

**Title : Use of Mobile phones and short message system (SMS) in consumer health information delivery**

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**Abstract:**

**Background and objective:** Easy to use and social nature of mobile phones along with its easy to access, every time and everywhere availability has made it a popular tool for communication in progressed and progressive countries. In health and medicine mobile phones is used by health providers and health consumers for professional communication, information exchange, consultation and reminding. The study aims to discover the attitudes of patients in receiving Consumer Health Information (CHI) and Information Therapy (Ix) services using Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools such as SMS, phone call, mobile phones delivery, World Wide Web, email and e-files. It answers the following questions: Which channels do patients choose to receive information prescription or health information from? Where do they seek health information from? Is there association between the age of patients and their tendency toward use of mobile phone and SMS in health information delivery? Is there any association between the rate of literacy and inclination towards use of SMS and mobile phones?

**Methodology:** An exploratory survey with an open interview and structured questionnaire was employed to gather data from patients of educational hospitals and clinics in Tabriz, Iran.

**Result:** Majority of patients preferred to receive information prescriptions and reminders through SMS. The only limitation declared by patients is the mobile phones limited memory and capability in transferring large amount of data, in cheap and typical handsets. The level of literacy and the age factors impact neither the demand for health information nor the patients' preferred channel to receive CHI and information prescription ( $P < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** SMS and mobile phones information delivery with a localized approach, considering the socioeconomic and cultural aspects of a developing country would support the improvement health literacy and it would boost healthcare outcomes.

**Key Words:** Mobile phones , SMS, Health Literacy, Information Prescriptions