

Pedscapes

Web 2.0 and Pediatrics

The world-wide web technology has been with us since the last two decades and continues to provide access to endless amounts of information. Unlike the previously used static pages on the net (Web 1.0), Web 2.0 refers to using, sharing and exchanging information on the world-wide web on an open platform.(1)

Web 2.0 is primarily about the benefits of easy to use and free internet software. It includes blogs and wikis which facilitate participation and conversations across a wide geographical expanse. Information pushing devices, like RSS feeds, permit continuous instant alerts to the latest ideas in medicine. Multimedia tools like podcasts and videocasts are nowadays popular as a virtual information source in the medical schools in the west.(1,2)

Blogs

A blog (WEBLOG) is a web site that contains dated entries in reverse chronological order (most recent first) about a particular topic. It essentially functions as an online journal. Entries contain important text, abstracts, commentary, links to other web sites, and images.(3,4)

List of some pediatric Blogs:

Unintelligent Design <http://www.theclayexperience.blogspot.com/>

Pediatric Grand Rounds <http://pgrarchive.blogspot.com/>

Neonatal Doc <http://www.neonataldoc.blogspot.com/>

Blog MD <http://blogmd.samblackman.org/>

Podcasts and m-Learning (mobile learning)

Podcasting is about creating content (audio or video – vodcasts) for an audience. Users can listen to podcasts and watch vodcasts on their computer (e.g., using Windows Media Player), or download to

portable MP3/MP4 players and listen/watch on the move, which is perfect for the busy health professional.(3,5)

List of some medical podcasts:

Nature <http://www.nature.com/nature/podcast/index.html>

New England Journal of Medicine <http://content.nejm.org/misc/podcast.shtml>

Medicine-net <http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=47344>

Wiki's

A wiki is a collaborative web site whose content can be edited by anyone who has access to it. The best example of a wiki is 'Wikipedia – The Free Encyclopedia', easily accessible on the net. Wikis can be used as a source for obtaining information and knowledge, and also as a method of virtual collaboration, e.g., to share useful information among participants in group projects.(2,3)

RSS newsfeeds

Similar to podcasting, RSS (Real Simple Syndication) uses XML file formats to allow Internet users to subscribe to websites with rapidly changing content, such as news sites or blogs, and regularly download text files to a mobile or personal digital assistant (PDA).

RSS feeds help to organise new web content, in real time by the best medical blogs, evidence based sites like the Cochrane Library and Pubmed, and newly published video and audio from major medical journals. One of the latest websites to offer RSS feeds is PubMed, which has just announced that daily search results now can be exported and sent automatically to your RSS news reader.(2,3)

Medical RSS feed directory <http://www.rss4medics.com/directory.html>

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