

Validated Case Archive

VCA
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The online archive of virtual cases and case based assessments for NHS professionals

This document provides a brief overview of the Validated Case Archive (VCA), which is being developed by the Department of Health's e-Learning for Healthcare programme in partnership with four professional bodies - The British Association of Dermatologists, The Royal College of Ophthalmologists, The Royal College of Pathologists and the Royal College of Radiologists. The VCA will provide an electronic collection of 'virtual cases' for clinical specialties. As the four partner specialties encompass all imaging modalities, the VCA will be relevant to clinicians from any specialty.

The purpose of the VCA is to provide a large, comprehensive, well documented, classified and professionally validated collection of 'virtual cases', to enable self-directed learning, assessment of visual interpretation skills and reinforcement of clinical experience in a safe environment, where errors do not impact directly on patient management and wellbeing. The VCA will complement many e-LfH projects by enabling trainees to practise applying their new knowledge safely.

Case based learning in the clinical environment can be ad hoc and is unlikely to be structured, or provide fully comprehensive curriculum coverage. This may be due to several different factors, such as limited face-to-face clinical time, geographical variations in expertise and provision of specialised hospital units, and uncontrolled patient selection. The VCA will enable the dissemination of expertise in image-based interpretation from centres of excellence to those teaching and training facilities without that local expertise. It will also enable trainees to experience a wider variety and a greater depth of experience in case interpretation than would otherwise be available through direct patient contact.

The VCA will also be of use to those specialists for whom image interpretation is an important or essential part of clinical practice. Trained professionals could improve their interpretation skills with exposure to, and discussion of, a larger and wider variety of 'virtual cases', reinforcing skills through the use of assessments.

Initially, the VCA will be linked to the training curricula of the relevant e-LfH projects but, over time, the number and type of case within the VCA will be expanded to include more specialised interpretation skills.

The project is currently defining the functions required in the final product, before moving to the development phase.

For more information visit www.e-lfh.org.uk/projects/vca



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