

Medicines Information for All

Improving the availability of information for prescribers and users of medicines worldwide

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HIFA shared vision

“a world where every prescriber and user of medicines will have access to independent, reliable, understandable information on the full range of commonly prescribed medicines - and will know where to find it.”

Introduction

“Globally, many prescribers receive most of their prescribing information from the pharmaceutical industry and in many countries this is the only information they receive.” [1]

Consumers may have even less information, or none at all, as medicines are often dispensed without packaging or the information is in a language they cannot understand.

Misuse of medicines, and especially antibiotics, is increasingly recognised as a threat to global health.

The availability of relevant, reliable information on medicines is a prerequisite for the delivery of effective care.

The **HIFA Working Group on Information for Prescribers and Users of Medicines (PUM)** is an international multidisciplinary group of volunteers who promote discussion on the HIFA forums on the information needs of PUM, and how these needs can be more effectively addressed; they also meet regularly (via Skype) to discuss other actions and steps to better address HIFAs goal.



Method

→ A scoping review of the literature was conducted

→ Findings were assessed according to six themes:

1. The information sources used for prescribing in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs);
2. Information sources for consumers in LMICs;
3. How medicines information is accessed in LMICs;
4. The consequences of prescribing with either no information or biased/inaccurate information;
5. The benefits / usefulness of different sources of information on medicines;
6. Practical aspects of compiling a drug formulary.

The main findings within these themes were further shared and discussed on HIFA forums:



Results

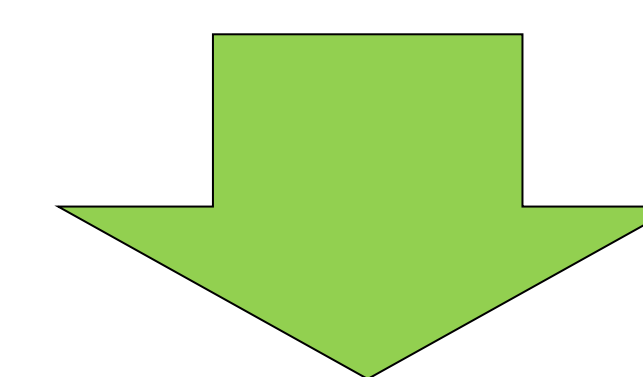
> 1,300 citations found
< 50 relevant to these themes

This has led to the first finding: **the evidence base for this area is very limited.** [2]

Discussion

The **HIFA project on information for prescribers and users of medicines** has harnessed insights, perspectives and relevant literature and continues to lead advocacy efforts to improve the availability and use of information on medicines.

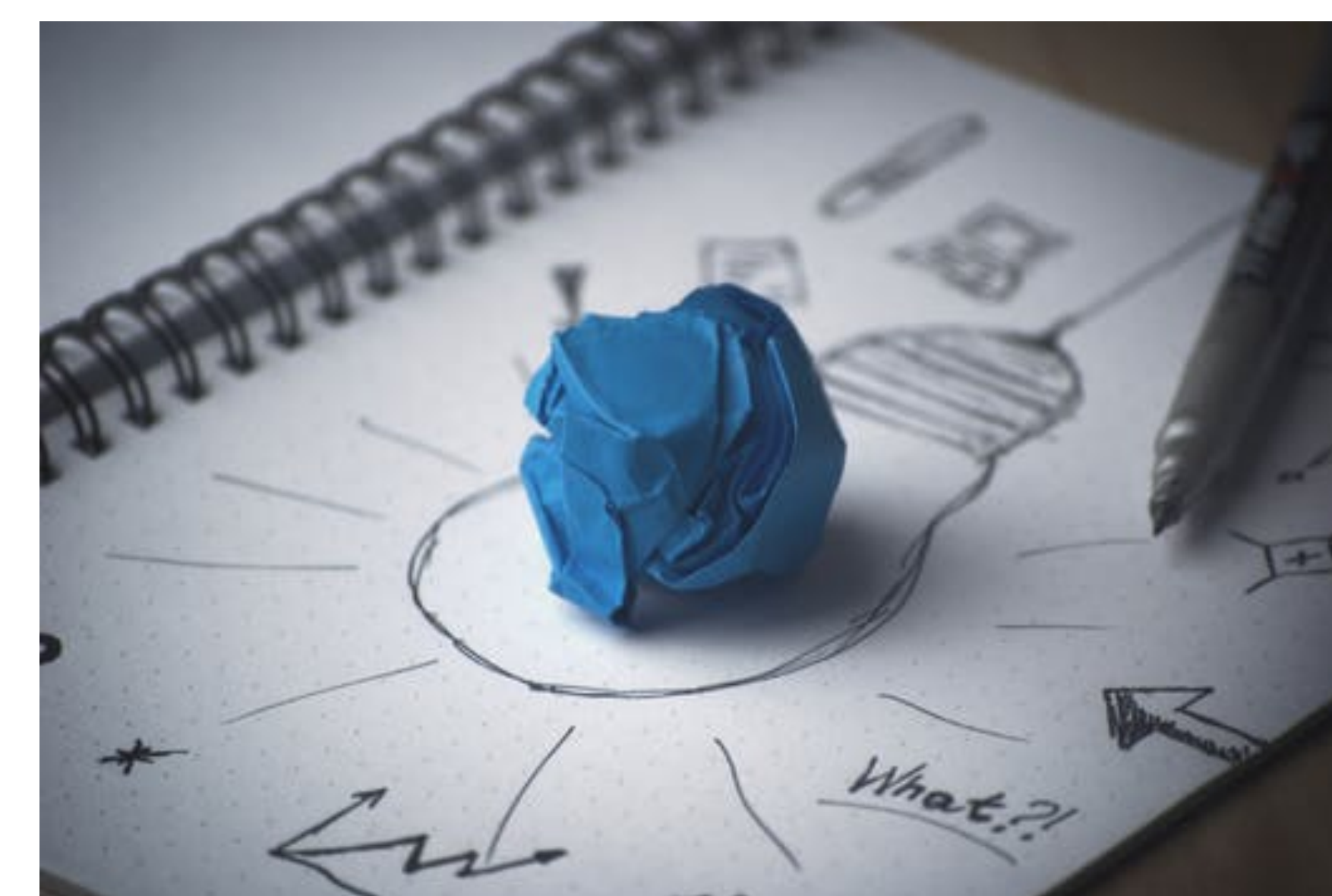
Given the very limited evidence base and the huge importance of the subject, a proposal to hold a **multi-stakeholder meeting in 2018** is being discussed further with the **BMA, WHO** and others to address the question:



“How can we better meet the information needs of prescribers and users of medicines in low- and middle-income countries?”

For more information:

<http://www.hifa.org/projects/prescribers-and-users-medicines>



References:

- [1] World Medicines Report, WHO
<http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/documents/s18064en/s18064en.pdf>
- [2] Key findings available here:
http://www.hifa.org/sites/default/files/publications_pdf/HIFA_PUM_literature_review_summary.pdf