



A pharmacist's electronic filing cabinet

By Jodie Malhotra, PharmD

Ever since I graduated from pharmacy school, I have struggled with the endless task of filing continuing education hours, licenses, certifications, records of honors and awards, evaluations, and academic history, in addition to everything else that has contributed to my professional career. No matter how fail-safe I think my filing system is, I still feel dread about relying on it when I have to renew my pharmacy license or update my curriculum vitae (CV). Along with the struggle of maintaining documentation following graduation, the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education now requires all student pharmacists to maintain student portfolios that document their progressive achievement of competencies throughout both the curriculum and their practice experiences.

Traditionally, pharmacy schools required students to maintain a paper portfolio of all their learning experiences during pharmacy school for assessment purposes. More recently, with the development of electronic portfolio software systems, some students have had the option of using an electronic portfolio to document their learning experiences and achievements. Such a portfolio is an organized collection of electronic files that demonstrates an individual's skills, education, and professional development. There are a variety of electronic portfolio software programs available for assessment of students; however, none of these programs are specifically designed for student pharmacists or pharmacy professionals.

On the other hand, *RXportfolios* is an electronic portfolio software program

that has been customized for the pharmacy profession and has been designed to meet the needs of both pharmacists and pharmacy education, in addition to serving as a model for the entire health care system.

Individualize your portfolio

My first experience using *RXportfolios* showed me that it was definitely designed with the user in mind. The program has a standardized navigation bar to assist in organization and a help icon on every page with detailed instructions on how to manage the individual categories within the portfolio. *RXportfolios* is designed to allow users to individualize their portfolios, although the main categories within the portfolios are standardized for consistency.

Some of the specific categories useful for organizing professional information are general biography, education and employment histories, honors and awards, licenses and certifications, and CE storage. The "Professionalism" category allows the user to track professional and scholarly activities, such as publications and research achievements, community service involvement, and meetings attended, as well as committee, association, and fraternity and sorority memberships. In several of the categories, there is also an option to upload relevant documents to support your achievements, such as copies of manuscripts, abstracts from posters that have been presented, transcripts from previous semesters, or assignments that demonstrate mastery of a specific outcome. *RXportfolios* also has a category titled "Reflections and

Quotes," in which the portfolio user reflects on both educational and professional experiences. These reflections and quotes help to personalize the portfolio and provide a way to collect and store lifelong learning experiences.

Unique features for career advancement

The pharmacy profession is characterized by lifelong learning and career advancement. A valuable feature of *RXportfolios* is the automatic creation of a CV assembled from information within the various categories of the portfolio. The program produces a CV in the form of a Microsoft Word document that can then be updated and edited.

Another unique benefit is the ability to send portfolios securely to potential employers. This option allows the user to choose the portfolio categories they would like to share with potential employers and to determine the duration of time employers are allowed to access portfolio information. *RXportfolios* users have a technological advantage that can set them apart from others pursuing a career in pharmacy.

Throw away those file folders

This innovative software program provides its users with the ability to engage in lifelong learning, professional development, career planning, and self-assessment. Toss your file folders and tiny folder tabs. *RXportfolios* has provided a much easier way to organize your achievements throughout your pharmacy education and in your lifelong journey as a successful pharmacist.



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