

# Mobile e-logbook app

Maintaining a record of operations in a surgical logbook has long been part of surgical training and governance. For trainees, it is an essential part of assessments. For consultants, maintaining a logbook is not essential, however, a review of clinical outcomes forms part of the revalidation process in the United Kingdom. The pan-surgical electronic logbook (<http://www.elogbook.org>) is used by more than 31,000 surgeons. A mobile version of the electronic logbook for iPhone has been available since 2011. Recently, the mobile e-logbook application has also been launched on Android devices. This digital review focuses on the usability and practicality of the mobile e-logbook app.

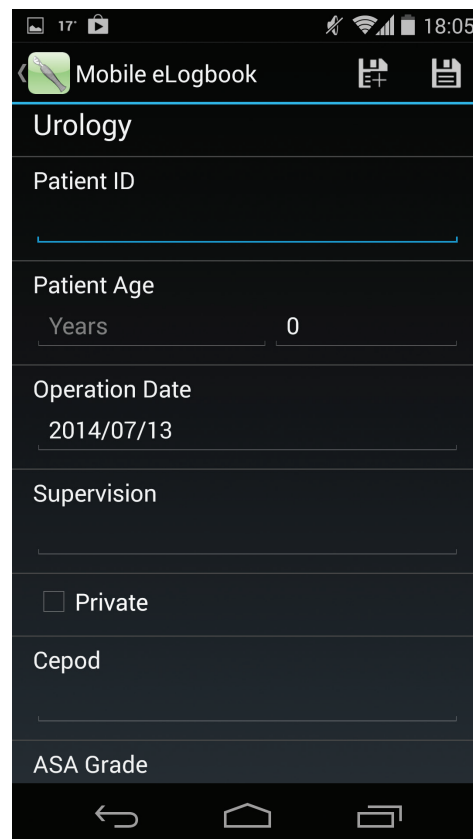
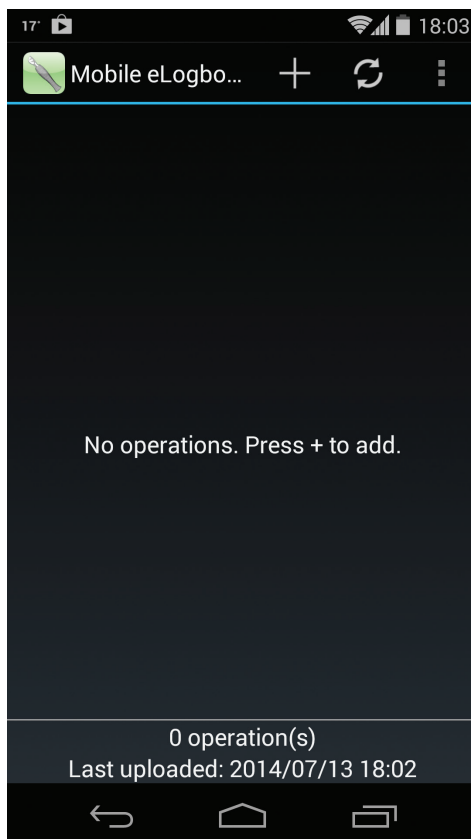
The mobile e-logbook app is designed exclusively for pan-surgical electronic logbook users and has been developed by a third party, NR IT Ltd. The key feature of the app is to allow the entry of operative data into the user's mobile device. It is then temporarily

stored within the device and easily uploaded and synchronised when you have access to an internet connection through your phone or tablet device. This proves to be particularly useful in areas with no instant access to the internet, such as operating theatres, wards and clinics. The app serves solely as a data exporting service, and viewing or changing logs is not possible through the app. The e-logbook app is available on Android and iOS (iPhone and iPad) as a free download from the respective app stores. However, to have any real function, you must subscribe for a fee of £4.99 per year. After downloading the application, you are asked to set up an individual, five digit, PIN number. The PIN number is used instead of a password, which significantly shortens the time to log in. One of the disadvantages of this feature is that the PIN cannot be retrieved, and if forgotten, the application needs to be re-installed. After the re-installation, all stored data on the device is lost.

Setting up the app is relatively

straightforward. At first login, you are required to enter your e-logbook username and password. Later, you only need to download, synchronise and validate your account settings in a few simple steps. To further enhance the performance of the app, you can spend a few more minutes setting up your preferred configurations, such as the default patient ID, date of birth format, default hospital, consultant, default operation date and the desired display fields.

Now you are ready to enter the operation details simply by pressing the plus sign (+). This takes you to a separate screen where you can input all the relevant operative details. Your favourite operations and hospitals, which were set up on your internet based e-logbook account, are automatically synchronised on the app. Entering the data is very simple and tends to be much easier than using the e-logbook account on a computer. Once the operative details have been entered, there is the option to save the details



or add another procedure on the same patient. All data on the app is protected by a highly secure encryption system that is approved by the US government for protecting highly classified documents.

Feedback from our colleagues, who have used the app since the launch has been mostly favourable. Users praised the reliability, accessibility and ease of use. The app has proved particularly useful in areas such as theatre where the number of computers available is limited and multiple tasks need to be completed in a fairly short postoperative period by theatre staff. The only minor issues with the app seem to relate to glitches around data upload, though we have had no such issues with the app. A couple of reviewers who have commented on the app failing to upload were quickly approached and aided by the app developer. This proves that there is a reliable customer service available if there are problems with the app.

#### Pros

- Easy to use
- Logical navigation
- Customer support.

#### Cons

- Annual subscription fee
- Rare app crashes and rare occurrences of failing to upload operative details.

In summary, the app is useful for those who haven't got instant access to their main e-logbook account on a computer. The app is easy to navigate and it appears that the developers are pro-active in resolving any potential customer problems. For the current modest price of £4.99 per year we think that the app should be present on the mobile of every urologist.

#### Resources

<http://www.elogbook.org> – Pan-surgical e-logbook.  
<http://www.mobile-elogbook.com> – Website of the mobile e-logbook app with links to the Android and iOS app store versions of the app.

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