Abstract

Over the recent years people have become more dependent on the internet for obtaining information about anything they need to know about including health issues. However there is no guarantee regarding the quality and accuracy of the provided information and whether this information is suitable for decision support. This study used type-2 diabetes mellitus disease as a model for investigating the quality of the available online medical information in Arabic language. The term "type-2 diabetes" in Arabic language was fed to Google.ps, Bing.com and Maktoob.Yahoo.com search engines. Then a common list of 50 website search results was created. Each of these websites was thoroughly evaluated based on predetermined quality standards. The author was identified in 40% of the websites; however the percentage of showing his/her affiliation, expertise and credentials was 18, 10 and 10% respectively. Interestingly, Only 12% of the websites provided information written by qualified persons (2% by scientists and 10% by doctors). In addition 34 % of the websites mentioned the source of information and only 10% of them included references or links to the provided scientific information. The majority of the websites poorly met the quality standards for decision support. . A few websites provided diagrams (8%), audio or video support (16%). The content of around 64% of the websites appeared to be appropriate to all audience. The data demonstrated a lack of credibility and low quality for the information on type-2 diabetes mellitus provided by the majority of websites in Arabic language.