



Institute of  
Medical  
Illustrators

# Choosing an App for Teledermatology



### Choosing an App:

The app is primarily for clinical staff to be able to get patient images simply, quickly and easily into the patient record, and to enhance the ability to share them, NOT for use by Clinical Photographers or to supplant the role of a professional Clinical Photography service which provides 'best practice' for capturing patient photographic images..

The table here explains the features and requirements of an application, which can be used in conjunction with a standardised scoring matrix provided by an organisation's procurement or IT services.

| Feature                                       | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Registration to use application</b></p> | <p><b>Do users need an NHS e-mail address or can any users with any e-mail register for use. Does the app have the inherent security design to accommodate use of personal emails?</b></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Are there potential use cases where the user may not have an NHS address and when the flexibility to use a non NHS email is required as long as the app security system can accommodate it?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p><b>Image Capture</b></p>                   | <p><b>Can the patient's details be populated with an NHS number, Hospital number or bar code scanning or is manual entry of demographics required?</b></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> How appropriate the automatic entering of data is, depends very much on the design of the system. If the system is doing lookups of patient demographics, then there is a question over whether the app can be allowed to be used on personal devices which are not under the control of the Trust. For in hospital use, reading of patient's barcodes would be a significant benefit, but consideration should also be given to validating that the correct barcode has been scanned.</p> <p><b>Does it directly upload to the patient's record or does it need to be sent manually?</b></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> If the image does not get automatically transferred to the patient record, then who is responsible? Patients have a right to see images that have been recorded, and a right to have them deleted, how can this be managed if firstly the image is not automatically saved to the patient record, and secondly if copies of the image end up proliferating on other systems/devices?</p> <p><b>Do devices/users need to be approved or registered for use?</b></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Approving a user is not the same as approving a device. If the system does not allow for the approval of users, then there is no way of controlling who uses it, how it is used or the quality of the images being captured. If the device is managed correctly then the administrative overheads should be taken into account in the commissioning process.</p> <p><b>Does the app compress file sizes at all?</b></p> <p><b>Does the application store consent?</b></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Many clinicians express a desire not to require lengthy conversations about multiple consent levels with patients who then need to decide what they consent to. Also it may be deemed an unnecessary cross contamination risk to be handing personal devices to patients to obtain a signature, which may not support local infection control processes..</p> <p>Serious consideration should be given to whether it is more appropriate to say these are for treatment only, and if additional consent is required in the future because an image proves useful for teaching, then full written consent is obtained at that stage.</p> |

| Feature                              | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Image capture<br/>(...Cont.)</b>  | <p><b>Can patients sign for teaching?</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> It needs to be clearly established what the app/system is for, i.e., primarily for emergency and out of hours situations, to allow clinical staff to be able to get images simply, quickly and easily into the patient record, and to enhance the ability to share them. Not to replace the role of a professional clinical photography service who can produce a better quality of image for teaching or publication purposes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Sharing</b>                       | <p><b>Can images be shared between colleagues?</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Given that patients have a right to see and ask for any of their images, the only copy of the image should end up in the patient record, and a simple method of providing a link to the image in the patient record incorporated. Any methodology that makes managing the patient's rights more difficult should be avoided.</p> <p><b>How are they shared between colleagues?</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Can an App be adapted to supply a link, containing no patient information, to the appropriate images in the approved secure image management system, the link could then be shared easily through other messaging systems to direct other clinical staff to where the image is stored. Or could the app be adapted to include an 'Emergency Viewing Folder' facility with the email notification received by a colleague containing and automated link to the images in the emergency folder.</p> <p><b>Are they shared from the medical record?</b></p> <p>See above</p> <p><b>Does the device need to be connected to secure WIFI network to work?</b></p> <p><b>Can the device send data securely using 4G?</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> It is known that Wi-Fi coverage in hospitals can be patchy or difficult in some areas and therefore having both Wi-Fi and cellular is a definite advantage. Ideally the system should be capable of both by the choice of the commissioning organisation.</p> |
| <b>Communication with colleagues</b> | <p><b>How does the app need to communicate with colleagues to share images or other patient related data</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Be clear as to what the app is for. Is it for capturing clinical images, or a communication tool for clinical colleagues to share clinical images or both? If both, what are the priorities?</p> <p>From an Information Governance point of view, the absolute priority should be getting an image securely into the patient record, and other features like sharing should flow from that.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

| Feature                            | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Images from the camera roll</b> | <p><b>Can the device upload images from the camera roll?</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> If the system puts patient images on the camera roll, then it is not safe to use on a staff members personal device, given that invariably these days, the images will be instantly uploaded to iCloud or Google, where they will remain for at least 30 days, even if you delete them from the device afterwards.</p>                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Device Required</b>             | <p><b>Can the app be used on a personal device or does it need to be a dedicated work device?</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Serious consideration should be given in future to the cost of having to use Trust supplied devices, as well as the costs of keeping them up to date. Personal devices are often more up to date, and subsequently have better cameras and can be used safely if appropriate app security systems are in place.</p> <p><b>Can the app work on both Android and IOS Platforms?</b></p> <p><b>Is the app compatible with the age of your device?</b></p> |
| <b>Application Security</b>        | <p><b>Is the app itself secure or will it need additional security, such as Mobile Iron?</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> The costs of enrolling and managing devices in Device Management Systems should not be underestimated, neither should the reluctance of staff to have their personal devices enrolled.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

