Updating of the Maltese Medicines Handbook

Renita Busuttil, Lilian M Azzopardi
Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Malta, Msida, Malta
email: renita.busuttil.14@um.edu.mt

INTRODUCTION
The British National Formulary (BNF) is one of the commonest pharmaceutical reference books used by healthcare professionals in Malta. Since the formulary is based on medicines available on the British National Health System (NHS), certain preparations, found on the Maltese market are not included. The Maltese Medicines Handbook (MMH) is a publication developed to include these local preparations. To date, four editions have been published, starting from 2006, 2009, 2012 and 2015.

AIMS
• To evaluate and update the MMH to its fifth edition.
• To analyse and follow up the present system of publication and online accessibility of the MMH.
• To develop an innovative, interactive and mobile-friendly website.

METHOD

Phase 1
A list of all the products possessing a marketing authorisation was acquired from the Malta Medicines Authority.
The trade name and active ingredient for each 6240 entries in this list was reviewed through the BNF (edition 73) and MMH (4th edition).

Evaluation of the previous edition of the MMH, both the book and online version.

Questionnaires distributed among pharmacists (n=81).

A list of non-BNF cited preparations was established.

Evaluation regarding the innovation of a phone application.

SPCs and other useful data of the respective products was compiled and included in the MMH.

Phase 2

Website structure, format and functioning was planned.

Call for sponsors for website funding and printing was released.

Website design and insertion of information.

Website trial and launch.

Website marketing distribution.

RESULTS

The 5th edition of the MMH consists of 1224 preparations, 609 generic and 615 branded products.

These products were classified under 654 active ingredients. The book is made up of 15 chapters. Chapter 1 (Gastro-intestinal system), Chapter 2 (Cardiovascular system) and Chapter 4 (Nervous system) were the major chapters consisting of the largest number of active ingredients, as seen in the graph.

The 5th edition of the MMH differentiates itself from previous editions as it has been written in a more appropriate layout for a formulary. It includes:
• Detailed information on active ingredients, with all the corresponding generic and branded products having a marketing authorisation listed down.
• Addition of new sections regarding medical equipment, non drugs and medicines available through the national health system.
• An interactive website, was developed to supplement the MMH and to be continuously updated.

CONCLUSION

Although the MMH has arrived to its 5th revision, its use and accessibility is still limited. Instead of restricting the MMH to just a book that is revised every 5 years, it is changed to a formulary system that is continuously updated. Apart from the traditional updating procedure, the project has been directed to search for means and ways on how the MMH can be disseminated and made available to all healthcare professionals, to keep it alive and up-to-date. Medicines form a crucial part of medical treatment.

Acknowledgements
Pharmaconsulta, Chemimart Gpr, Menarini International, Smoochie drinks, Sanofi, Pemix Distributors Ltd, Cherubino Ltd, Pfizer.

REFERENCES
1. Midoll L. Compiling a formulary for non-BNF cited items. Malta (Malta): Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta; 2006
2. Casal D. Formulary for non-BNF cited items. Malta (Malta): Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta; 2009
3. Cassar C. Evaluation of a formulary for non-BNF cited items Malta (Malta): Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta; 2006
4. Stucchin T. Formulary for non-BNF cited items Malta (Malta): Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta; 2016

Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Malta, Msida, Malta
um.edu.mt/m/ps/pharmacy