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Doctor Avatar life lessons for health professionals: a workshop exploring failure to appraise social media outcomes

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Introduction: Among Healthcare Professionals Social Media use has become increasingly ubiquitous. While many documents are available on how to stay safe, when it comes to Social Media, it can be argued that we still lack both educational resources and a scientific evidence base; educationally, we have not yet developed the resources to teach effective use of Social Media, and research has not yet answered the question as to whether Social Media is a positive or negative phenomena. This has manifested within WONCA as a push for a Social Media Interest Group.

Objectives: We have three objectives; firstly, to encourage participants to reflect on how and why they use Social Media, secondly, to prompt consideration of whether or not their Social Media usage is effective, and thirdly, to draft recommendations for Healthcare Professionals that promote effective use of Social Media.

Methods: A brief introduction will present three concepts; firstly, the general dangers that exist with Social Media usage, secondly, the specific hazards for Healthcare Professionals, and thirdly, the concept of outcome measures in assessing effective Social Media use. After dividing into groups, Facilitators will assist participants in discussing Social Media under deliberately provocative headings, e.g. “Facebook Is Evil” or “Twitter Is A Waste of Time”.

Results: After group work, findings and conclusions will be presented. Following the workshop, a summary will be written up for publication.

Conclusions: Through consideration of effective use of Social Media, we intend that participants will leave the workshop better equipped to appraise their overall Social Media engagement. This will include a clearer insight into the boundary between personal and professional use. We also hope that the workshop outcomes will provide a platform for development of recommendations, educational tools, and research within WONCA which promote the effective use of Social Media among Healthcare Professionals.