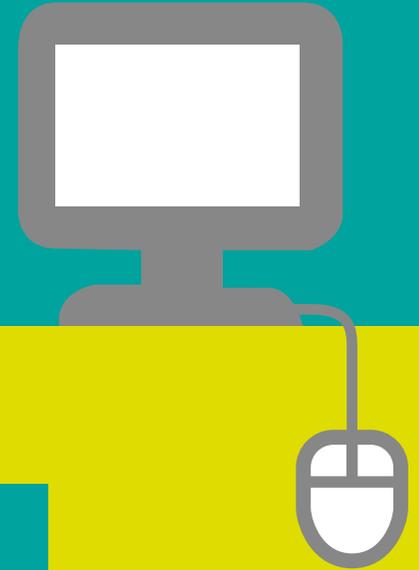




Redmoor
Health



Guide to using facebook in Primary Care



10 simple tips to improve your engagement through **Facebook**



Facebook is a truly incredible phenomenon.

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It has more than 1 billion users worldwide. It has launched products and created trends. It is also an incredible tool for engaging with people on health issues – but it requires planning.

Put simply, it requires much more than setting up a page.

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As with any other form of marketing or engagement it requires a strategy otherwise you will not achieve your goals. Don't make the mistake of thinking you will get your share of those billion Facebook users if you haven't thought it through.

To help, we have put together some simple advice to help you get the most from Facebook:

1

Know your goals

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Don't make the mistake of creating a Facebook page just because everyone else is. Make sure you have clear goals at the start and stick to them. Depending on what you are trying to achieve, your goals may differ. Are you trying to engage directly with patients about practice issues or do you simply want to send out useful health information? Are you trying to direct people towards a website? Whichever it is, you need to outline this before you create your page.

2

Do some research

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Have a look at really engaging Facebook pages from practices such as Goldenhill Medical Centre, Haymarket Health Centre, Belgrave Practice and Furlong Medical Centre. Look what works well. How often do they respond? How do they respond? This will help you picture in your mind what you want from your site.



3

Know your audience

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There is a common misconception that Facebook has a predominantly young audience. This isn't the case. On most GP Facebook sites the more engaged audiences are in the 25-64 year age range. Facebook's fastest growing demographic is women over 55.

Use the Facebook insights tool to find out when your patients are accessing Facebook and then schedule your posts using the clock symbol in the bottom corner so that they appear in the evening when patients are online rather than during the day.

4

Sort your admins

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You will not be able to create your Facebook presence as a person but instead a page contained within an existing Facebook account. You can use Facebook as your page no problem but you will need to log in first to an account. You can create a new account with a name such as 'staff furlong' and then produce a page off this account. This prevents the need for you to login to your personal Facebook account to access the page. You should have at least two people managing your account and they should be trained.

5

Bag your URL

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There is nothing worse than to create a name for your practice only to find all the social media URLs have been taken. Before you launch your social media presence on Facebook, you need to make sure that your URL is available — and that it's simple and easy to remember. When you set up your page you will be given the option to change the name from the generic one you would have been given. You should do this but you are limited on how many times you can change the name so make sure it is correct. This will then allow you to use a Facebook URL that best fits your practice eg www.facebook.com/furlongmedicalcentre

6

Encourage people to share

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The real power of Facebook is its ability to share information so effectively that one post can reach out to several thousand people. There's a Facebook phenomenon called the "power of 130." The average Facebook member has 130 friends and the fastest way to spread a message is through social sharing. Facebook automatically offers members the opportunity to share a Like, but the real creativity comes when you can convince people to share some kind of unique content.

This could simply be a great photograph that people will want to share; a topical question to spark a debate or some helpful information.



7

Keep it simple

Put yourself into the mind of one of your patients. What would they most likely want to share with their friends? Photos and links to useful video clips from the NHS Choices website are always good. Steer away from posting lots of text as people will not want to share that. If the majority of your likes are mums under 35 then perhaps child health related posts might get shared a lot. Keep it simple.

8

Invest in your appearance

As with any branding your page needs attention. Anyone who lands onto your page will get their first impression of you straight away. Make sure you explain clearly who you are and why you are using Facebook. Use a nice photo as your cover.

9

Promote everywhere

Now that you have set up your page don't ruin that work by sitting waiting for people to arrive. Share it across all your social networks and e-mails. Use every channel you have.

10

Evaluate your site

Facebook insights will give you a pretty good idea of what's sparking conversations on your page. Take the 10-minute tour and learn what they mean. You will need to have achieved over 30 'likes' before you can actually use the insights tool but once you are there make sure you regularly look at it. This valuable resource tells you how engaging your page is.



And finally.....

If people visit the page but don't comment, it isn't compelling enough. A great campaign gets people to connect, comment and share it with their friends. Getting people to Like you is just the beginning. A really effective Facebook presence is an ongoing conversation with lots of questions.

Social Media Etiquette

for Practice Staff



06

DO



Always consider your practice's reputation in anything you say online



Make sure you schedule your posts for times when your patients are most likely going to see them. Otherwise your hard work is wasted.



Explore different ways of using sites such as Facebook. This might be pages, closed groups etc



Feel comfortable in using social media to find out answers to problems and challenges but beware of how much information you reveal – use generic circumstances.



Ensure you build your social media use into your day to day practice business. Don't look at it in isolation but as part of your customer service.

Practice Staff use of social media some do's and don'ts



Adapt the tone you use to the social media channel you are using.



Ensure you are fully aware of information governance restrictions and advice in this area. Don't ever publish confidential material on social media channels.



Do ensure you have thought about the objectives you want to achieve before deciding the channels to use.



Market the fact you are there. People rarely stumble upon Facebook or Twitter feeds – tell your patients you are using them.



Know when to get involved and when to back away. Some people simply cannot be reasoned with. Take the discussion offline.

Social Media Etiquette

for Practice Staff



06

DO NOT 

-  Upload confidential information of any kind to any social network. Even if it's private.
-  Get into public arguments or political discussions.
-  Make any claims about things unless you are sure they are true. Libel laws apply on social media as any other channel so be careful about what you say.
-  Take things personally.
-  Call into question the validity or experience of other people either in public or in private.
-  Think that deleting something makes it go away. Google 'remembers' old content for a period of time.

Practice Staff use
of social media some do's
and don'ts

-  Set up a social media presence without giving evaluation, safety, safe guarding or practice reputation good consideration.
-  Bury your head in the sand if you're struggling to keep up. Ask for help.
-  Allow your comments to be taken out of context.
-  Give an official opinion on behalf of your practice unless you have been authorised to do so.
-  Mix your personal social media accounts with practice ones. Keep them entirely separate.
-  Post health information from dubious websites. Stick to using NHS sites.

Developed and produced by



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