PHARMACISTS COMPETENCE TO RESOLVE THE THERAPEUTIC CHALLENGE OF THE VALSARTAN SAGA

Caroline Muscat1,2, Annalise Attard1, Luana Mifsud Buhagiar1, Anthony Serracino-Inglott1,2

1Malta Medicines Authority, San Gwann, Malta
2Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Malta, Msida, Malta

INTRODUCTION
In an evolving healthcare system, continuing professional development and education should reflect timely topics to enhance and improve professional skills1. A safety alert by the European Medicines Agency triggered a recall of potentially contaminated valsartan medicines with the genotoxic impurity, N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA)2.

AIMS
To investigate the use of an innovative tool, the Mentimeter in assessing the competence of pharmacists in addressing the risks versus benefits associated with the use of valsartan medicines potentially contaminated with NDMA.

METHOD
A symposium was organised to evaluate the competence of the pharmacists in the application of scientific knowledge to the therapeutic challenges in the valsartan saga.

A concise 32 slide interactive presentation with 9 questions was prepared after a literature search of valsartan-related peer-reviewed articles and scientific documents was conducted.

The Mentimeter was used as a tool to ask and record the responses given by the pharmacists in the interactive discussion.

RESULTS
26 pharmacists (16 females, 10 males; age 22 to 45) from different pharmaceutical work backgrounds (10 hospital, 12 community, 4 industrial pharmacists) participated in the symposium. Table 1 presents the outcome of the correct positive responses obtained interactively by the Mentimeter. The results show that pharmacists can benefit from educational interventions to enhance their knowledge and competence in certain areas such as in the pharmacokinetics and the clinical relevance of angiotensin-receptor antagonists and the threshold for toxicological concern of NDMA impurities.

CONCLUSION
It is concluded that the Mentimeter is a useful innovative tool to enhance the learning experience. Pharmacists can benefit from added value continuous professional development and education to enhance their scientific knowledge and competencies to deal with evolving healthcare issues.

REFERENCES