

Guidelines for Members of the Vigimed Mailing List

Description

Vigimed is the name of the e-mail distribution list set up to stimulate discussion and facilitate rapid exchange of information between representatives of National Centres participating in the WHO International Drug Monitoring Programme. It is a restricted list, open only to individuals connected to the National Centre for pharmacovigilance or to the Drug Regulatory Authority in participating countries (both Full and Associate member countries).

The Vigimed list server is managed by *the* Uppsala Monitoring Centre. To assist in its smooth-running, please follow these Guidelines in full.

Function

Vigimed is a means of discussion on topical subjects for its members. As a closed list, the expectation is that members feel confident to share preliminary findings, suspicions and opinions with other pharmacovigilance professionals in similar work settings.

An e-mail message submitted to the Vigimed address [vigimed@lists.who-umc.org] will automatically be distributed to all e-mail addresses included on the distribution list. The list server will only accept contributions from list members. The list is not moderated: there is no manual filter between the submission of a message and the distribution to list members. The server will automatically generate an initial statement 'Distributed through Vigimed' to every message submitted to it.

Admission of members to the list

A person who wishes to become a Vigimed member has to document that (s)he is an authorised staff member of a National Centre or a Drug Regulatory Authority of a participating country. Preferably this should be verified by the head of department. The request for being included on the Vigimed mailing list should be submitted to Sten Olsson (sten.olsson@who-umc.org) or Geoffrey Bowring (geoffrey.bowring@who-umc.org), accompanied by full contact details (name, organisation, postal address, telephone and fax numbers).

List members are requested to protect their computer(s) from potential virus attacks through Vigimed by installing a virus-checking program that is continuously updated with the latest definitions.

the Uppsala Monitoring Centre will regularly correct and update the distribution list, and make available on the UMC website a record of all members of the distribution list, including e-mail address, name and affiliation, approximately every six months. Through this, members will know who the immediate readers of Vigimed messages are.

Sending messages to Vigimed

1. A short descriptive **title** should be given on the subject line of your message. If you respond to a previous message, please use the title of that message.
2. If you are requesting information from colleagues in other National Centres, please give a short description of the **reason** for or **purpose** of your request. You are likely to get more and better responses if you do.
3. Messages may be written in more than one language, but one of them should be **English**. We do not wish to encourage the creation of language sub-groups.

4. Please consider starting a discussion on a **topical subject**. Vigimed is a closed list with the intention that members may feel confident to share preliminary findings, suspicions and opinions with other pharmacovigilance professionals, knowing that such information will not be given to other parties, the public or to media without the consent of the originator.
5. It is **important not** to post requests for the number of adverse reaction case reports to a particular drug from your colleagues **without having checked the WHO database first**. The WHO database is the repository for reports collected by the countries submitting reports to the WHO International Programme. By using *the* UMC web-based search facility or by directly contacting Anders Viklund (Anders.Viklund@umc-products.com) you will have access to reports from all countries from the WHO database. Only if you fail to obtain the information you want via one of these methods should you post a message on Vigimed.
6. To avoid spreading computer viruses, please **do not add attachments** to your message. If you receive a message with an attachment through Vigimed you should treat it with suspicion as if it is infected with a computer virus.
7. When you submit a message to Vigimed you may get return messages stating that certain list members are 'out of office' or that delivery has failed because the target address is invalid. Such delivery failures may be temporary or permanent. You do not need to take account of these messages, you can just delete them. The managers of the Vigimed system at *the* UMC are frequent contributors to the list and they will investigate all persistent delivery failures.

Responding to Vigimed messages

1. You may choose either to respond to the inquirer directly or make your response visible to all Vigimed members. It is recommended that your response to a request is posted on the Vigimed mailing list to stimulate further information exchange and discussion.
2. If your response to a Vigimed question is made more than two weeks after the original request, please send your mail directly to the inquirer only. Responses to old requests may become very confusing on Vigimed.

Removal from list

If a Vigimed list member discontinues his/her association with the National Centre or the Drug Regulatory Authority (s)he must advise *the* UMC, requesting to be removed from the list. Mail addresses that are dysfunctional and generate warnings of delivery failure for extended periods of time (several weeks) will be removed since they disturb the normal Vigimed traffic. The UMC will inquire by fax the reason for the failure notification. If a response to such an inquiry is not received within a reasonable time, the failing address will be removed.

Comments and Feedback

If you have any views on how the Vigimed e-mail distribution service may be developed, refined or extended please submit your proposals to sten.olsson@who-umc.org. The present facility is provided within the constraints of limited resources available to *the* UMC. We are anxious to develop the service to the best benefit of our partners. Only by getting feedback from Vigimed users can we know in which direction the facility should be developed and improved.