Quality Evaluation of Health Answers in Social Q&A: Socio-Emotional Support and Evaluation Criteria

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Introduction

• Little is known about the quality of health information in community contexts and socio-emotional factors impacting its evaluation
• We explored the socio-emotional reactions of and evaluation criteria discussed by evaluators of the quality of health answers in Yahoo! Answers, a social Q&A site

Key Findings

• Social and emotional support are important criteria on social Q&A sites
• Users focused on social and emotional support; librarians and nurses believed in need for objectivity, completeness
• Nurses also concerned with accuracy
• Trust / mistrust felt most by nurses and librarians, less by users

Conclusions

• Social Q&A sites must balance providing objective information and offering socio-emotional support to users in a comfortable context
• Users must also be educated in balanced quality evaluation of health information, incorporating subjective and objective evaluation criteria
• We will explore perceptions, advice, design implications, and the potential of balanced, collaborative educational efforts and information services