

IMPROVING THE USE OF THE DUTCH POISONS INFORMATION WEBSITE AND THE EFFECT ON TELEPHONE CALL VOLUME.

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Objectives The Dutch Poisons Information Center (DPIC) provides a 24-hour telephone information service for medical professionals in the Netherlands (population 17 million). In order to stabilize or reduce the ever growing telephone call volume, DPIC launched its own poisons information website (In Dutch: www.vergiftigingen.info) in April 2007. On this website, medical professionals can access toxicological information provided by the DPIC, free of charge. Until 2013, registered users had to log in with a password and enter patient age, bodyweight and product or substance of exposure, in order to perform a Severity Estimation Analysis (SEA) of the intoxication. Only after completing the whole 7-step severity analysis, users were able to access the substance monographs. From November 2012 onwards several changes were made to the website in order to improve accessibility and usage. These improvements comprised removing the registration and login-procedure, creating direct access to substance monographs (without performing a SEA) and treatment protocols. In addition, in February 2014, the user instructions on the homepage were improved and the option "Search monograph" was renamed to "Search product or substance". All website consultations are recorded in the database. The effect of the website changes on the use of the website and on telephone call volume from 2008- 2014 is shown.

Methods: We retrospectively analyzed the data of all website consultations and telephone inquiries in 2014, using dedicated software (Qlikview).

Results: Since 2008, the number of SEAs was approximately 7.000 – 8.000 per year (Figure 1). In 2013, there was a steep increase; 13.154 SEAs were performed in that year. This remained stable in 2014 with 13.628 SEAs. The number of accessed substance monographs has more than doubled in one year; from 10.863 in 2013 to 26.025 in 2014. The number of accessed treatment protocols has slightly increased from 2.843 in 2013 to 3.142 in 2014. The number of telephone inquiries did not change markedly; after a slight drop in 2008, call volume continued to increase by a few percent every year.

Conclusions: The use of the website was stable for several years. After the website was made more user-friendly in 2013, a steep increase in use of the website has been observed. No apparent reduction of telephone call volume was observed, but presumably the increase in call volume would have been greater without the on-line poisons information supply.