**Consumer Health Information Website Analysis**

The purpose of this paper is to apply knowledge of reliable and valid information sources to patient education in clinical nursing practice and to evaluate consumer/patient health information on the Mayo Clinic Website.

**The Significance of Analyzing Type 1 Diabetes (T1D)**

Mayo clinic defines type 1 diabetes (T1D) as an autoimmune disease (Mayo Clinic, 2017). It is a chronic disease most common in children and adolescents. The youths are more susceptible to T1D than adults. It is for this reason that TID is chosen in this paper in an aim of equipping the youth with the health information required for their wellbeing.

**About T1D**

The immune system destroys the pancreatic beta cells leading to T1D (Mayo Clinic, 2017). Pancreatic beta produce and secret insulin. The damage caused to pancreatic beta cells significantly affects the blood sugar process due to lack of insulin in the body. Body cells cannot absorb glucose without insulin. As a result, glucose concentrates in the blood leading to cell starvation and, therefore, causing high blood sugar level (Chen, Cohrs, Stertmann, Bozsak, & Speier, 2017; Mayo Clinic, 2017; Mescape 2018). TID can lead to dehydration, weight loss, and ketoacidosis. It can also damage nerves and small blood vessels in the eyes, heart, and kidneys (Webmd, 2016).

**Source of Information About TID**

There are many sources with valid, accurate, and reliable information about TID. However, for the purpose of this paper, the preferred source is Mayo Clinic website. The website educates patients, health professionals as well as the general public on different health issues. As reflected in the website, Mayo Clinic is a medical school aimed at inspiring hope and contributing to health and well-being through provision of quality care to every patient by integrating education, research, and clinical practice.

**The Design of Mayo Clinic Website**

The success of any websites depends on its usability (Laxmi, 2012). Usability improves the website’s performance thus enhancing its success (University of South Florida, 2018). Mayo clinic website is a user friendly and professional website. It is very easy to find information from this website. It is a mobile optimized website and can be accessed from any device. It has a well-planned information architecture. The sections and categories of the are designed in a way that users can find and use them easily. The content of the website is well-formatted which makes it easy to scan. Previous research found that the average website users are skimmers. They scan the website’s content before reading to determine whether the content satisfies their need. The website’s developer seems to have a clear understanding of this since the website has correct usage of headings, sub-topics, and paragraphs which makes it easy for users to find the information they need. Different fonts are used to ensure that the content is appealing to the user. Additionally, the website has a good speed and is compatible with different browsers. It uses simple HTML which ensures that there is consistency on all browsers. The colors used in the website makes the content legible and easy to read. In most paragraphs, the website uses aerial font 12 which is not only legible but also easy to read. In addition to this, the website has a bright background with the text being displayed in either black or dark blue color which enhances readability.

There is no single product or company endorsed by Mayo Clinic. The advertisements made on the website are meant to support the developer’s not-for-profit mission. The website was stated in 1998 and is sponsored by Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). The website does not have a regular pattern of being updated.  The contents are irregularly updated with the last update being 8th August 2018, one day before the compilation of this paper.

**About Medical Advice**

It is clearly stated in the website that its content should not be used as a substitute for treatment, diagnosis or medical advice. The site does not constitute any professional nursing or medical healthcare advice. All patients should talk to their healthcare providers regarding their healthcare needs.

**The intended Audience**

The website has clear intended audience. That is, the consumers of healthcare services who are 18 years old and above (Mayo clinic, 2016). The website is not intended for use by children.  They are educated on medical and health care issues affecting their lives. However, it is not warranted that the products or services are effective, appropriate, or safe. In this regard, it is recommended that issues on personal health and medical conditions should be addressed by physicians or any other healthcare professional. However, the information provided by the website is appropriate to all consumers of healthcare services if and only if it is used in accordance with the advice given hereinabove.

**Credibility of the information provided on the website**

The information provided in the website is valid. However, the content is uploaded by different people whose professionalism is not clearly stated. In this regard, it is not clear whether the information is accurate and reliable. From this perspective, there is no assurance for anyone to trust and believe in this information.

**About the authors**

The content of Mayo Clinic website is uploaded by different authors and is not found in a single page. Users must navigate through the website to obtain information on different topics. The professionalism of some authors is stated while in some cases it is not stated. It is, therefore, not possible to determine whether the authors whose professionalism is not stated have authority in their field regarding the information they provide. The responsibility of the hands of the developer (Mayo Clinic Staff). Who can withdraw or upheld any content without seeking the consent of the author or the end user. However, the users of this information are responsible in deciding whether to use this information or not.

**Communication with the authors**

The site provides an opportunity for users to create accounts where they can interact with different authors who publish their content on the website. Most of the authors are health professionals from Mayo Clinic School of Medicine. Some of the authors are health researchers. In some pages, the background of the authors is not provided which makes it problematic to determine their credibility.

**Biasness of the Authors**

As noted earlier, Mayo Clinic does not support or promote any product or company. Additionally, Mayo Clinic does not politicize health issues.  It is, therefore, clear that the information provided cannot be biased.

**Referencing the Website’s Content**

The information provided in the website clearly and professionally referenced. Users can access the information from the different sources whenever they desire to do so. The accuracy of this information is not guaranteed owing to the fact the background of the authors is not clearly stated which makes it difficult to determine the author’s credibility. However, there are no cased of false information, inconsistencies, or errors noted from the website.

**Links to Additional Resources**

The users are provided with links directing them to pages where they can obtain additional information. These links are easy to use since it is easy to locate them. The user only needs to click the provided link which opens in the required page within four seconds.

**Conclusion**

Conclusively, Mayo Clinic Website provides patient education to all health service providers without bias. Users do not need to visit other websites for them to obtain the required information. In case additional information is require, there is a link directing the user to where they can obtain it which makes it a user friendly website. All the topics covered in the website are well covered with the authors providing detailed information on every topic. Although health information uses a lot of technical terms. The authors of Mayo Clinic website try as much as possible to avoid too technical language. The information provided is, therefore, provided in the right way that as required by the intended audience. The site therefore achieves its objective of educating people on healthcare issues.

**References**

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