

**Submission Id: 3116**

**Title**

*Outcomes of Searching for Online Health and Parenting Information on Behalf of Others: A Mixed Methods Research Study*

**Priority 1 (Research Category)**

Healthcare informatics

**Presenters**

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**Abstract**

Context: Use of trustworthy online consumer health information (OCHI) is generally associated with benefits, yet barriers such as low health literacy may reduce these benefits. One of the largest groups of OCHI consumers is parents of young children. In addition to OCHI, parents reach out to their social circle for tailored advice, emotional support, and culturally relevant parenting information. However, little is known, about the use of parenting OCHI by the parents' social circle. Objective: To uncover OCHI outcomes when members of parents' social circle search for OCHI. Study Design: Convergent mixed methods study. Setting: Online parenting and child health information newsletter and magazine, available at [naitreetgrandir.com](http://naitreetgrandir.com) (N&G). Population studied: Participants who completed a questionnaire about the information presented by N&G between April 13th, 2019 to March 30th, 2021. Instrument: The validated Information Assessment Method (IAM) questionnaire, implemented by N&G since 2015. Main outcome measures: IAM responses on OCHI outcomes by participants were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and responses compared between parents and their entourage (grandparents, family, friends and neighbours). Qualitative component: 14 parents' entourage members were interviewed to uncover perceived OCHI outcomes (up to saturation) and thematic analysis was conducted. Quantitative and qualitative components were conducted and analysed separately; results were compared using a joint display to provide a complete picture. Results: 51,320 completed IAM questionnaires (81% by parents) were included in the analysis, pertaining to 1079 N&G webpages (mean 47.6; range 1-637). Entourage members were more likely than parents to report using the information in a discussion with someone else and this led them to being better able to make a decision with those persons. Interviewees described sharing the information they found in some situations or not sharing it to avoid conflict. They used the information to provide support or do something for the parent(s) or child. Sharing information led to improved decision making, improved relationships, less worry and better health outcomes, or in some cases led to tensions. Conclusion: By better understanding how people use information together, health information can be adapted to meet both individual and group needs. Public health interventions aimed at supporting parents can do so by facilitating shared decision making.