

WhatsApp with Antimicrobial Stewardship in New South Wales?

Evaluation of Social Media as a Resource

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Background

Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) pharmacists are often single practitioners with few opportunities for real-time information.

A WhatsApp group chat was created to enable communication, networking and knowledge-sharing between AMS pharmacists across New South Wales (NSW).

Aim

To evaluate the experience of AMS pharmacists, in NSW, using the social media application WhatsApp.

Method

41 WhatsApp group participants were anonymously surveyed using RedCap. The 31-question Likert scale survey was distributed by email and remained open for 14 days. One reminder email was sent during the period.

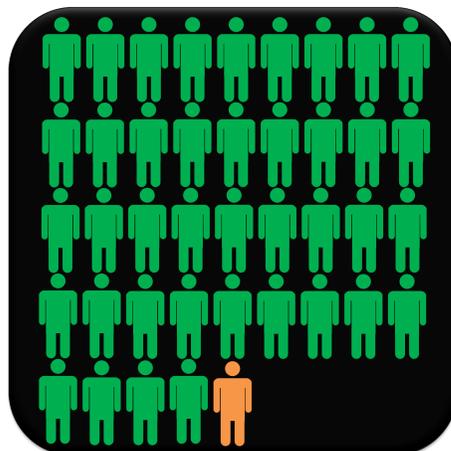
Four non-member AMS pharmacists were identified and surveyed over the phone to further gauge limitations.

Results

- ❑ The survey had a **100%** response rate
- ❑ 94% (15/16) of NSW health districts were represented
- ❑ Most pharmacists (48.8%) had been working in AMS for 1-5 years
- ❑ 66% were also members of the SHPA ID-SPG
- ❑ **100%** found the group brought additional utility to their practice
- ❑ **100%** of non-member AMS pharmacists were unaware of the group and wished to join

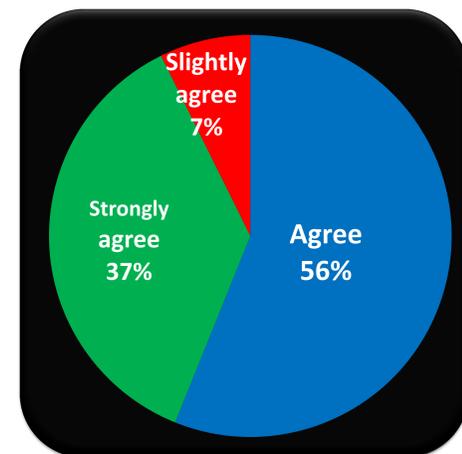
All pharmacists agreed that the group was useful, provided evidence-based answers, improved their clinical knowledge, and the informal nature of the group optimised its utility.

40 out of 41 pharmacists agreed the group improved the AMS programme in their facilities and enhanced their AMS practice.

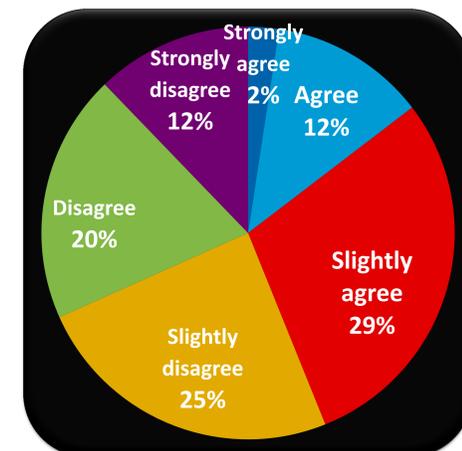


The most common utilities reported were

- ✓ **Being informed of drug shortages**
- ✓ **Keeping up-to-date with changes in practice**
- ✓ **Sharing resources**
- ✓ **Resolving clinical concerns**



The NASPN WhatsApp group is useful



The group disrupts my work/life balance

Discussion

WhatsApp is a freely available mobile application which may be useful in other specialty practice groups or clinical settings.

Limitations to its use include awareness of the tool, and disruption to work/life balance.

