

## **Use of internet as health information resource by community pharmacists in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

**Purpose** – The internet has become one of the most commonly used sources for medical and health information. Research that explored the extent to which Nigerian community pharmacists use internet resources for patient care is limited. This study aims to examine the extent to which community pharmacists use the internet for professional practice.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Data were collected using a questionnaire which was completed by 115 community pharmacists using convenience sampling technique. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis.

**Findings** – The results revealed that community pharmacists use a variety of online resources, although

only about 25 per cent or less use each of the online resources. The critical challenges that hinder their use of the internet were inadequate power supply, lack of funds to procure personal internet facilities, among others.

There is significant relative contribution of demographic variables (gender, age, educational qualification and number of years in professional practice) on frequency of internet use among community pharmacists.

**Practical implications** – The Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), Lagos Chapter, should organize continuing professional education for their members to expose them to online resources and emerging trends in professional practice. The community pharmacist should also address the problem of inadequate communication with patients by stepping up communication with the patients about their drug therapy not only through the conventional media but also through internet facilities such as email, WhatsApp and so on.

**Originality/value** – This study examined the extent to which community pharmacists use the internet for professional activities. This study also empirically investigated the significant relative contribution of demographic variables (gender, age, educational qualification and number of years in professional practice) on the frequency of internet use among community pharmacists.