

Joining forces on social media to raise ADR awareness

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Regulators rely on reporting of adverse drug reactions (ADRs) to make sure medicines on the market are acceptably safe.

Unfortunately, all reporting systems suffer from under reporting. In November 2018, Uppsala Monitoring Centre coordinated an **international social media campaign** to raise awareness of pharmacovigilance systems, and promote recognition and reporting of suspected ADRs.

After similar initiatives in 2016 and 2017, last year's campaign focused on **medicines safety in children and pregnancy**. It brought together 32 medicines regulators in the EU, Latin America, Australasia and the Middle East, who simultaneously shared campaign materials on their social media channels for one week. Eye-catching animations, featuring funny cartoon characters whose unfortunate misuse of medicines leads to comical calamities, were adapted for use in the 32 countries. Each country-specific version featured text in the local language, the logo of the medicines regulator and a link to their ADR reporting system. Overall, the animations reached 1.4 million people on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube, and were viewed over 360,000 times.

Efforts of this kind highlight how **creative approaches to healthcare communication** can effectively promote awareness and health literacy among patients, and how **international cooperation** is crucial to disseminate messages and give them greater resonance.

32 participating countries

1.4 million people reached on social media

The next campaign will run on **25–29 November 2019**. It will focus on polypharmacy, and the importance of reporting side effects in patients taking multiple medications.

Find out more:

www.who-umc.org/medsafetyweek/