-taking, creating multimedia content and examination drawings that can be easily exported and integrated with patient summary care records. Furthermore, it can be used to keep a record of your educational content or clinical encounters. Perhaps a helpful side-effect of this useful app might be that for once we may decipher our doctor's handwriting.



Goal: To improve the experience of note-taking, documentation and filing	Compatibility: Smartphones (iOS) and smart tablets (iOS)
Genre: Documentation & Productivity	Size & Cost: 166MB (£8.99)
Rating: 4.5 (Apple Store)	Creator: Ginger Labs (Software Developers, San Francisco, USA)
Target audience: Everyone	

MicroGuide [5]

A popular app that is used across numerous NHS trusts in the UK as a practice management guide for all medical and surgical specialities. This is a particularly useful guidelines app for ophthalmologists when it comes to antibiotic choice and step-by-step management of emergency cases in ophthalmology. So far, the main handbook for ophthalmologists has been written by Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, which contains a wealth of information.



Goal: To educate and offer guidance on antibiotic therapy and emergencies applicable to ophthalmology	Compatibility: Smartphones (Android & iOS) and smart tablets (Android & iOS)
Genre: Educational & Guidance	Size & Cost: 143.1MB (Free)
Rating: 4.8 (Apple Store), 4.2 (Android Store)	Creator: Induction Healthcare Group PLC (Healthcare Technology, London, UK)
Target audience: Ophthalmologists and allied healthcare professionals	

Eye Handbook [6]

This is the number one, swiss-army knife of ophthalmology apps. EHB encompasses calculators, examination tools, eye wiki access, medications and dictionary. If you can name it, Eye Handbook probably has it. Unfortunately, EHB is geared towards US-based practice, so not all concepts will be easily transferable for the UK, however, it is an excellent source for various ophthalmic tests (e.g. Snellen chart, Ishihara test).



Goal: To provide an all-encompassing app to assist ophthalmologists	Compatibility: Smartphones (Android & iOS) and smart tablets (Android & iOS)
Genre: Examination, Education & Guidance	Size & Cost: 86.6MB (Free, but paid advertisements exist in app)
Rating: 4.6 (Apple Store), 4.3 (Android Store)	Creator: Dr Ken Lord (Vitreoretinal Surgeon), Cloud Nine Development LLC (App Developers, Kansas, USA)
Target audience: Ophthalmologists and allied healthcare professionals	

Easilog medical logbook [7]

Scrap the excel sheet, logging clinical encounters and surgical procedures has never been easier with this logbook app. This logbook is unique in offering an extremely versatile, aesthetic and simple user interface for recording specialist clinics, surgical procedures and extracurricular achievements. In an era of continuous appraisal and cumbersome logbooks, this app helps to streamline the process, however, it does come at a cost and information needs to be stored in an anonymous manner.



Goal: To streamline the logbook process for medical doctors and surgeons	Compatibility: Smartphones (Android & iOS) and smart tablets (Android & iOS)
Genre: Educational	Size & Cost: 55.4MB (Membership £24.99 per annum)
Rating: 4.9 (Apple Store), 3.3 (Android Store)	Creator: Dr Idris Harding (Consultant Cardiologist, Kent, UK)
Target audience: Trainees in ophthalmology and allied healthcare professions	

Things [8]

An award-winning personal task manager that integrates across numerous platforms. Increasingly it is easy to feel swamped with various commitments and activities, especially when you are a healthcare trainee trying to refine your skills. Things acts like a 'second brain' to allocate time, deadlines and remember any tasks relating to your personal and professional life. Unfortunately, it is only available on devices operating on Apple iOS!



Goal: To help individuals plan, manage and make progress towards goals	Compatibility: Smartphones (iOS) and smart tablets (iOS)
Genre: Productivity	Size & Cost: 100.3MB (Single purchase £9.99)
Rating: 4.7 (Apple Store)	Creator: Cultured Code (App Developers, Stuttgart, Germany)
Target audience: Everyone	