

THE ROLE OF OPEN EDUCATION IN IMPROVING THE ACCURACY OF DEATH CERTIFICATION PRACTICES AMONG BIOMEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

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Keywords: Certification Of Causes Of Death; Open Education; MOOC; Elearning Course

Acknowledgement: The authors acknowledge CODA-EU, an Erasmus+ project funded by the European Commission (2020-1-FR01-KA203-080629). This publication reflects the views only of the authors.



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



INTRODUCTION

During the CoViD-19 pandemic, mortality data has proven to be a valuable tool in understanding the epidemiological trends and impacts of health policies on a population. The accurate recording, coding, and publishing of information on causes of death is crucial. Despite using an online platform for registering death certificates since 2014, Portugal records a relatively high proportion of deaths attributed to non-useful codes in public health analyses, mainly due to inappropriate certification practices. However, traditional in-person learning formats are not sustainable due to the limited resources available.

AIMS

As part of the European CODA-EU project (Erasmus+ Program), a team of multidisciplinary experts from biomedical, social and education sciences designed a Multilingual MOOC on certification on the causes of death (Image 1). It targets health professionals, such as Biomedical Scientists, for whom competencies in cause-of-death certification are important.



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Image 1 - CODA-EU Project participants

STRUCTURE OF THE MOOC

The MOOC was produced in 4 different versions adapted to the member countries of the consortium (France, Poland, Greece and Portugal) and was delivered in each country's language. It takes approximately 3 hours to complete and consists of 3 main modules:

1. Legal and Organizational Aspects of Death Registration;
2. International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems;
3. Most Common Errors in the Certification of Causes of Death.

At the end of each module, the learner should be able to:

- Module 1: Understand the national regulations concerning stating the death and issuing the death certificate; Know what to do in case of suspicious circumstances of death;
- Module 2: Understand how the contents of the Classification are arranged; Find out the specifics of four important chapters of the ICD;
- Module 3: Learn about recommendations regarding the choice of death causes; Find out the most common errors when filling in the death causes sections.

CONTENTS OF THE MOOC

Course contents I (Image 2):

- Initial test (Image 3)
- Introduction
- Certification of causes of death ICD-10

Course contents II:

- Case studies (scenarios) (Image 4)
- Final test (Image 5)
- Resources

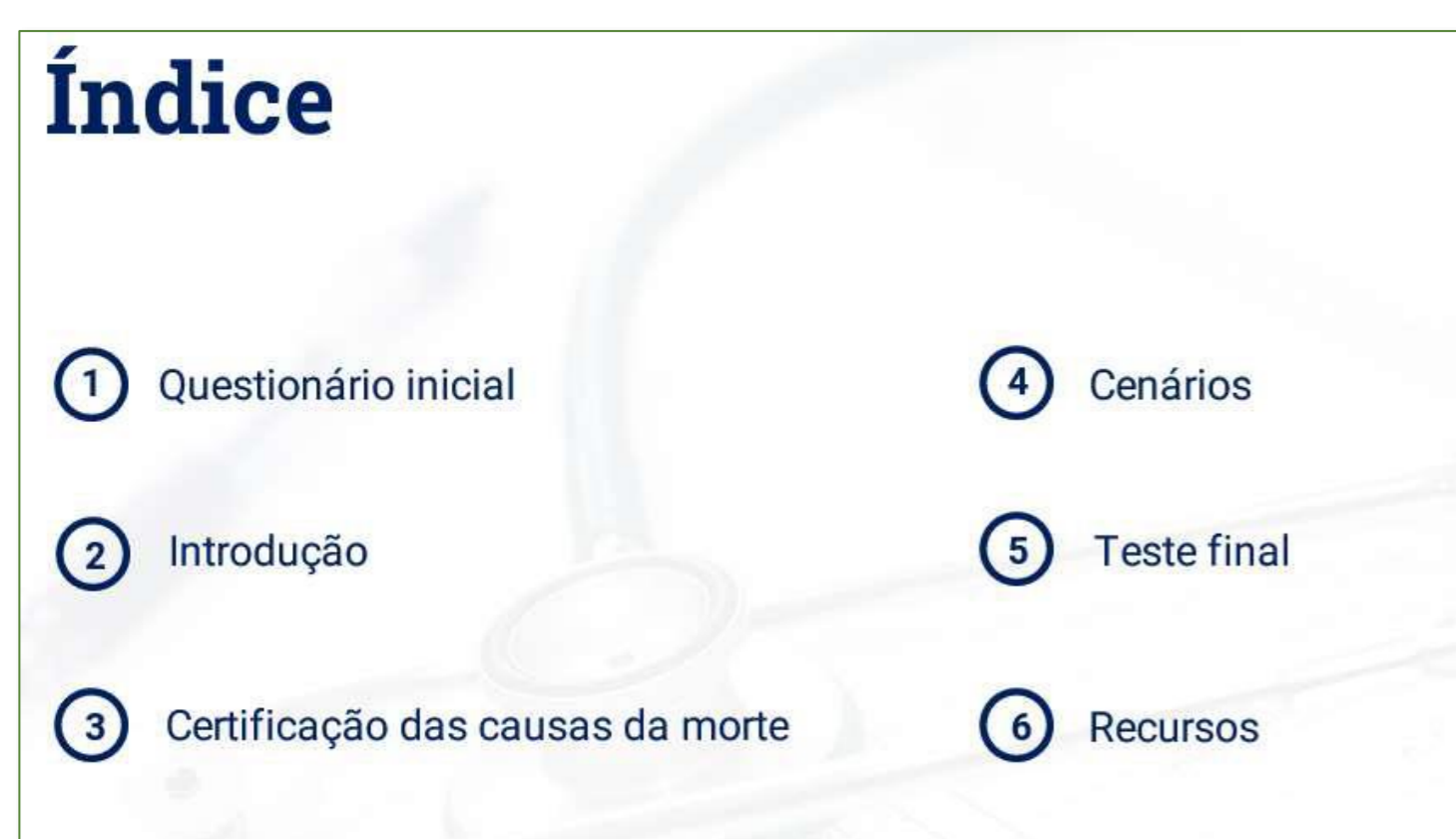


Image 2 - Layout of the Portuguese version initial page

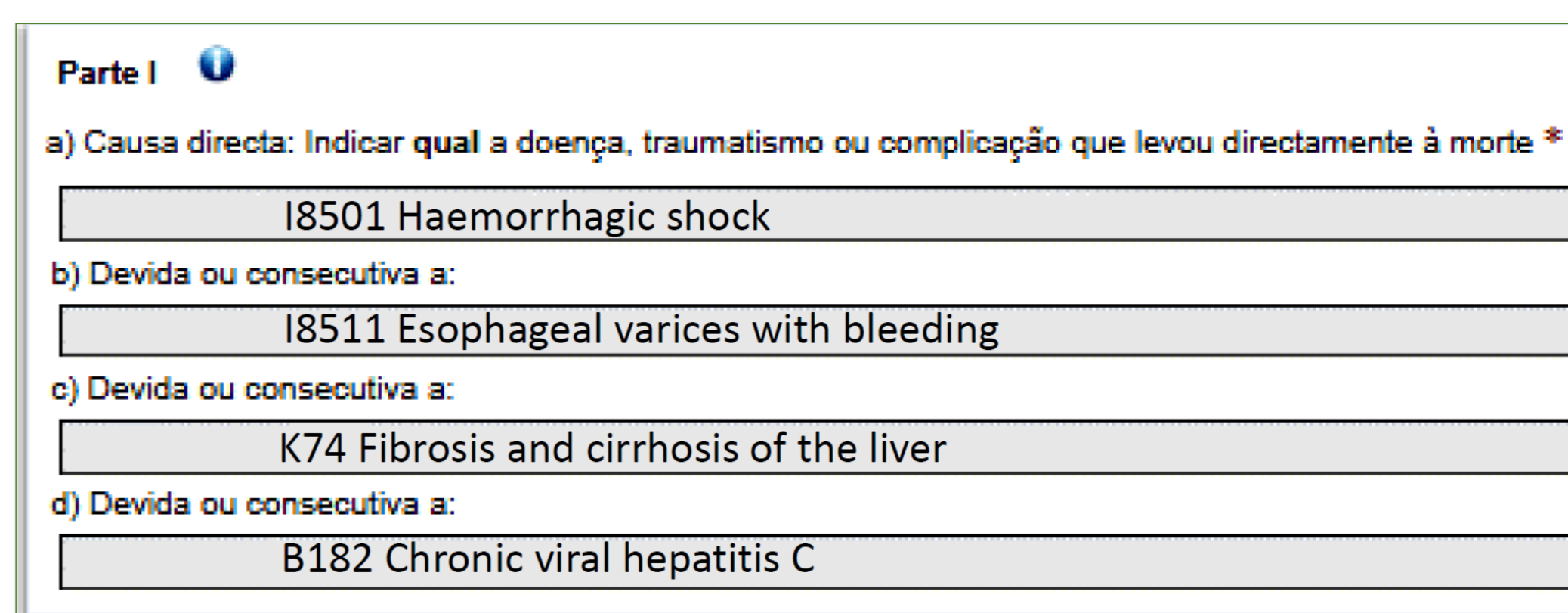


Image 4 - Layout of the Portuguese version Case studies (scenarios)



Image 3 - Layout of the Portuguese version initial test

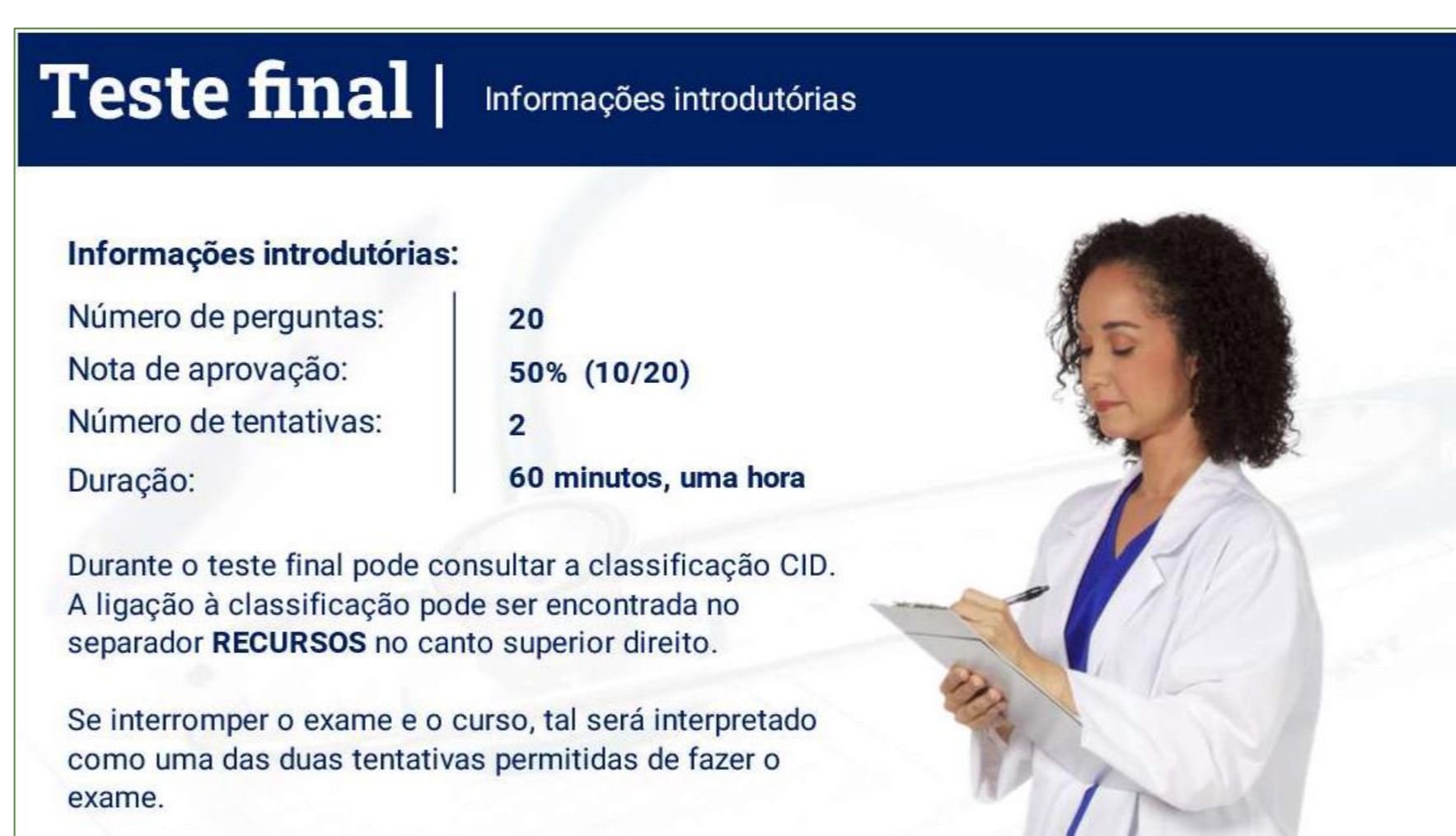


Image 5 - Layout of the Portuguese version final test

RESULTS

In Portugal, the MOOC attracted 369 participants, ages ranging from 19 to 66 years old. 95 passed the final exam, including several Biomedical Laboratory Scientists. 40 participants obtain a score of 80% or over

CONCLUSION

Feedback from participants demonstrates high satisfaction with this learning experience. Furthermore, representatives from the Portuguese Ministry of Health have recognized the contribution of this MOOC to the updating and improvement of staff.

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