

New research sheds light on how to choose quality eHealth tools

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With so many eHealth tools available, it can be challenging to select the best one for a specific health need. A recent study published in *JMIR Human Factors* provides valuable insights on how to choose quality eHealth tools in an evolving landscape of digital health technology. This study comprehensively examined how the quality and impact of eHealth tools are currently assessed.

Led by Dr. Christine Jacob, a health tech researcher at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland FHNW, the study found that presently there is no single framework used uniformly to assess eHealth tools. Efforts to standardize [assessment](#) are faced with challenges, such as a lack of comparability and practicability, gaps in criteria completeness of the individual frameworks, validation issues, and regulatory complexity.

The researchers propose a new sociotechnical framework for assessing eHealth tools—this framework aims to balance different aspects of the health care ecosystem and considers potential implementation challenges. It classifies relevant assessment criteria into technical, social, and organizational categories and factors in the interplay between these aspects.

The findings from this study can be immensely valuable to clinicians, pharmaceutical executives, insurance professionals, technology providers, as well as policymakers. The authors hope that their work will help these stakeholders make more informed decisions about which eHealth tools to use, invest in or partner with, endorse to patients, or reimburse based on their potential quality and impact. Overall, this study provides a valuable resource for anyone looking to choose a quality eHealth tool.

"To make these results more accessible and usable to the relevant stakeholders, we will work with an [expert panel](#) including clinicians, patient advocates, eHealth providers, eHealth experts, Pharma executives, researchers, insurance experts, investors, and regulatory experts to co-create and validate an educational practical toolbox that aims to help raise awareness about the relevant assessment criteria for eHealth tools," says Christine Jacob, the project lead and the first author of the study.

More information: Christine Jacob et al, Assessing the Quality and Impact of eHealth Tools: Systematic Literature Review and Narrative Synthesis, *JMIR Human Factors* (2023). [DOI: 10.2196/45143](https://doi.org/10.2196/45143)

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