

HOW DO PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS UPDATE THEIR INFORMATION AFTER INFORMATION AFTER GRADUATION

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Abstract: Introduction: Defining the use of Internet and other sources for professional updating among physicians and dentists is essential for improving Continuing Medical Education (CME). In Iran Medical Sciences University are responsible for CMEs.

Objective: To assess the extent of using Internet among physicians and dentists and to compare it with the use of other sources for professional updating information in Qazvin Medical University.

Materials and Methods: This was a descriptive study and a questionnaire was randomly sent to half of all physicians and dentists (n=399) in Qazvin province.

Findings: All of 339 samples answered the questionnaire. They were general physicians (52.8%), residents (2.1%), specialist (26.8%), sub specialists (2.8%), general dentists (11.9%), dental specialist (3.6%). The preference of the study group in using the source of CME information was 69.7% reading books, 24.6% internet, 28.1% foreign journals whether paper or electronic, and 26.8% seminars and workshops. Comparing the two groups, physicians spent 19 hours and dentists spent 14 hours on studying per month. Of those who did not use internet, 45.84% stated "not begin accessible" and 40% stated "don't know how to use it". The average weekly time of doctors was spent 5hrs on study books and papers, 9hrs on students teaching, 2.5hrs on research, 4hrs on participating in meeting and 35 hrs on medical visits.

Conclusion: Since internet plays an increasingly important role in physicians professional updating, it is suggested that training courses in, more hardware and software facilities at hospitals and libraries, and internet program for continuing medical education should be provided by the university besides the updated electronic library.

Keywords: Dentists, Information Technology, Internet, Physicians

I. INTRODUCTION

The subject of physicians' training and continuing profession development can be considered in the light of continuum of medical education and using electronic devices.⁽¹⁾

Doctors as well as dentists should keep abreast of the new knowledge so that they able to manage the medical care successfully. The usage of modern technology in continuing medical education (CME) has been a great help in updating the medical professionals in the recent decodes.⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

E. learning, internet and educational networking decodes electronic journals, CD-ROMs can be utilized in CME programs whether they many be within self education or organized learning from works.⁽⁴⁾ In Iran Medical Sciences University are responsible for CMEs.

The objective of the survey to assess the quality of updating the physicians' and dentists' professional information Qazvin province in Iran.

II. MATERIAL AND METHOD

In 2003 – 2004 a random sample of 339 of doctors – General or specialists and 60 dentists were selected and answered the self administered questionnaire containing 19 stems. The validity and reliability of the questions was tested, and the data were analyzed using statistical methods.

III. FINDINGS

Of the total 399 physicians and dentists 28.1% were women and 71.9% were men, and 52.8% were physicians, 2.1% residents, 26.8% specialists, 2.8% sub-specialists, 11.9% general dentists and 3.6% specialist dentists. Of the total number 20.8% were university members.

Of the total number, the felt needs for updating their information was as follows; 37.0% too much, 44.1% much, 16.5% moderate, 2.4 none.

To their internet the frequency distribution of getting new knowledge was as follows; 32.1% in medical research, 3.9% education, 55.4% out patient cares, 32.3% in patient cares, 61.2% diagnoses 13.5% epidemiology and 4% others. The preference of the study group in using the source of CME information was 69.7% reading books, 24.6% internet, 28.1% foreign journals whether paper or electronic, and 26.8% seminars and work shops.

The frequency distribution of the information resources usage among them was as follows; 46.6% books, 59% attending in seminars and workshops; 55.5% reading internal journals, 44.3% using educational CDs, 44.9% reading international journals - both hard and soft copies, 42.7% internet (table 1).

Of the total 63.6% sub – specialists utilized internet and e-mail for the communication of and information.

Their sources of dentists were mostly workshops and seminars.

The reasons why the study group did not use internet and e-mail were as follows; inaccessibility of computer and internet 45.8%, lack of computer skill 40%, traditional habits 6.3% and 7.9% other.

About 67.9% have not conducted research in the year before the survey and 72.7% of sub specialist and 71.4% dentists specialists had collaborated research project in the period.

Among the study group the average time per month spent on self directed studies using internet and CDs was as follows; general physicians 26 hours, specialists and sub specialists 36 hours, general dentists 27.5 hours and dentist specialist dentists 60 hours (see table 2).

IV. CONCLUSION

The findings of the survey revealed that the common source of up dating information of doctors was firstly books and secondly international journals. According to mammary and Charles study. The top three ranked sources among physicians were in person conferences (92%), print based self study (64%) and CD-ROM.

Dedicated time in the work place for self directed methods programs would encourage the use of self – directed CM and research works.⁽¹⁾⁽⁵⁾

A frequently cited reason for not using the computer for CME was a lack of knowledge about how to use the internet or a CD-ROM; also are not easing access in every where. It conforms to mammary and Charles study and Hormozgan university.⁽⁶⁾⁽⁷⁾ But According to Applebee survey the main reason for not using computer was lack of enough time.⁽⁸⁾

It is concluded that both hardware and software facilities should be empowered in the province. Besides, computer training workshops should be included and organized in CME programs of the doctors specially for whom they are servicing in more deprived area.

Table 1. CME delivery modes by type and utilization among the study groups

Delivery mode	Type	Percent
Books	Instructor – directed	46.5
In – person conference	Instructor – directed & self – directed	59
Journal – Based (National)	Self – directed	55.6%

Journal– Based (International)	Self – directed	44.9%
Computer CD-ROM	Self – directed	44.3%
Computer – internet	Self – directed	42.7%

Table 2. The average of the time dedicated to self – directed CME hours per month among the study group

Study group	Book	Journal	Internet	CD
GPs	14	22.5	14	12
Specialists	12	34	20	16
Dentists	20	30.5	17.5	10
Specialist dentist	17	42.5	36	24
Total (average)	15.7	34	17.5	14.2

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