Social Media: Changing Communication and Interventions in Public Health

July 19, 2012

Featured Speakers

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New media

- Various definitions
- Compared to old media
  - TV, radio, books, magazines
- Typically includes:
  - internet
  - computer games
  - CD-ROMs
  - DVD
  - material accessed via internet, smartphones, tablets
  - social media

Social Media

- Definition from Merriam-Webster dictionary
  - forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)
- Interactive
- Much of the content is consumer-generated

Social Media (from Practical Participation)

Web 1.0
(Read Internet)

Web 2.0
(Read/Write Internet)

Social Media
Social Networking

http://www.practicalparticipation.co.uk/yes/what/social_media

eHealth

- Social media can be considered part of eHealth
- “the use of emerging information and communication technology, especially the Internet, to improve or enable health and health care”
  (eHealth landscape, 2001)
- “use of emerging interactive technologies (i.e., Internet, interactive TV, interactive voice response systems, kiosks, internet-enabled cell phones and personal digital assistants [PDAs], CD-ROMs, DVDs) to enable health improvement and health care services”
  (Ahern et al, 2007)

mHealth

- Social media can also be considered part of mHealth depending on how it is accessed
- mHealth is included under eHealth, but is specific to the type of device used
  - any mobile or wireless device (cell phone, tablet, etc)
- Used for health specific purposes (health information, health care services, etc)
Some ways websites can support public health
- Organization websites
- Information websites
- Videos
- News
- Events
- Trainings/webcasts like this one
- Social media sites
- Links to social media sites from other websites

80% of adults use the internet (95% teens)

Those who do not use the internet are typically:
- older (53% age 65 and older use the internet)
- Spanish speaking
- have less than a high school education
- have a household income of less than $30,000 per year
- have disabilities

People do not use internet for many reasons including:
- lack of interest (31%)
- no computer (12%)
- cost (10%)
- too hard (9%)

Social networking sites (i.e., Facebook)
- Micro-blogs (brief text updates, i.e., Twitter)
- Online video and photo sharing (i.e., YouTube, Flickr)
- Blogs (online journals)
- Online communities and forums
- Many others

Why Use Social Media Tools?
- Tools people are familiar with
- Allows people from anywhere to connect with each other and organizations
- Presents a way to get information out quickly and share information with others
- Fairly inexpensive
- Allows people to share their views
- Can provide support to people/help people share health information within their network
Social Media Tools: CDC Toolkit

- Centers for Disease Control
- Describes different tools and provides examples of and tips for using these tools

Social Networking Sites

- Includes sites like Facebook, MySpace, Google+, LinkedIn
- People can make pages public or private and establish friends/connections on the site
- Can connect with organizations and groups

Social Networking Site Use (PEW, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-17</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and up</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Slightly higher and more regular use among women
- Which sites are used vary by demographic

Facebook

- Websites or organizations can create a presence (people can “like” a page and receive updates)
- Groups can be formed where people can connect with others/discussion areas for people to post questions, etc.

NYDOH: Facebook

Twitter

- Messages are limited to 140 characters
- 15% of adults and 16% of teens use it (Pew, 2012)
- Provides brief up to date information to people following organizations, companies, or a person-links to lengthier sources like articles may be given
NYDOH: Twitter

Online Image/Video Sharing

- Pictures and videos posted online
- Can be within:
  - social network sites
  - websites
  - image sharing sites like Flickr and YouTube
- Can show:
  - photos of events
  - videos of trainings and presentations
  - visual demonstrations of how to do something
  - public service announcements
- 14% of adults and 27% of teens have uploaded videos to the internet (Pew, 2012)

Pinterest

- Virtual pinboard
  - like a bulletin board
  - users pin electronic content to boards
  - you can repin from other users
  - you can follow other pinners
- 80% users female and 56% users age 25-44 (Ignite Social Media, 2012)
- A lot of moms and people in the mid-west
- Popular categories include recipes, fitness, crafts, fashion, home design, child related topics
- Public health uses?

Pinterest Example

Other

- Blogs (lengthier posts than other tools)
- Online forums
- Virtual worlds (i.e, Second Life)
- Review sites
- Many others
- New sites/formats always developing
mHealth tools

- Smartphone apps
  - An app is a computer program that runs on a smartphone
  - Can help users do things like find health services, access nutrition information, track running routes, find information about first aid, keep track of medication, enter blood pressure readings, etc.

- Texting
  - Messages with health information
    - text4baby (can sign up to get weekly text messages through pregnancy and 1st year to improve maternal and child health)
    - Health provider appointment reminders
    - Medication reminders

- Others
  - Accessing medical records
  - A lot of new ideas being developed

Why use mHealth tools?

- Don’t need a standard desktop/laptop computer
- Can be easily carried around
- Allows access from many locations
- Allows access to tools for people who only have a cell phone (no land line, no computer)

Mobile Phone Use (Pew, 2012)

- Adults
  - 41% have a standard mobile phone
  - 46% have a smartphone
  - 13% have no mobile phone
  - 55% go online using their mobile phone
  - 73% use text messages (more frequent among younger people)

- Teens 12-17
  - 54% have a standard mobile phone
  - 23% have a smartphone
  - 23% have no mobile phone
  - 49% go online using their mobile phone
  - 63% use text messages

Concluding Thoughts

- Can provide a way to communicate among staff and to population
- Is a good tool to get information out quickly
- Provides information in a format people are familiar with
- BUT....

Concluding Thoughts

- Will only provide information to those who seek it out or specify they want to receive it
- Needs to be regularly monitored for accuracy and appropriateness of information
- Should not be relied on as the only means of communicating public health information
- Important to consider various tools and think about which ones are best for goals of a program (i.e., social media is interactive)
- Knowing the social media outlet that your target audience uses the most is important (and it can change quickly)

Future

- More evaluation research is needed
  - Take a survey of staff and people served by your agency to find out how social media can be used at your location
• If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these ideas further, please contact me at:

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Social Media and the NYC Health Department

John LaDuca, MRP
Director of Digital Communications
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Why Social Media?

• Evaluation of Health Department media channels in late 2008
• Traditional media was shrinking
• In 2007: 13 health reporters; by 2009: 0
• Audience increasingly moving to social and mobile
• Demographics unreachable through traditional media, e.g. teens

Why Social Media?

• Interactivity and conversational tone promotes trust and transparency
• Puts human face on government
• Fast and cheap to implement
• Easily syndicated through RSS feeds
• Greater mobile access

MySpace

• Mental health issues for teens presented through video blogs in 2008
• Anxiety over user-generated posts led to disabling comments

NYC Health Blog

• Created number of posts in 2008-2009
• Difficult to find and develop personalities and authors
• Valuable learning experience, changing communications within large organization
### Current Strategy

- Use of a number of different platforms to disseminate public health information
  - Interact with different demographics that may vary from platform to platform
  - Present information in varied ways
  - Create/reinforce brand awareness and present agency as an authority on public health
  - Expand reach

### Why Reach is so Important

- Sharing, retweeting, reposting inherent to social media – the “village green”
- Spread messaging further than could previously
- Good fit for public health educational campaigns
  - Doesn’t always lead to conversions

### Twitter

- Broadcast technology – accommodates a variety of topics
- Keeps messages quick and digestible
- Functions as a great tool for website and info referrals
- Encouragement of sharing - info is likely to be seen by more people than other platforms

### @nychealthy

- Tone is casual
- Interaction with audience is friendly and helpful
- Information meant to be helpful/informative to the everyday New Yorker

### @drfarleydohmh

- Official handle of Health Commissioner
- Casual but slightly more authoritative
- Provides guidance and info
- Informative and reflective of current policy initiatives

### Facebook

- Current strategy revolves around having pages devoted to specific topics
  - Leads to more meaningful conversations with users around that topic
  - Keeps users “on-topic”
  - Lower threshold for taking down off-topic or inappropriate posts per NYC Social Customer Use Policy
NYC Condom

- NYCcondom inform NY'ers about the availability of NYC Condoms throughout the city
- Answer questions and concerns about the NYC Condom while promoting safe sex

NYC Quits

- NYC Quits – I Quit Because originally created as a page to promote agency anti-smoking efforts and information
- Transformed by users into a support site for quitters in their struggle to quit smoking

Social Marketing

- Annual anti-smoking campaign in March 2012, collaborated with digital influencers to create awareness and promote program
- Resulted in numerous shares on Facebook and significant reach on Twitter

Eating Healthy NYC

- Most popular DOHMH Facebook page
- Encourages a healthy lifestyle through eating healthy and daily physical activity
- Gained large number of fans through ads
- High engagement and passionate users

YouTube

- The NYC Health YouTube channel hosts all commercial and viral videos produced by the health department
- Offers a great, user free way to display video content
- Content can easily be categorized by topic

Pouring on the Pounds

- Developed viral videos around sugar sweetened beverages
- Gained popularity and were eventually picked up by the CDC for national television spots
- Due to availability of spots on YouTube, earned high number of shares and coverage via news articles, blogs, Facebook and Twitter
FourSquare

- Platform to share information that is tied to physical locations
- Tips and venues
  - TB and STD clinics
  - Opportunities for no-cost physical activity
  - Free HIV testing sites on NHTD
- Fun and interactive way for users to be aware of health while moving through city

Tumblr

- An easy-to-use blogging platform
- Users can easily learn and contribute
- Useful space to share dynamic content and feed to Twitter
- Useful for internal or partner sharing

The Importance of Metrics

- Direct social media page metrics – Facebook insights, Twitalyzer
- Key terms and topics related to organization
- Track influence and reach a particular campaign had on the targeted audiences

Moving with Your Audience: Mobile Access

- Users are increasingly moving to mobile
- Mobile apps
- Text-based marketing

Next Steps?

- New platforms always emerging
  - e.g. Pinterest
- Better integration of social media into traditional web content
  - Feeds
  - Share/Tweet buttons
- Questions: jladuca@health.nyc.gov

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