Session 4802
Social Media: The Future is Here!

Using Twitter

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3/3/14

Disclosures

* None
Objectives

- Discuss how the utilization of social media in allergy and immunology practices can lead to improved patient education and satisfaction
- Identify and implement processes designed to protect PHI and prevent HIPAA violations when using healthcare social media
- Identify a step-wise plan for the implementation and maintenance of a social media strategy

What is Twitter?

- Micro-Blogging
- 140 characters for an individual post, called a Tweet
- An additional 20 characters allowed to identify who sent the Tweet
Twitter Facts, via SocialMediaToday.com

* Twitter is the fastest growing social network in the world

* It was 7 years old in 2013
* There are over 500 million Twitter Users
* 17 million Americans use Twitter actively
* 170 billion Tweets have been sent to date
* 400 million Tweets are sent daily

http://goo.gl/BtignO
Posted 9/26/13
Site accessed 12/22/13

Twitter Facts Cont’d, via SocialMediaToday.com

* 70% of small businesses are on Twitter
* Around 60% of Twitter users follow a brand to get customer support
* 42% of Twitter users say they use Twitter to learn about products and services
* 85% of people say they feel more connected to the business after they follow them
* Close to 80% follow a brand to get exclusive content
* Tweet exposure has a positive influence on brand consideration

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What is Twitter useful for?

* Marketing a medical practice
* Engaging with patients
* Staying current with the medical literature
* Interacting with colleagues
* Promoting research
* Developing a personal brand and internet presence
* Following presentations in real-time at medical (& other) conferences
* Keeping up to date with news in general

Improving Patient Education & Satisfaction with Twitter

* Be social – don’t be impersonal

* Engage with your followers / patients
  * If they ReTweet you, thank them
  * If they have questions, reply
  * Pay attention to conversations just as in real life
  * Listen, don’t just talk

The Medical Practice Marketing Blog 7/22/13  (http://goo.gl/tMoHF5)
Improving Patient Education & Satisfaction with Twitter

* Great for announcing events, specials, or new information

* Examples:
  * Office closings, including weather-related
  * Changes in office hours
  * Notification of blog posts or articles written
  * Marketing campaigns
  * Current pollen counts
  * Air quality warnings

Curbsideconsult.tumblr.com published 11/13/13 (http://goo.gl/4bgwXH)

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Improving Patient Education & Satisfaction with Twitter

* Offer in-depth knowledge and healthcare tips

* Comment on Allergy-related issues currently in the news

* Discuss recently published Allergy-related journal articles

* Make suggestions on new healthcare services & products

* Interact with & engage your followers and community

The Medical Practice Marketing Blog 7/30/13 (http://goo.gl/xVWgcy)
Improving Patient Education & Satisfaction

* Use Twitter for Customer Service
* People expect you to monitor your Twitter account for service concerns about your practice
* Make sure to respect confidentiality
* You can and should reply to them privately if appropriate

The Medical Practice Marketing Blog 7/22/13  (http://goo.gl/tMoHF5)

Improving Patient Education & Satisfaction with Twitter

* Customer Service
* It is necessary to always respond to the good and the bad
* Stay objective when responding to negative criticism
* Don't respond off the top of your head – your emotions can get the better of you

Curbsideconsult.tumblr.com published 11/13/13  (http://goo.gl/4bgwXH)
Avoid posting identifiable patient information online

Use privacy settings to the extent possible

Realize that privacy settings are not absolute

Once on the Internet, postings likely permanent

Maintain appropriate boundaries of the patient-physician relationship in accordance with professional ethical guidelines just as in any other context.

Consider separating personal and professional content online

If you see something inappropriate posted by a colleague, address it with them.

Physicians must recognize that actions online and content posted may negatively affect their reputations among patients and colleagues, may have consequences for their medical careers.

The AMA: Opinion 9.124 - Professionalism in the Use of Social Media
http://goo.gl/pdXvoF
* Maintain clear professional boundaries
* Have separate accounts for personal and professional use
* Do not post any confidential information to Twitter
* Make sure that patients who interact with your office on Twitter know the privacy limits of Twitter

The Medical Practice Marketing Blog 9/17/13 [http://goo.gl/BYiOWx](http://goo.gl/BYiOWx)

* A study in the British Medical Journal published 7/24/13 ([http://goo.gl/AeE6Qg](http://goo.gl/AeE6Qg)) showed:
  * 6% of Swedish physicians and medical students (n=237, total of 13,780 Tweets) who used Twitter had published at least 1 Tweet that may have violated patient privacy laws
  * This correlates with a 2011 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association which showed 3% of physician Tweets to be unprofessional

Becker’s Hospital Review 8/27/13 [http://goo.gl/2PWEUH](http://goo.gl/2PWEUH)
Protecting PHI & preventing HIPAA violations

* “... what is written will not only be read by colleagues, but might also be read by an immeasurable number of Twitter users and be reshared throughout the network and beyond.

* By posting a message on Twitter, the user readily loses all control of how the messages will be shared, resent and interpreted”

Anne Brynolfi, Stefan Johansson, Ester Appelgren, Niels Lynoe3, Anna Karin Edstedt Bonamy
Virtual colleagues, virtually colleagues—physicians’ use of ‘Twitter: a population-based observational study.

Developing a Social Media Strategy

* Join

* Set up a Social Media account for your practice – if you don’t, you are invisible

* Pick one that you are comfortable with

* Twitter & Facebook are the most prominent

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Developing a Social Media Strategy

* Know your Audience

* Who is following you on Twitter, vs. Facebook, or other social media networks?
  * Example: Local Businesses vs. Patients

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Tweeting Do’s & Don’ts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Use Twitter to answer patient questions</td>
<td>* Give access to too many staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Invite questions</td>
<td>* Violate PHI</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Have physicians get involved</td>
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HITECHAnswers.net Tweeting Do’s and Don’ts for Small Medical Practices 10/8/13 http://goo.gl/1TaUxi
Developing a Social Media Strategy

* Establish Twitter policies
  * “Following” and posting on Twitter
  * How to manage requests and other Twitter postings
  * If you are not able to monitor Twitter & respond in a timely fashion, make that clear
  * Make sure patients know to call if they need emergency assistance
  * Provide full contact and emergency information on your home page – for Twitter, link to your office web page, where this information should be present.


Developing a Social Media Strategy

* Engage with others

* Social Media is a two-way street

* Find people, practices, & organizations you like and follow them

How Often Should I Tweet?

- Average life-span of a Tweet is 2 hours
- ReTweets are what you are shooting for
- Sweet spot for ReTweets is when you Tweet 4-5x per day


Developing a Social Media Strategy

- Be patient
- Growth takes time

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Thank You!

@AllergyTalk