Minority Cancer Awareness Week
Social Media Toolkit

April 9-15, 2017

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC

GW Cancer Center

GW Cancer Center
CANCER CONTROL TAP
Tap into resources to control cancer

Minority Cancer Awareness Week Social Media Toolkit
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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help public health professionals establish a Minority Cancer Awareness Week social media strategy, manage social media accounts, implement Facebook and Twitter best practices, disseminate Minority Cancer Awareness Week messaging and evaluate their social media efforts.

Don't have the time or capacity to implement this toolkit? Don't fret! You can still engage your audience by retweeting messages from **@GWCancer**

WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOLKIT?

Public health professionals, cancer control professionals, coalitions and community-based organizations can all use this toolkit and adapt its messaging for their unique audiences and areas of expertise.

WHAT IS MINORITY CANCER AWARENESS WEEK?

April is National Minority Health Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness about the health disparities that continue to affect racial and ethnic minorities (Office of Minority Health, 2015). The campaign was originally started as "National Negro Health Week" in April 1915 by Booker T. Washington, and has since grown into a month-long opportunity to advance health equity across the U.S.

National Minority Cancer Awareness week, also in April, provides an opportunity to raise awareness about cancer disparities among racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. African American men have the highest incidence and death rates from cancer (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2016). In addition, research suggests that despite improvements in life expectancy and overall health, many Americans are not benefiting equally from these advances (CDC, 2016). African Americans and Hispanics in the U.S. are also more likely to be uninsured, making it more difficult for them to access the care they need (Martinez, Ward & Adams, 2015).

"Without health and until we reduce the high death rate it will be impossible for us to have permanent success in business, in property getting, in acquiring education or to show other evidences of progress. **Without health and long life all else fails**."

-BOOKER T. WASHINGTON
THE INDIANAPOLIS RECORDER FEBRUARY 6, 1915

SOCIAL MEDIA 101

According to a 2015 Pew Research Center survey, "76% of online adults use social networking sites." (Pew Research Center, 2015). In addition, a 2014 study found that nearly 75% of adults use social media to discuss health (Fox, 2014).

Social media represents a unique opportunity to reach a large audience of both consumers and professionals. It is more important than ever that online medical and health information is "trustworthy, engaging, and accessible to digitally empowered consumers" (Hootsuite, n.d., p. 2).

When designing and thinking about your social media strategy, consider your audience, the channel(s) you want to use, your objective(s), or what you are trying to achieve, as well as how you will measure success. Remember that your social media activities should ultimately support your organization's goals (Hootsuite, n.d.).

Looking to establish a social media strategy for your organization or make the case for why it's important? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers "SocialMediaWorks," an online step-by-step tool to create and establish a social media strategy. The site also offers pre-tested and effective messages as well as evaluation strategies, tools and templates.

Remember to tailor messaging to your target audience or audiences. Your organization offers unique strengths and expertise; make sure to capitalize on them to make your campaign most effective.

Looking for more in-depth info on social media channels and communication strategy? Check out our **Media Planning and Media Relations Guide** or our other **social media toolkits**.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest and more: Social media is growing every day, along with opportunities for outreach.

TWITTER BEST PRACTICES

- Keep Tweets short, between 100-110 characters. This allows other users to Retweet while adding their own comments.
- Add photos or videos. Adding a photo boosts Retweets by 62% on average (Twitter Government and Elections Team, 2014).
- Tweet at author or organizational Twitter handles when possible. Note that Tweets that begin with a username will now reach all your followers (this means you no longer have to use the ".@" convention in order for your Tweet to be seen by all your followers).
- Twitter, Tweetdeck, Sprout Social and Hootsuite all have options to shorten links as you write Tweets. Other options for shortening links are provided under Additional Tools and Resources.
- Promote engagement with other organizations by favoriting or Retweeting their content. You can even add your own comment before Retweeting.
- Be responsive and recognize Retweets, @ mentions and when others share your content. It doesn't take much, but a simple "thank you" goes a long way toward building engagement.
- Remember that Tweets cannot be edited once they are posted, so proofread before you post!

FACEBOOK BEST PRACTICES

- Shorter posts (around 250 characters) get up to 60% more distribution than longer posts (CDC, n.d.)
- Use photos or videos to make your posts stand out. Posts with photos receive up to 50% more likes than non-photo posts (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013). However, be aware of Facebook's policies about what can be posted and identifying people in photos without consent (CDC, n.d.).
- Use a conversational tone and explain to your audience why the content should matter to them (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Posts that start conversations by asking questions and responding receive approximately 70% above-average engagement (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Vary your post type. Users don't engage the same way with every post (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Track your results and act on them. Facebook offers analytic data that you can use to find out what posts are being "liked" or shared and which ones aren't. Focus your efforts on what is working (CDC, n.d.).

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATION AND CANCER DISPARITIES

While communication is not a cure-all for reducing cancer-related health disparities, it can serve as one important tool in an overall strategy to address health inequities. Social epidemiology is one field of study that seeks to identify how "social determinants" of health, like socioeconomic status, education level, housing conditions and social networks can explain why different communities experience better or worse health outcomes (Berkman & Kawachi, 2000; Viswanath & Emmons, 2006). While research on message effects has largely focused on individual reactions to health messages, it's important to remember that audiences also process information through the shared filter of their social group or community (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006). There are several evidence-based practices you can use when developing messages intended to reduce cancer-related health disparities:

> "…disparities in health may occur concomitantly with disparities in access to information and knowledge, that is, communication inequality" (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006, p. S242)

- Understand that cultural background significantly impacts the lens through which we view health information
- Assess the health literacy level of your messages for appropriateness and use culturally appropriate narratives as an effective communication tool
- Use communication messages to point people toward on-the-ground resources for care and don't underestimate the importance of community-based partnerships in reducing disparities

WHEN DEVELOPING MESSAGES…

Cultural Background

- Audiences process information through filters of culture. Communication efforts that provide cultural context and background for health messages may be more effective than those that don't (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006).
- Social networks can affect messaging by framing and interpreting health messages in the environment – choices may be influenced by others who could be a secondary audience for your messages (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006).
- Emphasize the importance of cross-cultural communication skills for providers as they play an important role in developing trust with patients and their families throughout the cancer care continuum (Kagawa-Singer, Valdez Dadia, Yu & Surbone, 2010).
- Integrate cultural knowledge into the style of your communication messages—this requires a careful understanding of your audience and their preferred communication style (Kagawa-Singer et al., 2010).
- Involve patients in message testing and development whenever possible (Davis, 2002).

Health Literacy

- Low health literacy level could be a predictor of heightened cancer risk and lack of participation in cancer screening programs (Davis, 2002).

- With so much information available online, patients with low health literacy are often at an increasing disadvantage when it comes to understanding and processing health-related information on the Internet (Davis, 2002).
- Keep online messaging about cancer screening and prevention practical, concise and focused on action and motivation (Davis, 2002).
- Stories can be used to present cultural themes as a context and background to provide health information, which may make them more effective (Kreuter & McClure, 2004). They can also be used to overcome health literacy challenges since they are more memorable and motivating than statistics and written instructions alone (Davis, 2002).
- Longer narratives may have a better chance of addressing barriers that lead to disparities. Exposure to fictional narratives may influence perceptions of social reality, behaviors or knowledge about health (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006).
- Culturally compatible narratives tend to be most effective (Kreuter & McClure, 2004).

Leverage Community and Clinical Partnerships

- As was mentioned earlier, communication alone cannot solve health disparities. It can, however, serve as a tool to point people toward on-the-ground resources in the community.
- A study found that all groups of color were more likely to report experiencing bias and lack of cultural sensitivity when seeking treatment in the health care system compared to non-Hispanic whites—differences that persisted when controlling for demographic factors, health literacy and self-rated health status (Betancourt, 2006; Kagawa-Singer et al., 2010).
- Interventions that improve the health care system can stimulate preventive health care behaviors, but system improvements should also ideally come with increased care access (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006).
- Focus on promoting community-based resources for supporting cancer patients and families. As Kagawa-Singer et al. note: "Development of community engagement in health disparities through outreach, education, and research is crucial" (2010, p. 33).
- Leveraging partnerships with local media in the community to increase media attention around a topic may equalize knowledge across different groups, especially by focusing on active areas of improvement (smokers' rights vs. secondhand smoke effects, how we talk about clinical trials, etc.) (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006).

SAMPLE TWEETS AND FACEBOOK POSTS

Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts
4/9 Sun	It's National Minority Cancer Awareness Week, a chance to raise awareness & work toward eliminating health disparities #NMHM17	Did you know it's Minority Cancer Awareness Week? It's a great opportunity to raise awareness and work toward eliminating health disparities. Stay tuned for more info throughout the week!
4/10 Mon	Eliminating health disparities starts w/ awareness. Learn more about differences in cancer rates from @CDCgov: http://bit.ly/2gTqnZW #NMHM17	Awareness is the first step toward action. Learn more about health disparities and differences in cancer rates from the CDC: http://bit.ly/2gTqnZW
4/10 Mon	What programs work when it comes to reducing #cancer risk? Check out these great resources from @CPSTF: http://bit.ly/2h5SVdJ #NMHM17	Cancer is the 2nd leading cause of death in the U.S. What programs work when it comes to reducing cancer risk and disparities? These resources from the Community Preventive Services Task Force are a great place to start: http://bit.ly/2h5SVdJ
4/11 Tue	American Indians & Alaska Natives have the ↑ smoking rates in the US. Learn what @KeepItSacred is doing to change it: http://bit.ly/2gTzB8n	Did you know that American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest smoking rates in the U.S. and face inequities in cancer prevention and control? Learn what Keep It Sacred is doing to make a difference: http://bit.ly/2gTzB8n
4/12 Wed	@CDCgov funds #CompCancer efforts to reduce disparities in states, tribes & territories: http://bit.ly/2hE1QVz	Did you know the CDC funds comprehensive cancer control efforts in states, tribes & territories? Many of those plans include strategies to reduce cancer disparities. Read more: http://bit.ly/2hE1QVz
4/13 Thur	#DYK @LGBTHealthLink is working to address LGBT cancer disparities? Learn more: http://bit.ly/2hDd4MO #NMHM17	LGBT communities are disproportionately affected by cancer. Learn more about what's being done to address disparities across the continuum of care: http://bit.ly/2hDd4MO
4/14 Fri	Black men are most at risk for #ProstateCancer. Learn about risk factors and early detection. http://bit.ly/2atrTMV #NMHM17	Black men are most at risk for getting prostate cancer, followed by White, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native men. Talk to your doctor about ways to detect the disease early: http://bit.ly/2atrTMV
4/15 Sat	Tobacco use is the #1 preventable cause of cancer death among Asian Americans. Thinking of quitting? Start here: http://bit.ly/2hsWmzf #NMHM17	Smoking rates in some Asian American groups are higher than the general population, and tobacco use is the #1 cause of preventable cancer death among Asian Americans. Thinking about quitting? These top 10 tips can help you get started: http://bit.ly/2hsWmzf
4/15 Sat	#DYK Hispanic women have about twice the risk of cervical #cancer compared to non-Hispanic women? Learn more: http://bit.ly/2hDka3A #NMHM17	Hispanic/Latina women have about twice the risk of cervical cancer compared to non-Hispanic women. Get the inside knowledge about gynecologic cancers and what you can do to get screened and protect yourself: http://bit.ly/2hDka3A

OTHER IDEAS TO PROMOTE MINORITY CANCER AWARENESS

April is a busy month for health observances. It includes National Minority Health Month, National Cancer Control Month and National Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week. Consider linking your Minority Cancer Awareness Week activities to other observances to leverage momentum for your campaign.

> "CDC uses social media to provide users with access to credible, science-based information…A variety of social media tools are used to reinforce and personalize messages, reach new audiences and build a communication infrastructure based on open information exchange" (CDC, 2015a)

Host or Participate in a Twitter Chat

Twitter chats are a great way to expand your audience and promote engagement with other partners and organizations. You can organize a Twitter chat yourself or simply participate in another one. Twitter chats are live moderated Twitter conversations focused around a specific topic, using a single hashtag. They usually last an hour and involve a list of pre-circulated questions to participants. If you are organizing a chat, reach out to partners early and provide the list of questions as far in advance as possible.

Host a Twitterview

A Twitterview is an interview conducted through Tweets. A Twitterview is a form of Twitter Chat where individuals participate in a live moderated Twitter conversation focused around a specific topic using a single hashtag.

For a Twitterview, typically an interviewer asks questions directly to the interviewee and participants can follow the conversation through an event hashtag. You may also open up the interview to questions from the audience. The benefits of a Twitterview include the creation of relevant and interesting content, dissemination of accurate and evidence-based information, increased visibility for your organization and increased engagement with followers.

Pick a hashtag. Using hashtags is a way to group and organize messages together. In Twitterviews, hashtags are used to distinguish your interview from regular Tweets in the feed. Your followers will also be able to filter and track your Twitterview posts by searching your hashtag. Symplur amalgamates popular and established Tweet Chat hashtags on health care topics. If you use an established hashtag, your Tweets may reach audiences that you usually do not reach. If you would like to create your own hashtag, make sure it is short and intuitive. Don't be afraid to use abbreviations and acronyms, because your questions and answers including the hashtag must be under 140 characters.

Pick a date and time, then secure a speaker or speakers to be interviewed. Potentially influential speakers might include researchers, cancer survivors or caregivers, health care providers or other subject matter experts. Provide your speaker(s) with a list of what questions will be asked before the event, so they can prepare their answers in under 140 characters. This can take time and editing. Decide in advance whether you are going to open up the interview to your followers and let your speaker(s) know what to expect. Consider using a website to help manage the Twitterview such as TweetChat or TWUBS.

Promote the event to your followers. Host the event, running it similarly to how you would host a live in-person meeting (introduce topic, speaker, your organization). Number your questions starting with a "Q" for question. For example: Q1: What is 1 thing you can do to reduce cancer disparities? #HealthEquityChat. Your speaker(s) can either "reply" to the question or Tweet "A" and the corresponding number that aligns with the question followed by an answer to the question. For example: A1: Connecting communities to on-the-ground resources is a great start #HealthEquityChat.

Retweet or favorite the best questions posed by your followers and answers by your speaker(s) and be sure to share relevant links and resources. After the event, archive an event summary and share with participants and your other followers. Consider using Storify to create a visual transcript of the Twitterview.

Best Practices for Engagement Events and Activities

- Plan early and well
- Expand your audience and reach by partnering with another organization
- Make sure you use an original hashtag (unless it makes sense to use an established hashtag)
- Prepare as many questions and responses in Tweet format as possible in advance
- Involving well-known local figures may help raise the profile of your event(s) and increase participation and engagement

MEASURING SUCCESS

Looking to measure the success of your social media campaign? Twitter and Facebook both offer free analytic tools to allow you to demonstrate the impact of your social media efforts.

Twitter Analytics allows you to see and download detailed tracking information about Tweet activity, engagement, audience and trends over time. Log in to analytics.twitter.com/about with your Twitter username and password to learn more.

Facebook Insights allows users to track page likes, post reach, number of visits, specific posts as well as who is following your page. According to Facebook, "posts that get more likes, comments and shares show up more in News Feed and are seen by more people. Posts that are hidden, reported as spam or cause people to unlike your Page reach fewer people."

Klout tracks the influence and reach of your social media profiles and provides a score based on how others are interacting with your content across multiple networks. It also provides information on your top posts so you can see what content is generating action from your networks.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES

National African American Tobacco Prevention Network: Focuses on tobacco control leadership, expertise and promotion in the African American community

National Native Network: A network of Tribes, tribal organizations and health programs working to decrease commercial tobacco use and cancer health disparities among American Indians and Alaska Natives

Nuestras Voces: Works to empower Hispanics and those who serve them around the United States to eliminate disparities in critical health areas

The RAISE Network: A network of national and local organizations that work together to prevent and reduce tobacco use and other cancer-related health disparities in the diverse Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities

LGBT Health Link: A community-driven network of advocates and professionals looking to enhance LGBT health by reducing tobacco-, cancer- and other health disparities

Icon Array: Tool for creating icon-based graphics for use in risk communication

Owly: Link shortener from Hootsuite

TinyURL: Link shortener that allows for customization of URLs to make them more memorable

Goo.gl: Link shortener that allows for tracking of clicks

Hootsuite, Sprout Social: Online platforms that allow organizations to schedule Tweets and Facebook posts, keep up with their feed (the posts of those they follow), and collect basic analytics for evaluation

Tweetdeck: Platform from Twitter that allows for pre-scheduling Tweets, including pre-loading photos

Klout: Service that tracks your organization's level of online social influence

Thunderclap: Social networking tool that allows you to "crowdsource" your social media campaign to increase its impact

Periscope: Live-streaming video app so you can show events or videos live to your audience on social media

Symplur: A current list of health care related hashtags in use on Twitter

Canva: Allows users to create visually appealing graphics and photos for social media and print materials; includes a collection of low-cost or free stock photos and backgrounds

CDC Public Health Image Library (PHIL): Free image library

CDC "photostream" on Flickr: Website designed for public image sharing. CDC images include public health photos and graphics developed for public health events that users can comment on and share.

CDC Infographics: Gallery of CDC-designed infographics to visually communicate data or information

GLOSSARY

Facebook: A social networking site that allows people to create personal profiles and stay connected with others (www.facebook.com)

Feed: News feeds which you receive straight into your account

Followers: People who have agreed to receive your Tweets or Facebook posts

Hashtags (#): A form of metadata tag that makes it possible to group messages

Message Effects: Research that systematically exploring how features, formats and structure of messages may attract audience attention and influence the audience (Viswanath & Emmons, 2006).

Retweet (RT): Re-posting of someone else's Tweet

Tweets: 140-character text messages

Twitter: An online social networking and microblogging service that enables users to send and read short 140-character text messages, called "Tweets" (www.twitter.com)

Twitter chat: A live moderated Twitter conversation focused around a specific topic using a single hashtag

Twitter handle: Your Twitter name that begins with the "@" sign. For example: @GWCancerInst

Twittersphere or **Twitterverse**: The total universe of Twitter users and their habits

Twitterview: A combination of the terms Twitter, a popular microblogging platform, and interview. It is a type of interview for which the medium restricts the interviewer and interviewee to short-form responses

See Twitter's "Twitter Glossary" for more.

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