The potential role of pharmacist in counteracting health misinformation in social media

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INTRODUCTION

The increasing number of Social Media (SM) user dan its frequent use has an impact to entire aspects of life, including healthcare. Many health information circulates in SM, some of which are misleading information. It is often circulated leading to confusion and jeopardizing patient’s health. This study aimed to identify the role of pharmacist in responding to health misinformation in SM.

METHODS

41 pharmacists participated in this study.
The most frequent misleading information was herbal medicine.
The misinformation tended to noncompliance to therapy, a delay in treatment, and worsen the illness.
Some of the respondents clarified the misinformation by showing the references
Lack of scientific references about traditional and alternative medicine.
The general public often asked for advice and opinion related to health information.

RESULTS

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DISCUSSION

SM is widely use because it’s perceived as an effective channel of communication and information. A shifting of communication behavior lead to the increasing number of health misinformation circulating in SM. Considering the health misinformation could decrease the quality of life, thus pharmacist should actively counteract the health misinformation in SM.

CONCLUSION

Pharmacists need to actively counteract the health misinformation in SM. However, lack of reference to particular issue is often a major obstacle to play such role. This might imply a shared coordination with other pharmacists.

References: