

Providing reliable information on Pharmacovigilance via the web: a long-term experience of an Italian web site

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The possibility given by the Internet to have access to updated medical information in real time makes it an essential tool for healthcare professionals education.

In order to provide accurate information on drug safety and to promote the reporting of adverse drug reactions among physicians, in June 1999 the Clinical Section of the Italian Society of Pharmacology created the website www.farmacovigilanza.org.

The site provides updated articles and case reports published on the international literature and warning issued by Regulatory Agencies (FDA, EMA, MHRA, TGA, Health Canada, etc.), always in a brief and easy to read way.

Free registration is required to have access to strictly medical information. When the site is updated, members receive monthly an e-mail with the list of new contents included.

The site contains a specific section dedicated to herbal remedies, with single herb monographs and news about herbs side effects and drug-herbs interactions.

A section is also related to drugs which might alter most commonly prescribed Lab tests and a list of common iatrogenic diseases together with a list of drugs which might be responsible. A section, Cosmetovigilance, collects lessons, news and links to websites concerned with ACR (Adverse Cosmetic Reactions).

Up to May 2013, the site counts over 1.260.000 direct accesses and over 17.000 healthcare professionals registered. Data collected shows that community pharmacists (over 2700), hospital physician (over 2600) and general practitioners (over 1800) are the three figures mainly represented, thus witnessing the importance of such tool for the continuing education in pharmacovigilance.