

Cervical Cancer Awareness Month Social Media Toolkit



January 2017

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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help stakeholders establish a Cervical Cancer Awareness Month social media strategy, manage social media accounts, implement Facebook and Twitter best practices, disseminate Cervical Cancer Awareness Month 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, community-based organizations and other stakeholders can use this toolkit and adapt its messaging for their unique audiences and areas of expertise.

WHAT IS CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH?

Cervical Cancer Awareness Month is an annual observance held throughout the Month of January. It is intended to raise awareness of cervical cancer and to fundraise for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, survivorship and cure. In 2013, nearly 12,000 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer (CDC, 2016a). January is also an opportunity to support those affected by cervical cancer. Cervical Cancer Awareness Month begins on January 1 and ends on January 31.

SOCIAL MEDIA 101

According to a 2014 Pew Research Center survey, "74% of online adults use social networking sites." (Pew Research Center, 2014). In addition, Hughes (2010) found that, "one-third of adults access social media related to health" (p. 3).

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 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](#).

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 effective.



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 liking 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!

“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, 2015)

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 COMMUNICATING ABOUT CERVICAL CANCER

The first step in any communication campaign is to define your audience. When communicating about cervical cancer, your audience may be newly diagnosed patients, survivors, caregivers, health care providers, employers or others. All of these audiences may have different messaging needs and may be reached through different channels. However, there are some commonalities in that cancer communication must help patients: “(1) Receive bad news, (2) handle the emotional impact of a life-threatening illness, (3) understand and remember complex information, (4) communicate with multiple health professionals, (5) understand statistics related to prognosis, (6) deal with uncertainty while maintaining hope, (7) build trust



that will sustain long-term clinical relationships, (8) make decisions about treatment, possibly including participation in clinical trials and (9) adopt health-promoting behaviors” (Epstein & Street, 2007, p. 1).

WHEN COMMUNICATING ABOUT CERVICAL CANCER...

- Consider health literacy and numeracy
- Emphasize screening information and follow-up reminders, especially the importance of not delaying treatment if an abnormal lesion is identified
- Remind providers about the importance of talking about HPV vaccination as cervical cancer prevention

Consider health literacy and numeracy

- Use simple language and avoid terms not often used outside of the scientific community. Explain how data influences your audience and why it’s relevant (NCI, 2011).
- Organize information so the most important points are first (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.).
- If presenting data, use integers instead of decimals as they are more convincing and easily recalled (Witteman et al., 2011). Visual representations of data, like icon arrays are most effective ().
- Where possible, point consumers to supporting materials, visuals and reliable sources of information such as trusted websites or physicians.

Emphasize screening information and follow-up reminders

- Health care providers are central sources of information about cervical cancer screening and their involvement is often an important factor in influencing screening coverage (Giordano et al., 2008).
- Recent studies have found that many women lacked basic knowledge about cervical cancer screening, including the age that the average woman should start screening as well as how often they should return for follow-up (Cooper, Polonec & Gelb, 2011; Hawkins, Cooper, Saraiya, Gelb and Polonec, 2011).
- Remind women to get screened and ask about it at appointments. A recent study found that nearly 20% said they had not been checked recently for cervical cancer, with fewer Asian and Hispanic women reporting that they had been screened than white women (Sabatino, White, Thompson & Klabunde, 2015).

Remind providers about the importance of talking about HPV vaccination as cervical cancer prevention

- Cooper et al. (2011) found that although some women had heard of human papillomavirus (HPV), many didn’t know it caused cervical cancer.
- It was estimated in 2013 that increasing HPV vaccination to 80% could prevent an additional 53,000 future cervical cancer cases among girls who are now 12 years old or younger over the course of their lifetimes (President’s Cancer Panel, 2013).
- The message that “HPV vaccination is cervical cancer prevention” tends to resonate well with parents (CDC, 2016b).
- A health care provider’s recommendation is the single biggest predictor of whether or not a parent will vaccinate their child against cervical cancer (Brewer et al., 2011; Guerry et al., 2011).
- When talking to parents, providers’ recommendations about HPV vaccination should be strong, timely (when boys and girls are in the recommended 11-12 age range for vaccination), consistent and urgent, meaning parents are encouraged to get kids vaccinated the same day they come in (Gilkey et al., 2015).



SAMPLE TWEETS AND FACEBOOK POSTS

Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts
Mon 1/2	We're kicking off #CervicalHealthMonth! Read about some ways you can reduce your risk of #CervicalCancer here: http://1.usa.gov/1YpPgTA	Prevent cervical cancer with the right test at the right time! Screening tests can find abnormal cells so they can be treated before they turn into cancer. Take a look at this infographic to find out more: http://1.usa.gov/1Ui0DRm
Tue 1/3	Did you know smoking can increase your risk of #CervicalCancer? Get the facts from @CDC_gov and call 1-800-QUIT-NOW http://1.usa.gov/1S45lbw	Each year, more than 12,000 women in the United States get cervical cancer, but it can be prevented by getting an HPV vaccine, visiting your doctor for a Pap test when recommended and not smoking. Find out more: http://1.usa.gov/1S45lbw
Wed 1/4	Almost all #CervicalCancer is caused by #HPV: http://bit.ly/2cDAAU2 . Talk to your doctor to see if the vaccine is right for you!	The most important thing you can do to help prevent cervical cancer is to have regular screening tests starting at age 21. If your Pap test results are normal, your chance of getting cervical cancer in the next few years is very low. For that reason, your doctor may tell you that you will not need another Pap test for as long as three years. Learn more about Pap test recommendations here: http://1.usa.gov/1YpPgTA
Thu 1/5	Listen to the story of a #CervicalCancer survivor and the importance of getting the #HPVvax: http://bit.ly/2d4V5NY #CervicalHealthMonth	Almost all cervical cancers are caused by human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can be passed from one person to another during sex. There are many types of HPV. Some HPV types can cause changes on a woman's cervix that can lead to cervical cancer over time, while other types can cause genital or skin warts. Learn more here: http://1.usa.gov/25W0Cep
Fri 1/6	Clinicians: You are the key to closing the door to #CervicalCancer. Watch this video on the importance of #HPVvax http://bit.ly/1toMsRo	The National Cervical Cancer Coalition (NCCC) offers a free ebook of essays from cervical cancer survivors and family members, providing personal perspectives on the physical and emotional impact of cervical cancer. Read their stories here: http://bit.ly/1tuvYld
Mon 1/9	#CervicalCancer is the easiest gynecologic cancer to prevent, with regular screening tests and follow-up! Learn more: http://1.usa.gov/1UO2PA2	Check out this CDC brochure about when to get tested for HPV and how to make sense of your HPV and Pap test results for women ages 30 and older: http://1.usa.gov/1UsKxWk
Tue 1/10	Question: I heard about an #HPV vaccine. Can it help me? Find the answer to this and more: http://1.usa.gov/24OLpGf #CervicalHealthMonth	Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines offer the best protection against cervical cancer and other HPV-associated cancers when all three doses are administered early. That's why HPV vaccination is recommended for preteen girls and boys at age 11 - 12 years. Read more: http://1.usa.gov/1YpaAyZ



Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts
Wed 1/11	As parents, you do everything you can to protect your kids' health. Today, there's a way to prevent #CervicalCancer: http://1.usa.gov/237Kx03	As parents, you do everything you can to protect your children's health for now and for the future. Today, there is a strong weapon to prevent several types of cancer in your kids: the HPV vaccine. Find out more: http://1.usa.gov/237Kx03
Thu 1/12	This @CDC_Cancer brochure outlines #CervicalCancer screening guidelines with the #HPV test and the Pap test for women ages 30+: http://1.usa.gov/1UsKxWk	You can prevent cervical cancer with the right test at the right time. The Pap test looks for the human papillomavirus (HPV) that can cause cancer. Check out this infographic and talk to your doctor for more information: http://1.usa.gov/1Ui0DRm
Fri 1/13	Question: Why is HPV vaccination only recommended for women through age 26? Find out the answer: http://1.usa.gov/25W18Jo #CervicalHealthMonth	Attention clinicians! CDC and partners, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommend HPV vaccination of both girls and boys at ages 11 or 12. Read more: http://1.usa.gov/21ks0vS
Mon 1/16	Attention clinicians! @CDC_gov and partners suggest strongly recommending #HPVvax for girls AND boys at ages 11-12: http://1.usa.gov/21ks0vS	Early on, cervical cancer may not cause signs and symptoms. Advanced cervical cancer may cause symptoms, but they could be from something other than cancer. The only way to know is to see your doctor: http://1.usa.gov/1WMPoDU
Tue 1/17	Are you listening to your body? Learn the symptoms and get the inside facts about #CervicalCancer: http://bit.ly/1ZODqrp	If your doctor says that you have cervical cancer, ask to be referred to a gynecologic oncologist—a doctor who has been trained to treat cancers of a woman's reproductive system. This doctor will work with you to create a treatment plan: http://1.usa.gov/25W2a8j
Wed 1/18	A survivor's advice on #CervicalCancer: "Get your Pap smear regularly. It really can save your life" http://1.usa.gov/1WMPECS	Clinicians: What can you do to ensure your adolescent patients are fully vaccinated? Here is a factsheet for vaccine recommendations, including the HPV vaccination to protect patients against cervical cancer: http://1.usa.gov/1YpchfZ
Thu 1/19	Did you know that as many as 93% of #CervicalCancers could be prevented by screening and getting the #HPVvax? http://1.usa.gov/21krxdp	More than 12,000 women get cervical cancer every year. Up to 93% of cervical cancers are preventable. HPV vaccination helps prevent infection with the HPV types that cause most cervical cancers. Learn more: http://1.usa.gov/21krxdp Talk to your doctor for more information.
Fri 1/20	Clinicians: Are you up-to-date on the current #HPVvax and #CervicalCancer screening recommendations? See here: http://1.usa.gov/1UxJErV	Current vaccination and screening recommendations for cervical cancer include that both girls and boys ages 11-12 should receive all doses of the HPV vaccine. Learn more: http://1.usa.gov/1UxJErV
Mon 1/23	#CervicalCancer is highly preventable thanks to vaccines that prevent #HPV infections & screening tests. Read more: http://1.usa.gov/28Cef18	Did you know Hispanic/Latina women are most likely to get #CervicalCancer? CDC's AMIGAS Program aims to reduce this disparity by increasing cervical cancer screening through health education. Find out more: http://1.usa.gov/1Ps9pli



Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts
Tue 1/24	Clinicians: Here are some tips and time-savers for talking with parents about #HPVvax: http://1.usa.gov/1XUYFe3 #CervicalHealthMonth	Parents: Have you vaccinated your kids so they can lead healthy and full lives? Your doctors may have already talked to you about the Tdap vaccine to prevent tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough) and the flu shot to prevent influenza. Did you know that the HPV vaccine is recommended to prevent cervical and HPV-associated cancers? Find out more about recommended immunizations for children from 7-18 years old here: http://1.usa.gov/1tuya28
Wed 1/25	Parents: Are your kids immunized against #CervicalCancer? @CDC_gov & partners recommend #HPVvax for kids ages 11-12 http://1.usa.gov/1tuya28	If there were a vaccine against cancer, wouldn't you get it for your kids? The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention. Talk to your doctor for more information. http://1.usa.gov/1U75nHd
Thu 1/26	Parents and health care professionals are the key to protecting teens from #HPV cancers, including #CervicalCancer: http://1.usa.gov/1tuxt9b	As a clinician, you are the key to closing the door to cancer today. Every year, 27,000 men & women are affected by HPV-related cancers. Most of these can be prevented by vaccinating boys and girls ages 11-12. Watch this short video that emphasizes the importance of prevention from 3 different perspectives: an OB-GYN who treats cervical cancer daily, a pediatrician and mom who vaccinated her own daughters, and a cervical cancer survivor http://bit.ly/1toMsRo
Fri 1/27	Girls and boys 11-12 years old need the #HPVvax now to prevent #cancer later. Watch this clip: http://bit.ly/1UsMQss #CervicalHealthMonth	HPV vaccine is cancer prevention. Talk to your child's doctor about vaccinating your 11-12 year old against HPV. http://bit.ly/1UsMQss
Mon 1/30	Do you have a preteen/teen? Protect them from #CervicalCancer and other serious diseases by getting them vaccinated: http://1.usa.gov/21ksvGz	Has your doctor talked to you about getting all recommended HPV vaccine shots for your child? Talk to your doctor about the HPV vaccine at your child's next appointment: http://1.usa.gov/21ksvGz
Tue 1/31	Think you know the facts about #CervicalCancer? Learn more from this #InsideKnowledge video: http://bit.ly/2cLzsk3	Get the inside knowledge about cervical cancer from actress Cote de Pablo and CDC: http://bit.ly/2cLzsk3



OTHER IDEAS TO PROMOTE CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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 of 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, which 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 questions should #cervicalcancer survivors ask their doc? #CervicalHealthChat. Your speaker(s) can either "reply" to the question you Tweet or Tweet starting with an "A" and the corresponding number. For example: A1: Start w/questions about short- and long-term side effects & screening #CervicalHealthChat.



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 Twitterinterview.

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

[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

[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

[Klout](#): Service that tracks your organization's level of online social influence

[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

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: @GWCancer

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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