Internet information for patients – Who looks for what?

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Background

CKD patients should be formally informed about the underlying disease and dialysis options, including PD. Websites are one approach to deliver information to patients although difficulties remain over ensuring accurate content and directing visitors to accurate information that they need. A Czech language patient information website was established in 2011 and was used in this study to analyse site visiting behaviour to determine website use effectiveness and to guide future online information development.

Methods

The website www.domaci-dialyza.cz gives information about CKD, dialysis modalities, lifestyle impact of CKD and its treatment and practical information for Czech patients. An analysis using standard web analysis techniques (Google Analytics - GA) was performed of all visits to the website from 1/1/12 to 31/8/13. This includes how the site is accessed, what is read and if visitors are first time or repeat visitors. Czech Republic has a population of 10,5 million people and approximately 6000 dialysis patients. As the site is Czech language only it allows easier analysis of online visiting behaviour compared to an English language site.
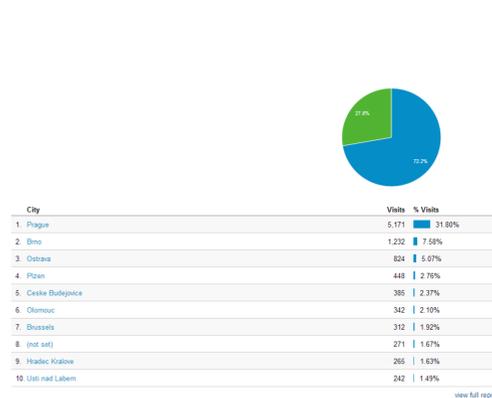
Figure 1 – Czech website main page

Objectives of the website

• To provide correct information about CKD and treatment options.

• To support people searching for information and contact to their closest dialysis unit.

• To attract those looking for similar life stories or those who want to ask physician about their current health status.

• To engage patients to share their successful experiences with self care and home treatment.

• To announce events and activities organised by patient organisations and / or dialysis units.

Results (1) Number of visits

The average number of visits per month was 451 with 72,9% being new visitors. The average number of pages/visit was 3,24. Prague was the commonest origin for visits (30.13%) although only 10% of the Czech population live there.
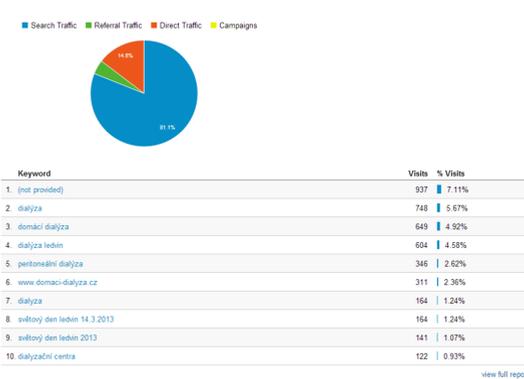
Figure 2 – Demographics

City	Visits	% Visits
1. Prague	5,171	31.80%
2. Brno	1,232	7.58%
3. Ostrava	824	5.07%
4. Plzen	448	2.76%
5. Ceske Budejovice	385	2.37%
6. Olomouc	342	2.10%
7. Brussels	312	1.92%
8. (not set)	271	1.67%
9. Hradec Kralove	265	1.63%
10. Usti nad Labem	242	1.49%
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Results (2) Device, search engine and key words

The majority of visits were coming from desktop devices (96%) and 83% visited the site following search engine results – 'peritoneal dialysis' was the keyword search for only 2.62% and 'haemodialysis' was not among the first 100 common key words. Most often searched key word was 'dialysis' (5.67%), followed by 'home dialysis' (4.92%).

Figure 3 – Key Words

Keyword	Visits	% Visits
1. (not provided)	937	7.11%
2. dialyza	748	5.67%
3. domaci dialyza	649	4.92%
4. dialyza ledvin	604	4.58%
5. peritoneální dialyza	346	2.62%
6. www.domaci-dialyza.cz	311	2.36%
7. dialyza	164	1.24%
8. světový den ledvin 14.3 2013	164	1.24%
9. světový den ledvin 2013	141	1.07%
10. dialyzační centra	122	0.93%
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Results (3) Impact of website promotion

In the timeline of 20 months average daily visit per site was 23. Visits to the site increased 10 fold in the 2 – 3 days around Word Kidney Day 2013 when page was promoted - 335 per day.

Figure 4 – Peak visit with WKD 2013
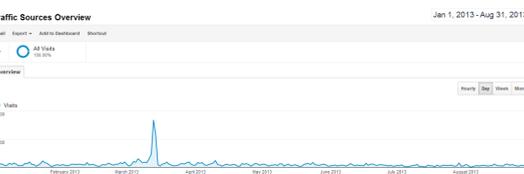
Results (4) Visited Content

Diet pages were the most commonly visited (7.36%), followed by the pages with information about kidney disease, home dialysis, interaction with physician and social and lifestyle information.

Figure 5 – Frequent visited pages

Page		Pageviews	% Pageviews
1. /		5,655	16.43%
2. /dieta		2,697	7.36%
3. /ledeny-a-jejich-nemoci		1,964	5.36%
4. /co-je-domaci-dialyza		1,851	5.05%
5. /poradna		1,481	4.04%
6. /caste-dotazy		1,428	3.90%
7. /socialni-informace		1,243	3.39%
8. /seznam-dialyzacnich-center?kraj=3		1,129	3.08%
9. /odbornik		1,047	2.86%
10. /seznam-dialyzacnich-center		949	2.59%
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Results (5) Interaction

A frequent Q&A section is available but more frequently visited is an "interactive" page where questions are answered by a nephrologist once a week.

Figure 6 – Interaction with a physician

Conclusions

Useful information has been gained regarding online visiting patterns to this patient information site. There is variability in visiting patterns across the country and desktops rather than mobile devices are most commonly used. Most patients visit following search engine searches.
Its use by patients looking to be informed about dialysis options needs to be increased and repeat visitor numbers can be used to assess how useful patients feel this online information is for them.
Public awareness campaign e.g. WKD can increase web page traffic so there need to be methods to maintain this heightened level.
Site visitors value interaction with healthcare professionals although this is challenging to regulate.
This analysis gives useful information for those considering the use of online methods for patient education especially over dialysis modality choices.