

Workshop Title

Is ZERO Evidence Enough Evidence? A Road Map to Evaluate the Quality of Drug Advertising in Medical Journals

Presenter

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Introduction

Drug advertisements represent a major source of new medical information for clinicians. The quality of the evidence-based claims in drug advertisement, however, has been found to be suboptimal.¹⁻⁵ Therefore, readers should not take the claims at face value, and instead critically evaluate the supporting evidence as they would do with other sources of new empirical data.

Workshop Goals

The goal of this workshop is to present an innovative technique to teach critical analysis of the medical literature to Physician Assistant students. This educational technique is based on the critical evaluation of the claims and the supporting evidence used for the promotion of drugs in medical journals. The overall aim of this technique is to improve the quality of medical decision making by applying the necessary skills to search, appraise, interpret, and evaluate the evidence behind promotional sources of new medical information.

Workshop Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- 1- Describe the impact of pharmaceutical advertising in medical journals on clinicians' prescribing practices.
- 2- Compare and contrast pharmaceutical advertising with pharmaceutical detailing in light of current industry guidelines, laws and regulations.
- 3- Review the quality of the evidence behind pharmaceutical advertisements printed in medical journals.
- 4- Given an example of a drug advertisement, identify the original article cited to support the main claim.
- 5- Evaluate the quality of the original study using a structured questionnaire to guide the critical analysis of the medical literature.

Workshop Organization

This 60 minute workshop will be organized as follows:

- 1- Didactic Session (Total time: 15 minutes)
- 2- Active Participation by Attendees (Total time: 40 minutes)
- 3- Conclusions (Total Time 5 minutes)

References

- 1- [van Winkelen P, van Denderen JS, Vossen CY, Huizinga TW, Dekker FW](#). How evidence-based are advertisements in journals regarding the subspecialty of rheumatology? *Rheumatology (Oxford)*. 2006 Sep;45(9):1154-7. Epub 2006 Mar 10.
- 2- [Cooper RJ, Schriger DL](#). The availability of references and the sponsorship of original research cited in pharmaceutical advertisements. *CMAJ*. 2005 Feb 15;172(4):487-91.
- 3- [Lankinen KS, Levola T, Marttinen K, Puumalainen I, Helin-Salmivaara A](#). Industry guidelines, laws and regulations ignored: quality of drug advertising in medical journals. *Pharmacoepidemiol Drug Saf*. 2004 Nov;13(11):789-95. Review.
- 4- [Villanueva P, Peiro S, Librero J, Pereiro I](#). Accuracy of pharmaceutical advertisements in medical journals. *Lancet*. 2003 Jan 4;361(9351):27-32.
- 5- [Gutknecht DR](#). Evidence-based advertising? A survey of four major journals. *J Am Board Fam Pract*. 2001 May-Jun;14(3):197-200.
- 6- [Wilkes MS, Doblin BH, Shapiro MF](#). Pharmaceutical advertisements in leading medical journals: experts' assessments. *Ann Intern Med*. 1992 Jun 1;116(11):912-9.