



## #6 Updates from the E+DIETing\_LAB: Porto Summit & Launch of the Virtual Clinic

On the 22nd and 23rd of April 2024, the E+DIETING\_Lab partners convened in the picturesque town of Porto, Portugal, for a two-day summit. Representatives from the European University of the Atlantic (UNEATLANTICO), University of Valladolid (UVA) in Spain, St. Pölten University in Austria, Jan Kochanowski University (UJK) in Poland, and AP Hogeschool Antwerpen in Belgium were warmly welcomed by their Portuguese colleagues at the Universidade do Porto.

Partners were given a guided tour of the impressive Faculty of Nutrition and Food Sciences and enjoyed the nearby botanical gardens and local attractions.

The summit's central theme was reflecting on the progress and lessons learned from piloting the virtual patient chatbots and the virtual clinic. The meeting also focused on planning future engagement with the wider community and key stakeholders.

In this newsletter update, we will elaborate on the rollout of the virtual clinic.



*1 - Meeting of the Partners in Porto*

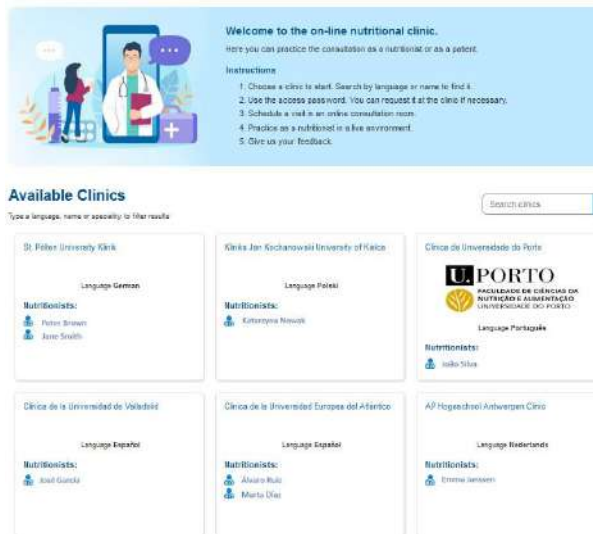
### ***The Virtual Clinic: A service learning and trainer's tool***

The E+Dieting\_Lab virtual clinic is a newly launched digital lab for dietetics education. It is designed as a trainer's tool focused on the dietetic care process (DCP) as it pertains to a community dietitian.

The platform currently comprises six clinics, each representing one of the six project partners. Teachers (dietitians), students and community members (patients) can register on the platform and partake in student-led, supervised dietetic consult.

During the booking process, community members (patients) can schedule an appointment created by students and teachers to partake in the virtual consultation. After the consult artificial intelligence (AI) can transform the interaction into a new virtual patient that will feed new cases to the previously described patient chatbot platform.

## Nutritional on-line clinics



Welcome to the on-line nutritional clinic.  
Here you can practice the consultation as a nutritionist or as a patient.

Instructions

1. Choose a clinic to start. Search by language or name to find it.
2. Use the access password. You can request it at the clinic if necessary.
3. Schedule a visit in an online consultation room.
4. Practice as a nutritionist in a live environment.
5. Give us your feedback.

**Available Clinics**

Type a language, name or specialty to filter results

SEARCH CLINIC

St. Peter University Klinik	Klinika Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce	Clinica de Universidade de Porto
Language German	Language Polish	Language Portuguese
Nutritionists: Peters Simon Jesse Smith	Nutritionists: Katarzyna Nowak	Nutritionists: Julio Silva

Clinica de la Universidad de Valladolid	Clinica de la Universidad Europea del Atlántico	AP Hogeschool Antwerpen Clinic
Language Spanish	Language Spanish	Language Dutch
Nutritionists: Anaïs González	Nutritionists: Alvaro Ruiz María Díaz	Nutritionists: Emma Jensen

2 - The E+Dieting\_Lab Virtual Clinic

## Nurturing Competency: Safety and Support in Supervision

A key component of the virtual clinic is the ability for students or junior dietitians to conduct consultations under the supervision of a qualified and experienced dietitian. This arrangement ensures safety for both patients and students or less experienced dietitians.

While many dietetic programs include significant practical training or internships, there are sometimes limited places available, particularly in niche practice areas leading to a lack of practical experience and exposure. Additionally, new graduate dietitians or dietitians transitioning to new practice areas may not always have access to support and supervision in their setting.

The virtual clinic can benefit students and less experienced dietitians by linking theoretical knowledge to practical applications in a supervised format. By using the virtual clinic, we hope that students can gain valuable experience with a more diverse range of patients and health conditions, particularly for areas where they may otherwise have limited access to practical training.



*3 - Connecting patients, students and practitioners*

## Fostering Inclusivity: Community-Focused Outreach

One of the project's goals is to promote social responsibility in universities. The virtual clinic supports this goal by providing a platform to connect students with real patients in a safe way and enable the interaction with isolated or low-income patients who do not have access to dietary counselling.

The virtual clinic is essentially a telehealth platform that removes some of the barriers related to geography, mobility, and financial constraints, which are often impediments to accessing quality care. The digital format ensures that some patients who live in remote areas, struggle with transportation, or face other economic and social challenges can still receive dietary and health advice.

An example use-case scenario for the delivery of virtual dietetic care was seen in the recent COVID-19 pandemic where there were reduced in-person healthcare services to patients and limited access for students to practical training. In such a scenario, a solution like the E+Dieting\_Lab could help to maintain delivery of healthcare services and student education.



## Innovating for the Future: Turning Consults into Chatbots

Beyond consultation supervision and community outreach, the platform seeks to leverage the data from dietetic consultations to create new virtual patient chatbots for the previously described self-learning tool.

The goal is to transform anonymized recorded consultations into new chatbots via AI by mapping the key components of the consultations. This aspect of the platform is still under development, but we aim to refine and test it in future iterations.

## Paving the Way: Piloting Activities

During the testing of the virtual clinic, several piloting activities are underway. Some universities are using role-playing scenarios for students to practice dietetic consultation and interpersonal skills over the platform. At other sites, dietetic interns are providing basic healthy diet advice to community members under supervision.

These diverse piloting activities offer valuable feedback about the platform's functionality and potential use cases across various target groups and geographic regions.

## The Road Ahead: Strategizing Our Next Phase

The recent summit in Porto marks a crucial step forward in refining the E+DIETING\_Lab's virtual clinic and patient chatbot technologies. Partners left the meeting with renewed enthusiasm and clear strategies for enhancing the clinic's capabilities, engaging with the broader community, and continuing to support and unify dietetic education in Europe.

Stay tuned for future updates as the project continues to evolve, empowering the next generation of dietitians with innovative digital tools.

The E+DIETing\_Lab project is jointly funded by the Spanish Service for the Internationalisation of Education ([SEPIE, Spanish Agency of the European Programme Eramus +](#)) through to 2025.

## You want to know more about the E+DIETing\_LAB project?

**Get more information and updates on the E+DIETing\_LAB project through our [website](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)**

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**E+DIETing\_LAB**



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Erasmus+ Programme  
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