

Health On the Net Foundation is conducting a study to understand how the general public searches for health information on the Internet

Health On the Net (HON) Foundation is starting the survey to better understand the process of health information retrieval by the general public. This study is a part of the European Union project KHRESMOI, whose goal is to develop a multi-lingual and multi-modal search and access system for biomedical information and documents addressing the needs of the general population and medical doctors, especially radiologists.

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GENEVA-- HON (<http://www.HealthOnNet.org>) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization whose mission is to promote and guide the deployment of useful and reliable online medical information. HON is accredited by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The HON Code of Conduct offers the most well-known certification scheme: “a multi-stakeholder consensus on standards to protect citizens from misleading health information.”

In the framework of a European Union project KHRESMOI (<http://www.khresmoi.eu/>) which aims to develop a search engine for health and medical information retrieval to meet the needs of the general population, MDs and radiologists, HON is focusing on understanding the preferences and needs of the general public in the process of health and medical information seeking in the Internet.

“We know that the general public mostly uses search engines such as Google to find health information online. However, studies provided evidence that in some cases, the information retrieved can be misleading and even dangerous. On the other hand, a search engine targeted to health content allows for the retrieval of better, more trustworthy results. By creating a new search engine, we want to facilitate Internet users’ access to reliable health information and contribute to helping them take informed decisions regarding their health. But to do so, first of all, we need to know what is valued and desired by our target audience, and what is perceived as a barrier accessing online health content,” states Célia Boyer, Executive Director of Health On the Net.

The survey will last until the 17th of April and is available online in English, French, Spanish and German on the following link: www.healthonnet.org/kpat/

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