

WEB-BASED INFORMATION ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING PREGNANCY – INFPREG IN SWEDEN

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A non-commercial website containing multidisciplinary information on infectious diseases during pregnancy – INFPREG provides information in Swedish for experts and the general public on ante-/peri-/postnatal care [1]. The site, which has been running for 10 years now, intends to meet the need for up-dated information on the relevance of infectious diseases in pregnancy. It is divided into two sections, one for health professionals and one for the general public. Of 35 chapters, 33 provide specific information on various pathogens, and two chapters provide information on screening programmes and on vaccinations. Information presented in each chapter is the result of collaboration of experts from various fields: obstetrics, infectious medicine, paediatrics, clinical microbiology (virology, bacteriology and parasitology), neonatology, epidemiology, hospital hygiene, audiology, ophthalmology. For professionals, the website offers an interactive questions and answers facility. Questions are answered within three working days, and both are stored in a password-protected archive. The site adheres to AMA (American Medical Association) web site guidelines [2].

The chapters dedicated to health professionals include information on the nature of the causing agents, on contagiousness and transmission in society, on the clinical profile in general and in pregnant women, in the foetus and the newborn, on transmission risks, on laboratory methods, diagnosis of infection in the mother and in the foetus/child, on prophylaxis, on therapy, etc. The information available to the general public has essentially the same content but is presented in a more accessible form, and antenatal care centres in Sweden inform pregnant women about the INFPREG site.

INFPREG has so far been a success. The use of the site increased gradually among midwives, obstetricians and the public, with the number of visits increasing from 52,200 in 2002 to 265,000 in 2008. The website is also used in neighbouring Nordic countries, where the epidemiology, vaccination strategies and guidelines are similar to those in Sweden.

References

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