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MEETING ABSTRACT

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The Drug Information Unit of the Medical Faculty of Novi Sad – Serving medical practitioners for 15 years

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Background: In Serbia, official drug-related data for medical professionals usually are provided by the National Agency of Drugs and Medical Devices or international databases. The Medical Faculty, University of Novi Sad, is hosting a Drug Information Unit which serves as regional drug information centre providing official information on drugs for the last 15 years to medical professionals in Vojvodina (northern region of Serbia, with a population of about 2,000,000 inhabitants). The aim of the study was to analyse requests on drug information sent by medical practitioners to the Drug Information Unit at the Medical Faculty, University of Novi Sad.

Methods: Data on requests on drug information sent to the Drug Information Unit in the last 15 years (starting from 2007), were collected and analysed. Data were analysed by two criteria: type of the client sending the request (general practitioners, specialist in medicine, nurses) and the type of information requested (e.g. drug interactions, side effects, use of drugs in pregnancy and lactation etc.).

Results: During the observed period of 15 years there were 2,720 requests on drug information generated by health-care professionals. The majority of requests were sent by specialists in different fields of medicine (73%), 24% by general practitioners and the rest (3%) by nurses. The most frequent type of information by health-care professionals were related to treatment of choice in bacterial infections (17.6%), drug–drug or drug–food interactions (16.3%) and safety of drug use during pregnancy and lactation (15%). Other inquiries were related to adverse drug reactions (14.5%), pharmacokinetics, most frequently related to drug pharmacokinetics in kidney and/or liver failure (13.7%), posology (9.6%), and treatment of choice in diseases where there is no consensus regarding treatment options (9.1%).

Discussion: The Drug Information Unit is a useful source of official information for all types of medical professionals offering various information on different topics related to drugs. In health-care professionals there is a growing demand for information on the use of antibacterial drugs, especially in case of drug-resistant bacteria, drug interactions most frequently caused by polypharmacy, and information on pharmacokinetics of drugs especially in patients with failure of excretory organs. Information provided by the Drug Information Unit improves the efficacy and safety of pharmacotherapy.

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