The Effectiveness of Facebook in Highlighting Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Advice to service users within Ayrshire.

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Description

- Increased musculoskeletal waiting times and need to reduce face-to-face appointments.
- Facebook™ most common social media platform (2.07 Billion users with 76% visiting the site daily).
- Yearly, 80% of internet users have accessed health information.
- Musculoskeletal patient information traditionally accessed in clinics.

Methodology

- An NHS Ayrshire and Arran Facebook™ page was created in March 2017.
- A snowballing recruitment strategy was used to generate page ‘likes’.
- Facebook™ data was analysed from April to December 2017 to understand user activity.

Aims

- Ascertain the public’s appetite for musculoskeletal advice via Facebook™.
- Improve information accessibility to service users within their home environment.
- Continually evolve to meet increased demands of the service.

Outcomes

Lifetime Total ‘Likes’

- Lifetime Total ‘Likes’ is the number of people who followed the page.
- Total number of page ‘likes’ started at 337 and reached 551.
- Gains varied from 2.5% to 13.8%.
- No unfollowers noted.

Monthly Page ‘Engaged’ Users

- ‘Engaged’ is the number of people actively interacting with the page’s content.
- Average monthly engagement varied between 352 – 2353 people.
- Engagements averaged at 842 over the period.
- Engagement impacts your audience growth. Reduced engagement results in Facebook™ lowering the importance of the page on users’ newsfeeds.

Monthly Total ‘Reach’

- Is the number of people viewing any content associated with the page on their Newsfeeds from user ‘shares’ or original page posts.
- The average total ‘reach’ varied from 4681 to 21,406. The average ‘reach’ was 9348.
- Higher ‘reach’ could influence health behaviours and musculoskeletal understanding locally and nationwide.

Conclusions

- There is evidence of user appetite for musculoskeletal information via Facebook™ and has improved accessibility to advice and health promotion.
- Current data unable to highlight waiting time impact.
- Social media is a step toward realising realistic medicine and health.
- Further research is required to assess the benefit of NHS Ayrshire and Arrans new musculoskeletal website being linked to the Facebook™ account.

References

Smalhodzic, E., Hooijsma, W., Boonstra, A., Langley, D.J. Social Media Use in Healthcare: A Systematic Review of Effects on Patients and on their Relationship with Healthcare Professionals. BMC Health Services Research, 2016 16:442