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Social Media: a force for inclusion

A. Brown, K. MacLure, B. Addison, S. Pederson, D. Stewart, J. Andrews
Robert Gordon University @RGUPharmacy Contact: ✉ alyson.brown@rgu.ac.uk @alyjbrown

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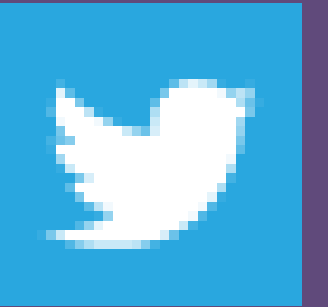
Introduction

- Traditional pharmacy networks have migrated to online social networks
- Social Media (SoMe) is merging personal and professional personas
- Need for guidance on SoMe professional use
- Limited research on SoMe as a support for professional practice

The aim of the study was to explore how and why pharmacists interact through hosted networks on SoMe

Method

Two one hour hosted Twitter chats held in December 2015 via the #WePh network

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Topic guide around 'exploring the use of Twitter and WePharmacists'

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Themes inducted from analysis of chats using the topic guide as a framework

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Ethical approval granted by RGU School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences

Results

Each chat had over 2 million impressions with participants representing international pharmacy practice

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E-professionalism and online privacy emerged as themes of concerns.

Personal experiences and impact of 'trolling' (angry offensive behaviour) were also discussed

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Pharmacists and students from across all sectors and all levels of experience reported benefits of using SoMe

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Benefits included using SoMe for education, networking, support and career development

Conclusions

- This study evidenced support for the responsible use of SoMe as a force for inclusion
- SoMe has the ability to break down geographical barriers in pharmacy practice
- Issues of e-professionalism and responsible online behaviour increasingly impact Fitness to Practise

Further research is underway including a systematic review of professional body and regulatory organisation guidance on the use of SoMe by registered healthcare professionals