

PRESS RELEASE

Hephai receives 2021 Catalyst Award from US National Academy of Medicine for its unique digital education platform

\$50k prize from US National Academy of Medicine recognizes Hephai's AI-based platform designed to help asthma and COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) patients

Paris, France, September 22, 2021 – Hephai, a French start-up developing an AI-based digital education platform, today announces that it received a 2021 Catalyst Award as part of the US National Academy of Medicine 'Healthy Longevity Global Competition'. The award comes with a \$50,000 (€42.2K) prize to further develop its platform.

The Healthy Longevity Global Competition is a multiyear, multimillion-dollar international competition seeking breakthrough innovations to extend human health and function in later life. The Catalyst phase calls on teams and individuals from any background – from science, medicine and health to technology, finance, social sciences and beyond – to submit innovative ideas with the goal of extending the human healthspan. Applications are judged primarily on novelty and innovation.

The US National Academy of Medicine launched the competition and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) Health managed the European applications through the EIT Health Headstart Programme.

"We are extremely proud of this new international award," said **Dr. Valéry Trosini-Desert, Hephai founder and pulmonologist at the Pitié-Salpêtrière hospital**, Paris, France. "We are in a rapid development phase with new partners, including leading pharmaceutical company Chiesi. We have filed a patent for our technology and are reinforcing our expert team to make our digital platform available in the coming months to asthma and COPD patients. We are pursuing one goal: to help patients with chronic respiratory diseases use their treatments correctly and thus live a better life."

Awardees will attend the upcoming virtual [Healthy Longevity Innovator Summit 2021](#) on Sept. 13, 14 and 22, 2021.

A unique AI-based digital tool for asthma and COPD patients

Both asthma and COPD are usually treated with medication taken via inhalers. Typically, patients have to make regular use of inhalers in order to take their treatment properly. Unfortunately, usage errors are commonplace: an estimated 30–40% of patients with COPD¹ do not use their inhalers correctly. This can have a direct impact on how they take the medication, reducing its benefits.

Consultations with pulmonologists and GPs are often short, not allowing enough time to monitor the use of the prescribed inhaler medication, or to provide a full explanation to patients on its application. Short patient consultations are also common at the pharmacy. As a result, many people are unaware of the correct techniques to use their inhaler effectively, as they lack professional training or advice. This is why an educational approach is needed, to provide step-by-step instructions on the correct use.

Hephai's digital educational platform makes it possible to assess whether the inhaler treatment has been taken correctly. If there are problems, the tool can establish a corrective process, or inform the patient's doctor. The app can be recommended by the prescribing doctor or pharmacist and will be available for free download in 2022 via Apple and Android devices. It is recognized as a Class 1 medical device.





A total of 299 million people worldwide live with asthma or COPD. Over the past 30 years, there has been unprecedented growth in the market for inhaled therapy, with annual sales having increased from \$7 billion (€5.9bn) in 1987 to \$36 billion (€30.4bn) in 2014 and with over 90 billion inhaled doses prescribed to patients in a single year².

1. Molimard M, Raheison C, Lignot S, et al. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease exacerbation and inhaler device handling: real-life assessment of 2935 patients. Eur Respir J 2011 - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28182569/>
2. Omar S. Usmani, Choosing the right inhaler for your asthma or COPD patient. Ther Clin Risk Manag. 2019; 15: 461–472 - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6422419/>

About Hephai

Hephai develops an AI-based digital education platform to support patients in correctly using their inhalers prescribed for asthma and COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), in order to maximize effectiveness.

Considering the sheer variety of inhaler-based treatments available, there is a significant lack of information on the best techniques for patients to use, resulting in 30-40% not knowing how to use their inhaler properly. These critical errors are exacerbated by doctors and pulmonologists having very little time to dedicate to monitoring inhaler use. As a result, the treatment is less effective, with potentially significant negative health consequences.

Hephai uses AI to automatically assess the patient's inhaler technique and to provide a virtual coach that can guide them through the process for correctly using an inhaler, as well as providing feedback and alerting the patient's doctor if necessary.

Hephai's goal is to improve care for respiratory conditions by minimizing the risks associated with incorrect use and to gather Real-World Evidence (RWE) on the use of ready-to-use inhaler medication.

Hephai builds upon ten years of prior research into inhaled medication prescribed for asthma and COPD and on the success of the ZEPHIR guide. Its app is expected to be launched in 2022 on smartphones, tablets and PCs, in partnership with pharmaceutical companies.

Founded in 2019 in Paris, France, by Valéry Trosini-Desert, Serge Kinkingéhun and Thomas Similowski, the company is incubated at Paris Biotech Santé and supported by the Wilco accelerator. Hephai is also a laureate of EIT Health. Its partners include AP-HP, Bpifrance, Microsoft, Medice and France Biotech.

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