

NEW REPORT SHOWS 60% OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS ARE USING WIKIPEDIA PROFESSIONALLY

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Wednesday, 1 June 2011

“MR. SMITH? DOCTOR WIKIPEDIA WILL SEE YOU NOW...”

NEW REPORT SHOWS 60% OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS ARE USING WIKIPEDIA PROFESSIONALLY

LONDON: A new report from global marketing research agency Insight Research Group (<http://www.insightrg.com/>) has revealed that 60% of European doctors are using Wikipedia for professional use.

A total of 300 GPs were interviewed across Europe for the report that looked into how regularly doctors are accessing the social web for both professional and personal reasons. The headline statistic has surprised many in the industry, which jumps to 69% when analysing the number of European GPs using social media sites for professional use outside of just Wikipedia (including FaceBook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter).

On the site itself, the online encyclopaedia confirms that “...Wikipedia is written collaboratively by largely anonymous internet volunteers who write without pay. Anyone with internet access can write and make changes to Wikipedia articles... users can contribute anonymously, under a pseudonym, or with their real identity, if they choose.”

“The issue that needs debate here is whether this is a surprise to patients and doctors alike, as it is clearly a forum that GPs do refer to,” said Damian Eade, Director at Insight Research Group, who spearheaded the research. “The report is certainly not saying Wikipedia, and other social platforms, are not exceptional fonts of knowledge for the public. But should it be a sensible and reliable place for medical professionals to turn to?”

The report highlighted that across Europe the social web is not just a method embraced by young doctors either. Across all markets a surprising 75% of doctors in the 51-60 age groups stated that they regularly used Wikipedia for professional use.”

And it seems the web has now become integral to the whole experience of visiting your doctor. Half of those doctors interviewed (50%) are also recommending specific websites for patients to visit, following their consultations. 87% are advising certain sites for further background or education on their condition, 70% for additional support and advice and 69% for more information regarding treatment and medication.

The report has further reinforced the view of many that we are now living in the era of the ‘ePatient’ - where the web has become a trusted tool for not only daily tasks, but also health-related matters.

“The ePatient is here to stay. But we have to investigate whether patients are accessing the right type of websites when it comes to health issues they, or their loved ones, are facing,” continued Damian Eade. “Whether it’s researching illnesses, sharing experiences, making recommendations or

providing moral support for other patients around the world, the social web has reinvented health advice, and we need to make sure the right advice is on hand for people.”

According to the Office for national statistics, 42% of Britons have sought health-related information online within the past three months, and nearly a fifth of web users use the web as their first port of call when investigating a health concern. Whether the news today of doctors using sites like Wikipedia for their own professional use is going to help the situation, or not, remains to be seen.

www.insightrg.com

Notes To Editors

About Insight Research Group

Global marketing research agency, Insight Research Group has offices in Central London, UK and Midtown Manhattan, US. Insight operates UK and international divisions focused on global healthcare marketing research. The 120-strong research group, founded in 1983 also co-founded the Cello group in 2004 and is the largest business within the group. Insight works with some of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, including Astra Zeneca, Pfizer International and GlaxoSmithKline.

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