

The Drug Information Service through the internet in Taiwan

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INTRODUCTION

In recent year, internet has been undoubtedly provided a convenient platform to link the world information together. Drug information service could also be available through most medical center in Taiwan. However, sometimes only one who raised the question could be answered personally but not publicized on the website to let other people know the Question and Answer (Q&A). Our Department of Health (DOH) has firstly developed an integrated pharmaceutical information website and began at the 1st December 2006 to answer all the drug information questions through the internet. They announced user-friendly, easily click to use and free of charge as the characteristics of the website which supported by a group of professional pharmacists. Besides, all the Q&As are kept posted to the public and provided with printout function as well as Excel exported files.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this work aimed to express the viewpoints about the quality of the government drug information service website by a user perspective.

METHODS

The unrestricted download Excel files of the drug information were revealed from this January to June and summarized by using the DOH 5 major drug related problems (DRPs) classification “ Asking Five Questions While Receiving your Medicine” which included asking the drug name, the drug efficacy, the drug days, how to take and drug precautions. The questions related to Chinese herbs, health food and only comments on the quality of the website were ignored. The SPSS 13.0 statistical software was used to organize the information.

RESULTS

A total of 258 drug related problems (DRPs) identified from 164 posted drug information requests by the public. According to the DOH 5 major DRPs classification, precautions were found the most frequently asked questions of 118(45.7%), the second and third most were drug efficacy 57(22.1%) and others 56(21.7%) respectively (Table1). Other than the DOH 5 major DRPs classification, indications and adverse drug reactions were also found the same most frequently asked questions 42(16.3%), the second most was related to the women drug safety i.e. pregnancy and breast feeding 41(15.9%) (Table 2).

Table1 Type of questions according to the DOH 5 major DRPs classification

Groups	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Precautions	118	46%	46%
Efficacy	57	22%	68%
Others	56	22%	90%
Drug administration	12	5%	94%
Drug name	11	4%	98%
Drug day	4	2%	100%
Total	258	100%	

Table2 Type of questions other than the DOH 5 major DRPs classification

Groups	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Indication	42	16.3%	16.3%
Adverse drug reaction	42	16.3%	32.6%
Pregnancy	35	13.6%	46.1%
Drug of choice	24	9.3%	55.4%
Policy & Regulation	15	5.8%	61.2%
Analytical drug ingredient	13	5.0%	66.3%
Drug-drug interaction	12	4.7%	70.9%
NHI regulations	10	3.9%	74.8%
Breast feeding	6	2.3%	77.1%
Terminology	6	2.3%	79.5%
Other patient informations	6	2.3%	81.8%

Table3 Other drug related information written in the 164 requests

Information	Frequency	Percent
Chinese drug name	63	38.4%
English drug name	60	36.6%
English trade name	42	25.6%
Pharmacological group	28	17.1%
Manufactory	7	4.3%
DOH License No.	5	3.0%
Appearance and Description	4	2.4%
None	16	9.1%

CONCLUSIONS

As a user’s point of view, drug information website could effectively provide documented information as references for the public. The dedication of the government and all the team members i.e. the professional pharmacists should be proud of their fruitful contributions. Furthermore, according to a newly statistical data in this July, the time taken to give advice has reduced within 2 days, which has been putting great effort in responding the drug information requests which depend on how complicated they are. In conclusion, such a fabulous website should be encouraged and presented to the public.