Symposium 4: Social Media Influence on Health Belief: A Global Challenge

Effective Communication in Social Media

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ABSTRACT

I've never considered myself a religious man, but lately I've found myself preaching one key message to the community repeatedly – the need to recognize the importance of harnessing social media as part of their ongoing communication and health seeking behaviour. Gone are the days of press kits and faxing press releases. Social Media has become a game changer. Don't believe me? Facebook alone has over 1.2 billion monthly active users, Twitter over one billion registered users and Instagram over 300 million. Nonetheless, there is strong evidence to suggest that at least part of the source of this trend is the degree to which medically inaccurate information about medical issues surface on the websites where many netizens get their information. Social media survey from MCMC (2017) stated that 77.2% of netizen search medical information including virtual consultation via internet. Sadly, 82.7% of them said, the information that they gathered from internet were trusted. Since most netizens would probably read the first few pages of the internet search results, study shown by American Academy of Physician, only 43.5% of sampled websites contained recommendations that were in line with the AAP recommendations, while 28.1% contained inaccurate information and 28.4% of the websites were not medically relevant. Hence the virtual medical information are not designed to distinguish quality information from misinformation or misleading information, and the consequences of that are particularly troubling for public health issues. Medical provider must put forward an effort to curb this myth and misleading information through social media.

Social media plays a crucial role in connecting people and developing relationships, not only with key influencers and journalists covering medical fraternity, but also provides a great opportunity to establish patient's service by gathering input, answering questions and listening to their comment. The insight you gain from social media listening provide our professionalism with a better understanding of what's working and what's not, and goes a long way in helping your public image. It's important to be aware real-time of what people are saying about our fraternity.