Prostate Cancer Awareness Month Social Media Toolkit
September 2016

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Quick Tip:
Viewing this PDF in Chrome?
Use “Ctrl+click” on links to get them to open in a new tab

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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help stakeholders establish a Prostate Cancer Awareness Month social media strategy, manage social media accounts, implement Facebook and Twitter best practices, disseminate Prostate Cancer Awareness Month messaging and evaluate their social media efforts.

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 PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH?

September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, also known as National Prostate Health Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness of the disease and fundraise for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, survivorship and cure as well as to support those affected by prostate cancer. In 2012, over 177,000 men in the United States were diagnosed with prostate cancer (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). Prostate Cancer Awareness Month begins in September 1st and ends on September 30th.

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 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. Note that @names no longer count toward the 140-character limit on Twitter (as of June 2016).
- 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!

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 PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer death among men (CDC & NCI, 2015). Recent data from the Health Information National Trends survey found low levels of communication between patients and providers about prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing and treatment (Bhuyan et al., 2015). This lack of communication can inhibit the shared-decision making process (Bhuyan et al., 2015).
Men are often bombarded with information on social media, so how do you get your prostate cancer messaging to stand out? There are several main evidence-based practices you can use to craft your messages most effectively:

### WHEN COMMUNICATING ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER…

**Consider health literacy and numeracy**

- Patients with low health literacy are more likely to be diagnosed with advanced-stage prostate cancer, a frequently overlooked barrier to screening and prevention (Bennett et al., 1998).
- Before drafting communication messages, it is essential to assess multiple dimensions of health literacy (functional, interactive, critical) within your target population (Friedman et al., 2009).
- 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.

**Promote shared decision-making about screening and treatment**

- Sajid et al. (2012) found that suboptimal communication about prostate cancer can lead to “increased decisional conflict, increased anxiety and poorer quality of life” despite the fact that prostate cancer usually grows very slowly (p. 1069; National Cancer Institute, n.d.).
- Most men desire an active or collaborative role in medical decision-making after a prostate cancer diagnosis (Davison, Parker & Goldenberg, 2004).
- Low health literacy may be a barrier to patients’ full participation in the decision-making process (Davis, Williams, Marin, Parker & Glass, 2008).
- Let patients know about specific resources they can request, such as survivorship care plans or long-term recommendations about screening and follow-up.

**Tailor your messages to your target audience**

- A survey of African American men found that men expressed a preference for situating prostate cancer messages within a culturally appropriate context that emphasized the importance of community (Friedman, Corwin, Dominick & Rose, 2009).
- For Hispanic or Latino men, cultural taboos around sex, reproductive health and intimacy may limit discussions around familial risk and screening options for prostate cancer (Hicks, Litwin & Maliski, 2014).
- Decision aids targeted at Spanish-speaking Latino men should be adapted and tested beyond simple English to Spanish translation (Berry, Halpenny, Bosco, Bruyere & Sanda, 2015).
- A recent study of gay and bisexual prostate cancer survivors’ experiences with health care providers reported inadequate provider competence in addressing their unique and significant sexual concerns (Rose, Ussher & Perez et al., 2016).
- Tools like Make it Your Own (MIYO) can help you customize messages for your specific target population.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tweets</th>
<th>Facebook Posts</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 9/1</td>
<td>September is National #Prostate Health Month! Start by learning about the prostate: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1XNBWik">http://1.usa.gov/1XNBWik</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>September is #ProstateCancer Awareness Month! Start by learning about what the prostate is: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1XNBWik">http://1.usa.gov/1XNBWik</a></td>
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<td>Fri 9/2</td>
<td>Need help talking to your doctor about getting screened for #prostatecancer? This infographic may help: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1TuZG5E">http://1.usa.gov/1TuZG5E</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Most #prostatecancers grow slowly, and don’t cause health problems in some men who have them. There are ways to get screened. Take time to ask your doctor these questions before you decide to get tested or treated for prostate cancer: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1TuZG5E">http://1.usa.gov/1TuZG5E</a></td>
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<td>Mon 9/5</td>
<td>Being older &amp; having a family history can increase your chances of getting #prostatecancer. Read on for more: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Tv1lIv">http://1.usa.gov/1Tv1lIv</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Research has found that being older and having a family history are factors that increase your chances of getting #prostatecancer. Read on for more and talk to your doctor: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Tv1lIv">http://1.usa.gov/1Tv1lIv</a></td>
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<td>Tue 9/6</td>
<td>DYK that #prostatecancer is the most common cancer for US males aside from non-melanoma skin cancer? <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1WKUss9">http://1.usa.gov/1WKUss9</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Did you know that #prostatecancer is the most common cancer among men in the US aside from non-melanoma skin cancer? Talk to your doctor to see if you should get screened for prostate cancer: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1WKUss9">http://1.usa.gov/1WKUss9</a></td>
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<td>Wed 9/7</td>
<td>Different people have different symptoms for #prostatecancer. Here are some symptoms you can look out for: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA">http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>What are the symptoms of #prostatecancer? Different people have different symptoms. Some men do not have symptoms at all, but here are some tell-tale signs: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA">http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA</a></td>
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<td>Thu 9/8</td>
<td>There are a couple of ways to get screened for #prostatecancer: the DRE and PSA. Talk w/your doc to learn more: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1YSAauE">http://1.usa.gov/1YSAauE</a></td>
<td>Did you know that there are a couple of ways to get screened for #prostatecancer? There is the digital rectal exam (DRE) and prostate specific antigen (PSA) test. Read more about them and talk to your doctor about which test is right for you: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1YSAauE">http://1.usa.gov/1YSAauE</a></td>
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<td>Fri 9/9</td>
<td>Studies suggest that being a healthy weight and quitting smoking can reduce the risk for #cancer <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1U7bHqP">http://1.usa.gov/1U7bHqP</a></td>
<td>Studies suggest that you may be able to reduce your risk for cancer by quitting smoking, eating a healthy diet and exercising: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1U7bHqP">http://1.usa.gov/1U7bHqP</a></td>
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<td>Mon 9/12</td>
<td>Having a father, brother or son who has had #prostatecancer puts you at increased risk. Take charge! Learn more: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1sNat4Y">http://1.usa.gov/1sNat4Y</a></td>
<td>Having a father, brother or son who has had #prostatecancer puts you at increased risk. Take charge of your health! Use this tool to map your family history and learn more about your risk and share it with your doctor. <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1sNat4Y">http://1.usa.gov/1sNat4Y</a></td>
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<td>Tue 9/13</td>
<td>Have you been diagnosed with #prostatecancer or know someone who has? See this free booklet for information: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1sNax4x">http://1.usa.gov/1sNax4x</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Have you been diagnosed with #prostatecancer or know someone who has? See this free booklet for information on the disease and sources of support: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1sNax4x">http://1.usa.gov/1sNax4x</a></td>
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<td>Wed 9/14</td>
<td>Did you know that more men are living with #prostatecancer? The key is finding it early &amp; monitoring its growth <a href="http://bit.ly/1WNP87T">http://bit.ly/1WNP87T</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Did you know that more men with #prostatecancer are living longer, healthier lives? The key is finding it early and monitoring its growth. Watch this 2 min video and talk to your doctor for more information: <a href="http://bit.ly/1WNP87T">http://bit.ly/1WNP87T</a></td>
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<td>Thu 9/15</td>
<td>Different types of treatment are available for #prostatecancer. Decide w/ your doctor about which is right for you: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1NHxhfY">http://1.usa.gov/1NHxhfY</a></td>
<td>Different types of treatment are available for #prostatecancer. You and your doctor will decide which treatment is right for you. Here are some common treatments: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1NHxhfY">http://1.usa.gov/1NHxhfY</a></td>
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<td>Fri 9/16</td>
<td>Black men are most at risk of #prostatecancer. Talk to your doctor for ways to reduce your risk: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/25cav3Z">http://1.usa.gov/25cav3Z</a></td>
<td>Black men are most at risk for getting #prostatecancer, followed by White, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native men. Talk to your doctor about ways to reduce your risk and detect the disease early: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/25cav3Z">http://1.usa.gov/25cav3Z</a></td>
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<td>Mon 9/19</td>
<td>Being told you have #prostatecancer can be scary. Here are some Qs to ask your doctor to get the information you need: <a href="http://bit.ly/1U9wO55">http://bit.ly/1U9wO55</a></td>
<td>Being told you have #prostatecancer can be scary and stressful. Learning about the disease, how it’s treated and how this info may apply to you is a lot to do on your own. Here are some questions you can use to help you understand your options: <a href="http://bit.ly/1U9wO55">http://bit.ly/1U9wO55</a></td>
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<td>Tue 9/20</td>
<td>Learn more about #prostatecancer risk reduction, early detection, symptoms &amp; treatment: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1YSCCRY">http://1.usa.gov/1YSCCRY</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Check out this factsheet for an overview of #prostatecancer, including risk reduction and early detection, symptoms and treatment. Talk to your doctor for more information: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1YSCCRY">http://1.usa.gov/1YSCCRY</a></td>
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<td>Wed 9/21</td>
<td>Some #prostatecancer symptoms: difficulty starting urination &amp; pain during urination. Learn more &amp; talk to your doc: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA">http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA</a></td>
<td>Symptoms of #prostatecancer include difficulty starting urination and pain in the back, hips or pelvis that doesn’t go away. Learn more about what to look out for and talk to your doctor if you or your loved one experience any symptoms: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA">http://1.usa.gov/1Xs8nCA</a></td>
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<td>Fri 9/23</td>
<td>There are treatment choices for early-stage #prostatecancer. Know them well &amp; get the right care for you: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1VfPuSZ">http://1.usa.gov/1VfPuSZ</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>There are treatment choices for early-stage #prostatecancer. Be sure to know them all to make the treatment choice that’s right for you. Learn more and talk to your doctor: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1VfPuSZ">http://1.usa.gov/1VfPuSZ</a></td>
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<td>Mon 9/26</td>
<td>Here is a simple health guide to help you understand normal prostate changes and #prostatecancer signs/symptoms: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1VfPL8C">http://1.usa.gov/1VfPL8C</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Here is a simple health guide to help you understand normal prostate changes and #prostatecancer signs and symptoms, risk factors and screenings. Talk to your doctor for more information: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1VfPL8C">http://1.usa.gov/1VfPL8C</a></td>
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<td>Tue 9/27</td>
<td>In 2010 @US_FDA approved a vaccine to treat some men w/ metastatic #prostatecancer. Talk to your doc for info: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1TrDI8N">http://1.usa.gov/1TrDI8N</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>We are making advances in #prostatecancer treatment. In 2010 the US FDA approved a vaccine to treat some men with metastatic prostate cancer. Talk to your doctor to see if this treatment is right for you: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1TrDI8N">http://1.usa.gov/1TrDI8N</a></td>
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<td>Wed 9/28</td>
<td>#Medicare Part B covers yearly #prostatecancer screenings for men 50+ years old. Talk to your doc for more info: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/27QR7Mf">http://1.usa.gov/27QR7Mf</a></td>
<td>Did you know that Medicare fully or partly covers yearly #prostatecancer screenings for men over 50? Talk to your doc about screening that's right for you: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/27QR7Mf">http://1.usa.gov/27QR7Mf</a></td>
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<td>Thu 9/29</td>
<td>Did you know that more men are living with #prostatecancer? The key is finding it early &amp; monitoring its growth <a href="http://bit.ly/1WNP87T">http://bit.ly/1WNP87T</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>Did you know that more men with #prostatecancer are living longer, healthier lives? The key is finding it early and monitoring its growth. Watch this 2 min video and talk to your doctor for more information: <a href="http://bit.ly/1WNP87T">http://bit.ly/1WNP87T</a></td>
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<td>Fri 9/30</td>
<td>What is being done to fight #prostatecancer? From research to raising awareness, progress is being made: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1WKXjRN">http://1.usa.gov/1WKXjRN</a> #pcsm</td>
<td>What is being done to fight #prostatecancer? From research to awareness raising programs, progress is being made to help older adults live better and longer: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1WKXjRN">http://1.usa.gov/1WKXjRN</a></td>
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OTHER IDEAS TO PROMOTE PROSTATE 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 followers 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 #ProstateCancer survivors ask their doc? #PrCaChat. 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 #PrCaChat.
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**

[American Cancer Society Prostate Cancer Survivorship Care Guideline](#): Covers follow-up clinical care guidelines for prostate cancer survivors

[E-Learning Series for Primary Care Providers](#): A no-cost series to educate primary care providers to better understand care for survivors in the primary care setting; contains prostate cancer-specific module

[National Cancer Survivorship Resource Center](#): Information on treatment and follow-up care for patients and providers.

[Prostate Cancer Survivorship Checklist for Patients](#): Checklist for patients to take to appointments with prostate cancer-specific questions

**General Social Media 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

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.
REFERENCES


