

# Finding your way in the app jungle

## A Belgian database for welfare and mental health apps

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Thousands of welfare and mental health apps are available today. It is difficult for professionals, patients and the general public to evaluate and assess the quality of these apps.



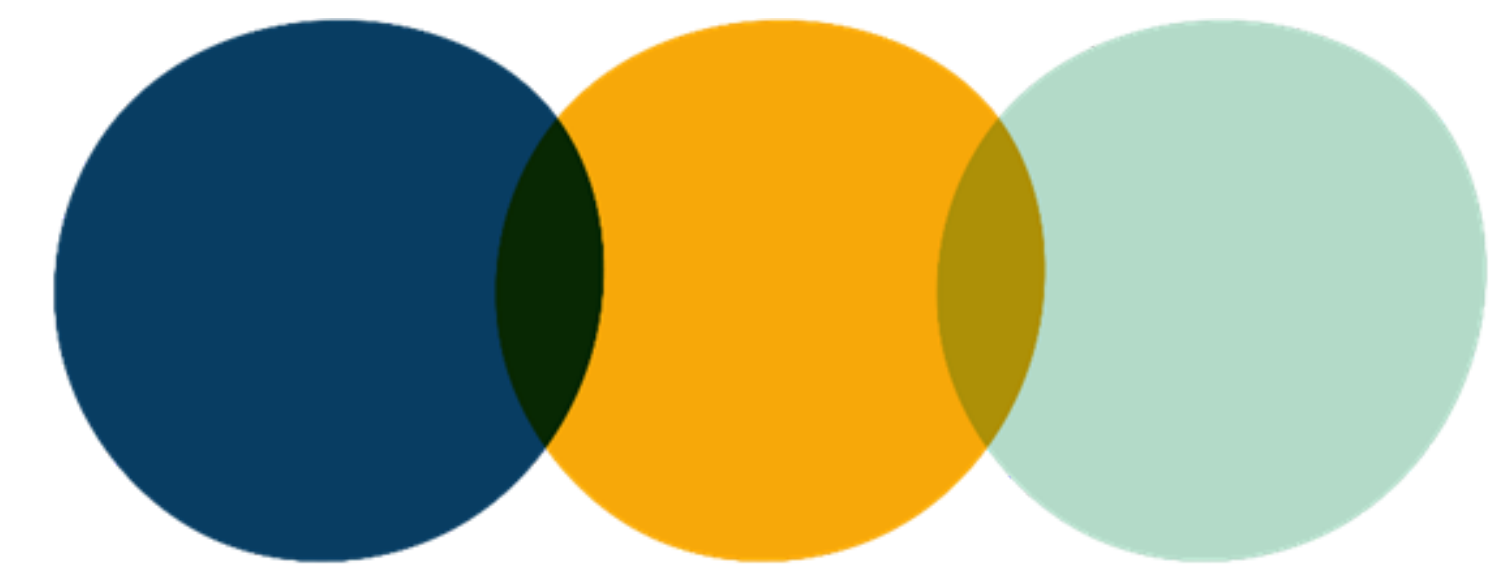
At onlinehulp-apps.be we bundle relevant, high-quality apps in an online database.



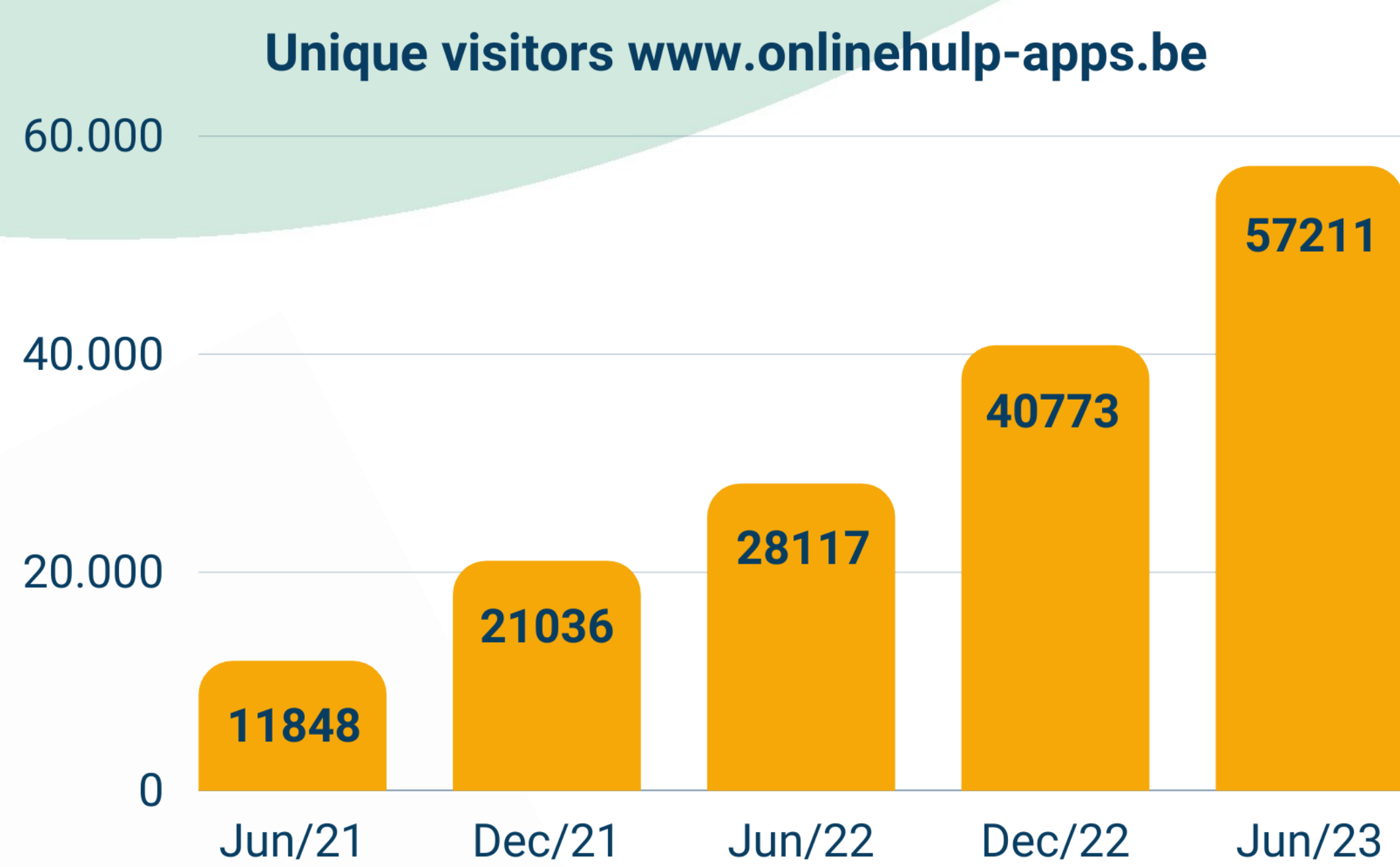
People now save valuable time in app selection and can find inspiration by browsing through the database. They can be confident that the database includes high-quality apps screened on a number of essential criteria.



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### onlinehulp-apps



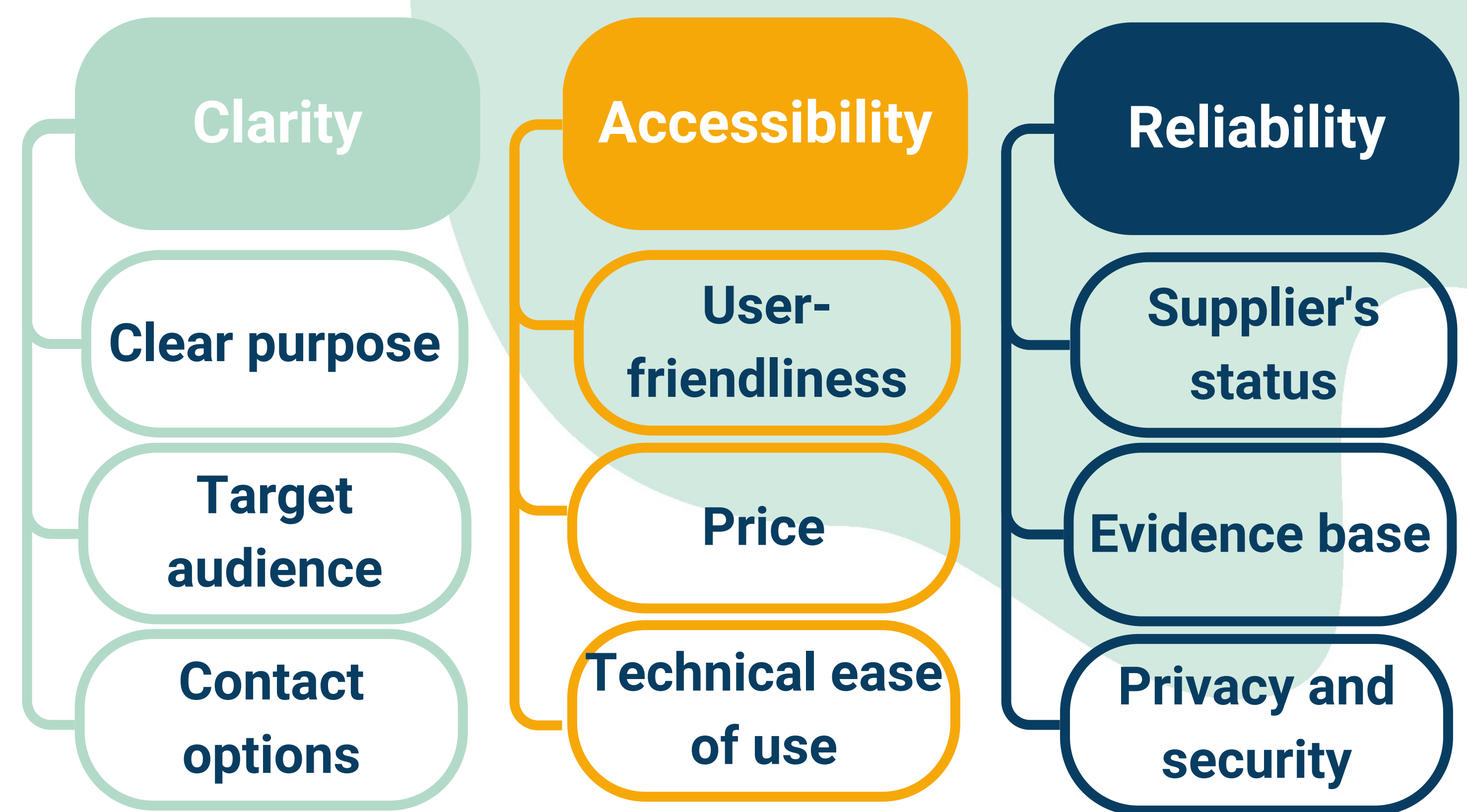
Onlinehulp-apps is the first database currently available in Belgium providing an accessible and up-to-date overview of relevant and high-quality apps for mental health and welfare. A solid search function allows visitors to browse through a total of 154 apps. Since its launch in January 2021, it has welcomed over 57,000 unique visitors.

### How was www.onlinehulp-apps.be created?

A screening framework was developed based on national and international existing criteria and screening instruments from (e.g., Stoyanov et al., 2015; GGD Appstore), which was subsequently evaluated by a steering committee of 75 mental health and welfare organizations.

For the selection of apps to be screened, we enlisted input from field professionals to prioritize commonly used apps

Every app is screened on 9 criteria related to three central topics: (1) clarity, (2) accessibility and (3) reliability. Screening is done by the partner universities of applied sciences from the Onlinehulp-Vlaanderen network.



### Lessons learned and future challenges

Professionals responded positively to the introduction of onlinehulp-apps.be, finding it a valuable tool for incorporating more blended approaches into their work.

Sustained efforts and resources are required to keep onlinehulp-apps up-to-date and to continue screening new apps.

Working together internationally and sharing best practices for app screening and bundling is crucial for mutual learning. Let's learn from each other to simplify the search for mental health and welfare apps.

Visit [www.onlinehulp-apps.be](http://www.onlinehulp-apps.be)



#### References

Stoyanov, S. R., Hides, L., Kavanagh, D. J., Zelenko, O., Tjondronegoro, D., & Mani, M. (2015). Mobile app rating scale: a new tool for assessing the quality of health mobile apps. *JMIR mHealth and uHealth*, 3(1), e3422. doi:10.2196/mhealth.3422

