

**Universiti Teknologi MARA**

**A Survey on The Physicians' and Pharmacists' Use of Handheld Devices and  
Mobile Medical Apps For Drug Information**

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## **Abstract**

**Introduction:** Recently there is an increase in the use and popularity of handheld devices such as smartphones, tablet computers and PDAs among physicians and pharmacists. Previous study shows that they also use handheld devices and mobile medical apps to search for drug information.

**Objective:** This study aim to investigate the physicians' and pharmacists' use of handheld devices and mobile medical apps for drug information.

**Method:** A structured validated questionnaire that consists of 5 sections is distributed to the practising physicians and pharmacists including the medical and pharmacy lecturers.

**Result:** 184 (94.8 %) of respondents claimed to use handheld electronic device at work site and 163 (84.0%) of them use handheld devices to search for drug information. Dosage recommendations and ADRs are the most common DI that they looking for. Medscape<sup>®</sup> and Micromedex<sup>®</sup> are the most popular medical apps among the respondents. The recommended app for clinical update is Medscape<sup>®</sup>.

**Conclusion:** The use of handheld devices and mobile medical apps for drug information among physicians and pharmacists in Malaysia are common. The adoption of medical apps in clinical practice has a bright future especially for improvement of our healthcare sector.

**Keywords:** Handheld devices, Mobile medical apps, Drug information, Physicians, Pharmacists

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Drug information service (DIS) is used to describe the provision of accurate information pertaining to a drug by specially trained individual to healthcare professionals, patients and public (1, 2). In Malaysia, DIS is a service that is provided by clinical pharmacy department in hospital pharmacy. DIS is operated by pharmacists who responsible for provision of information and advice regarding all aspect of drug and drug therapy to healthcare professionals and public (3).

According to Guidelines for Inpatient Pharmacy Practice produced by Pharmaceutical Services Division Ministry of Health Malaysia, pharmacists play a major role as an effective drug information (DI) provider in DIS (4). They are responsible to respond to the DI request from healthcare professionals, patients and public. Pharmacist may contribute to medication errors prevention by proper dissemination of DI. Proper dissemination of DI is the important element in promoting rational use of drugs toward better patient care (4). Thus, DIS is the important platform to increase the awareness and knowledge of public on the proper use of medicine and other pharmaceutical products.