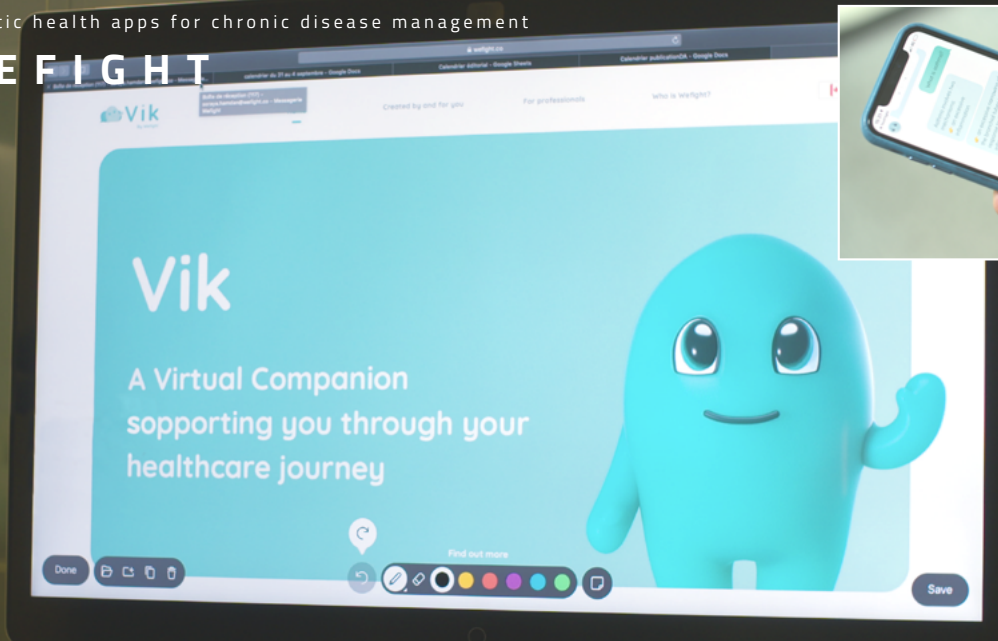


WE FIGHT



Living with chronic disease

Incidences of chronic diseases are growing across Europe,¹ and in addition to the significant cost to our health, they account for between 70 and 80 per cent of EU healthcare spending.³

Although patients with chronic diseases are seen by healthcare professionals at regular intervals, by nature these conditions are long term, affecting many aspects of a patient's life on a daily basis, which can take its toll.

Without easy, regular access to credible information and guidance, patients can experience feelings of isolation and anxiety, potentially resulting in poorer disease management and a reduced quality of life for them and their loved ones.

€700bn is spent on managing chronic disease across Europe alone.³

The importance of patient insight

Wefight is a start-up dedicated to empowering patients with chronic diseases.

It has developed the Vik app, a personalised virtual assistant, enabling patients to allay their anxieties and answer any questions about their condition at the touch of a button.

But while Vik uses chatbot technology, it offers so much more. Wefight co-creates the app content with patient advocacy groups, patients and a multi-disciplinary scientific committee to provide unique and relevant insight into managing the condition. It also provides access to trusted information, virtual patient communities, and clinical trials, and it works as a follow-up notebook for doctors' appointments to provide support and guidance throughout a patient's journey.

"It is undoubtedly the best alternative to what each patient wants to do and what doctors discourage – which is to type questions on the internet and find answers that are not necessarily the right ones." – **Christine Parrain, IMAGYN patient association representative and ovarian cancer survivor**

Enhancing patient compliance

User feedback has demonstrated that Vik is genuinely helping patients to manage their disease and a recent 12-month study showed it had also increased adherence to medicines.⁴ This study, which included over 4,500 patients, found the more people who used the app, the better their medication compliance became, with 88 per cent of respondents claiming that Vik provided them with support to help them track their treatment effectively.⁴

It's hoped that technologies like Vik can empower even more patients, accelerating expertise in their condition so patients can largely and safely manage their condition at home, reserving hospital visits for routine check-ups or specialist care and therefore, contributing to a more sustainable healthcare system.

"Technology like Vik will reduce pressure on the healthcare system by empowering the patient to take action and reducing the number of patients hospitals have to treat." – **Benoît Brouard, Wefight Co-Founder and Chief Executive**

spotlight

The Wefight Story

Europe is experiencing a rise in chronic diseases¹ – the leading cause of mortality and morbidity in the region – resulting in far-reaching implications for our healthcare systems and beyond. Everyday disease management driven by the patient could support people with chronic diseases, including cancer, to stay healthy at home and be less dependent on hospital settings.

However, in the absence of easy access to a nurse or doctor, patients at home can feel isolated and lonely, often looking online for answers, which can provide unreliable information and lead to greater confusion and anxiety.

EIT Health-supported start-up, Wefight, has developed a solution. Working in collaboration with patient groups, Wefight has created a series of apps dedicated to specific chronic conditions that work as digital personal health assistants.

Named Vik, the app series provides patients with trusted information about their condition, helping to overcome anxiety and isolation by using artificial intelligence (AI) to answer their questions.

Wefight Co-Founder and Chief Executive, Benoît Brouard, first saw the need for a solution while working as a hospital pharmacist. He found that patients living with a chronic condition have specific needs and questions at different stages of their journey, and this allowed him to gain important insights into how to deliver the right information to patients at the right time.

Vik aims to do just that. In the development of each app, Wefight conducts patient focus groups to draw on their personal experiences of living with their condition. These groups help to direct which questions and answers should be included in the app, providing genuinely valuable and relevant information to aid the patient journey.

Powered by AI, Vik supports patients by educating them about their disease, starting from diagnosis, with scientifically backed information, giving them the tools to manage their condition, providing ways for patients to speak to their family and friends, and eventually, giving advice on getting back to work. Vik also helps patients manage their treatment with personalised reminders.

With the backing of EIT Health, Benoît and his business partner, Pierre Nectoux, were able to find key investment and gained access to important industry stakeholders to accelerate the development of the apps.

For its latest addition, Vik Ovary, Wefight worked with IMAGYN, a France-based patient advocacy group, to develop a solution for patients with ovarian cancer – a condition for which Europe has one of the highest prevalence rates in the world.²

Wefight will continue to add to its app series with the support of EIT Health, as it prepares to launch apps for both atopic dermatitis and asthma. Meanwhile, expanding access to the app series further across Europe is also a priority, helping more patients live well with their condition.



EIT Health is supported by EIT, a body of the European Union

[1] European Chronic Disease Alliance. 9 out of 10 people die of a chronic disease in Europe (press release), 2014. Available from: http://www.ehnheart.org/component_attachments/?task=download&folder=news&id=1779 (accessed November 2020).

[2] Coburn SB, Bray F, Sherman ME, Trabert B. International patterns and trends in ovarian cancer incidence, overall and by histologic subtype. Int J Cancer 2017;140(11): 2451–2460. DOI: 10.1002/ijc.30676.

[3] European Commission. Towards better prevention and management of chronic diseases. Available from: https://ec.europa.eu/health/newsletter/169/focus_newsletter_en.htm (accessed November 2020).

[4] Hamine S, Gerth-Guyette E, Faulx D, Green BB, Ginsburg AS. Impact of mHealth chronic disease management on treatment adherence and patient outcomes: a systematic review. J Med Internet Res 2015;17(2):e52. DOI: 10.2196/jmir.3951.