Social Media Toolkit

A Primer for Local Health Department PIOs and Communications Professionals

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

NACCHO
National Association of County & City Health Officials

Social Media Toolkit for Local Health Departments

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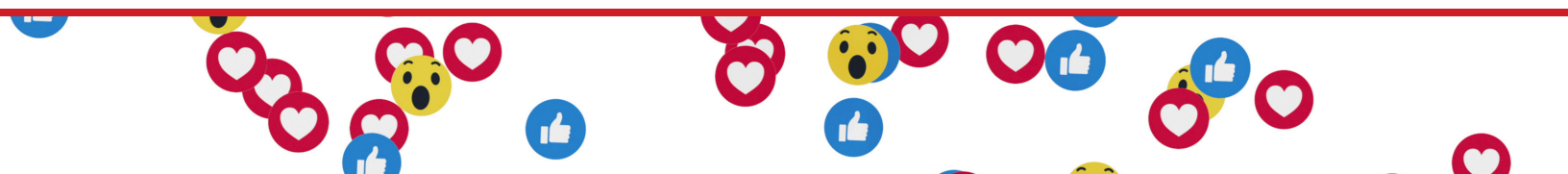
I. Social media platforms and what makes them unique

Local health departments should use social media to provide stakeholders with access to credible, science-based health information when, where, and how they want it. A variety of social media tools can be used to reinforce and personalize messages, reach new audiences, and build a communication infrastructure based on open information exchange. It's important to research your audience to help identify the right platforms to reach your target audience, and knowing your particular community's social media habits and trends are important. For example, does your community predominately use Facebook over Twitter? Focus your efforts wisely on what will have the biggest impact, rather than trying to have a social account on every platform that may not be working well.

Facebook
This is easily the largest social networking site in the world and one of the most widely used. Users create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages, including status updates. Brands, organizations, and companies create pages and Facebook users can "like" these pages.

Twitter
A social networking/micro-blogging platform that allows groups and individuals to stay connected through the exchange of short status messages. Twitter has expanded from a 140 to a 280-character limit, but the most common length of a tweet is 33 characters.

LinkedIn
LinkedIn focuses on professional contacts and also allows users to collaborate and share articles and ideas through its group message boards. Local health departments can use this platform for human resources functions such as recruiting employees. LinkedIn Groups is a place where groups of professionals with similar areas of interest can share information and participate in a conversations.

Instagram
Instagram is a mobile photo- and video-sharing service where users take images or videos, apply digital filters and have the ability to share them on the application itself and on a wide variety of social networking services.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a visual discovery tool where users created online "bulletin boards" of images, ideas and videos. All Pinterest content is "pinned" to boards from outside sources.

Snapchat

A mobile app that lets users send photos and videos to friends or to their "story." Snaps disappear after viewing or after 24 hours.

Flickr

An image and video hosting website and online community. Photos can be shared on Facebook and Twitter and other social networking sites.

YouTube & Vimeo

Video hosting and viewing websites.

Here is a handy chart to differentiate the various social media platforms – explained with smoothies!

Platform	What to Say
Instagram	Here is a photo of my smoothie
Facebook	I like smoothies
LinkedIn	My skills include smoothie-making
Twitter	I'm drinking a smoothie
Foursquare	This is where I like to drink smoothies
YouTube	Here is a video of me drinking smoothies
Pinterest	Here is a good smoothie recipe
Quora	When were smoothies invented?
Spotify	Currently listening to songs about smoothies
Tumblr	I like to blog about smoothies
Yelp!	You'll like the smoothies at this place
Snapchat	I can add filters to my short videos about smoothies
Reddit	Ask me anything about smoothies

Sources:
- Why Social Media? (n.d.). Retrieved February 15, 2017, from https://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/index.html
- https://www.digitalgov.gov/resources/improving-the-accessibility-of-social-media-in-government/
- http://communications.tufts.edu/marketing-and-branding/social-media-overview/
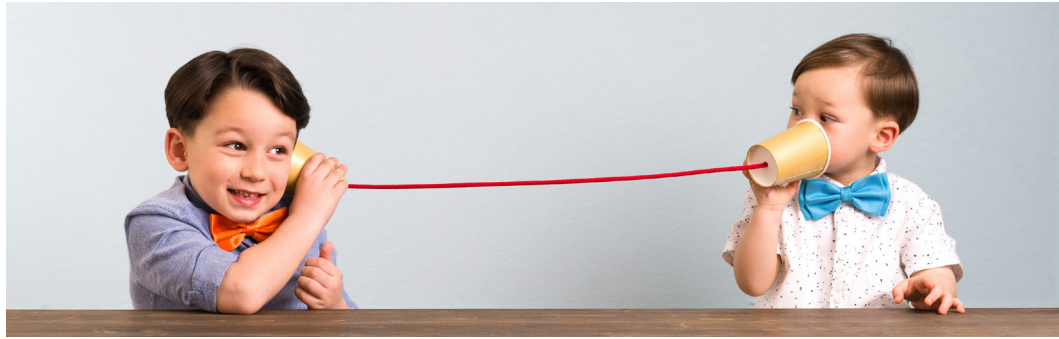
II. Establishing a Social Media Presence

Building in-house capacity for using social media

Staff

Designated, well-trained LHD employee(s) should work with social media on a day-to-day basis, both to build an audience that will share messages, and to prepare for using social media during an emergency.

Determine who in your organization will be responsible for implementation of social media, and determine the number of hours they can allocate for content creation and maintenance.

If there is no budget for a full-time communications professional to implement your social media strategy, you can:

1. Identify a current member who has the time (and passion) for social media. Or, recruit several staff members who could share the responsibility.

2. Contract someone who is experienced in the area

3. Contract a digital marketing agency to handle social media for you.

Social media should not be delegated to interns without clear guidance and oversight from a communications professional.

Communication plan integration

A social media strategy should be integrated into LHDs' existing communication plans. Integrating social media into health communication campaigns and activities allows health communicators to leverage social dynamics and networks to encourage participation, conversation and community – all of which can help spread key messages and influence health decision making.

Social media also helps to reach people when, where and how they want to receive health messages; it improves the availability of content and may influence satisfaction and trust in the health messages delivered. Likewise, tapping into personal networks and presenting information in multiple formats, spaces, and sources helps to make messages more credible and effective.

Policies

Clear social media policies for staff are essential to ensure that employees understand what is expected of them when administering social media. This should include which type of content can be shared and when, who can access social media, who should respond to public inquiries and comments on social media, a timeline for response, and an appropriate process for content to be approved before it is posted.

Resources

Social media is a 24/7 medium. LHDs will need to consider how to maintain a 24/7 presence on social media, as replies, comments and questions can pop up at any time. Adopting a 24/7 public information model can be challenging and may require additional resources. If such a model isn't feasible, your social media channels should include information about when posts will be monitored and responded to (i.e., Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). LHDs should ensure designated staff can access social media remotely such as using a mobile phone. During an emergency, LHDs can provide the public with situational awareness, dispel rumors, and establish themselves as the media's first point of contact by frequently posting timely, reliable, and transparent information to social media.

Once engaged in social media, you need to make sure there is capacity to continue this activity. Unacceptably long response times or a temporary – or even complete – withdrawal from social media could have a more negative impact than not having started in the first place. If people need to contact you repeatedly for information and receive a late or no answer, they are unlikely to have confidence or trust in you in the future. If maintaining activity is a concern, consider starting with only one or two platforms and don't initial others accounts until it's clear you will be able to maintain them.

IT Support

LHDs should consider the role of information technology (IT) staff when establishing a social media presence, and work with IT staff initially to set up permissions needed on network computers. IT support may be needed for technology including setting up a mobile phone or tablet specifically designated for social media monitoring.

Training

It is important to ensure that staff members are fully trained before granting them access to the agency's social media accounts. They also need to be aware of information sharing policies so they know what can be shared and published. Training requirements may depend on the skillset of the designated staff member. Social media technologies are constantly evolving, and it is important to remain up-to-date on the latest platforms and updates that are made. There are a wide variety of training resources, including many webinars available at no cost.

Content /Editorial Calendar

LHDs should develop monthly or seasonal editorial calendars, to plan for the type of content to be shared on social media. Facebook allows page administrators to schedule posts, which is beneficial for staff with limited time to create content. Setting aside one hour a week will allow the staff member to schedule all content for the following week. It remains critical to monitor and respond to social media. Third-party platforms for Twitter, such as HootSuite, provide the same scheduling features.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health in partnership with Drexel University School of Public Health have created an extensive online Social Media Message Library that provides message templates for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram and is geared toward emergency use. Message templates cover natural disasters, infectious diseases, accidental disasters, and intentional disasters. Messages have been reviewed by subject matter experts in both hazard content areas and public health risk communication. Messages are designed to help public information officers and other spokespersons create and deliver timely, accurate, and consistent information that will likely be needed during a public health emergency. Instructions are provided as to how to use the library.

Developing a Social Media Policy for a Local Health Department

Social media is an opportunity to engage with the agency's customers and stakeholders and build the agency brand. A decision to use social media must be based on a strategic communications plan and consider the commitment of resources necessary to manage and maintain this type of engagement. When creating a social media policy, it is recommended that to include employees in the process. Employees can provide great insight into how to engage with audiences and can also become

internal advocates for the policy. Once the social media policy has been finalized, it is important to communicate it to every member of the agency. Review and acknowledgment of the social media policy may even be made a requirement for each employee when he or she is hired.

Personal Use of Social Media

Local health departments are encouraged to develop a social media policy as a standard for appropriate use of social media. Employees are responsible for reviewing and complying with the policy while at work and after-hours. Employees are expected to demonstrate a high standard of conduct, integrity, and responsibility at all times.

When crafting the policy, the following should be included:

Applicability: Who does the policy apply to?

Definitions: Social media is constantly changing. Definitions of types of social media should be included such as networking sites, blogs, microblogs, photo, and video sharing sites.

Use of Social Media: Personal use of social media during work hours should be consistent with the terms of the department's other Human Resources policies and regulations. In most cases, social media during work hours and/or anytime while using official equipment is prohibited for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions or to engage in private business activities.

Employees should be advised not to represent themselves as an agency employee when posting content to social media sites. The exception is if the employee is posting in an official capacity as an administrator of an authorized account or with prior approval.

Discipline: The policy should identify what, if any, disciplinary actions could be taken if an employee violates the Social Media Policy.

Privacy: Employees should be trained on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and be made aware of how HIPAA relates to social media. Some common social media HIPAA violations include posting of images and videos of patients without written consent, posting gossip about patients, posting any information that could allow an individual to be identified, etc.

Agency Use of Social Media

A social media policy should provide guidelines for creating and managing official social media profiles, channels or applications for the agency. There are two approaches to creating a social media policy for this purpose: You can create one complete social media policy that addresses all currently available social mediums, OR you can write separate policies for each platform as you need them. (For example, if your agency doesn't have a social media presence on YouTube, you may not need to address YouTube and online video usage).

When crafting the policy, the following should be included:

Purpose: State the purpose of the policy and whether it applies to multi-media, social networking websites, blogs, and wikis, etc.

Roles and Responsibilities: Designate who in the agency has authority to manage social media accounts and who has the authority to post content. Determine if someone will be responsible for monitoring or moderating messages and comments.

Approval Process: Describe the process by which new social media accounts, profiles or applications are created and official posts approved within the agency.

Posting Guidelines: Provide guidance on how social media accounts should be used to promote the agency's brand, vision, mission, and values. Determine the agency's "voice" or "tone" on social media and any topics that will be off-limits when posting or engaging with the public on behalf of the agency.

Branding: Identity what elements, including official names and logos, may be required to be consistent and complementary to the agency's brand.

Security/ Privacy Concerns: State whether policies regarding patient privacy and confidentiality and information security will also apply on social media and what employees need to know to mitigate potential risks.

Accessibility: Address any requirements necessary to be in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Linking, Liking, Following and Endorsing

Linking to or liking non-government or other third-party sites may imply or convey an endorsement to the audience. Provide guidance on liking, following, reposting or retweeting content from another entity.

Comment Policy:

Determine if the public will have the ability to post or comment to the site or page, and if so, how the agency will handle negative or inappropriate comments. Also, consider if the agency will actively engage with comments or take a more passive approach and consistently implement.

Use of Images/Copyright:

State how employees are to adhere to copyright, intellectual property rights, and other applicable laws. Describe the process for the removal of material that infringes on the copyright or intellectual property rights. When taking photos of clients, ask the client to sign a waiver allowing you to use the photo with their image.

HIPPA Considerations:

HIPAA relates to social media and its use. Identify common HIPAA violations that may be of concern to the agency.

Archiving:

Content posted on a social media site may constitute a record that must be temporarily or permanently retained. Describe the system or process in place to ensure that content is captured and archived appropriately.

Social Media in Emergencies in Emergencies:

Consider how any of these elements may be affected or need to be modified during an emergency.

See examples of social media policies in the Appendix
- Cambridge Public Health Department, Cambridge, MA
- Ottawa County Department of Health, Ottawa County, MI
- Shelby County Public Health Department, Memphis, TN

III. Expanding Social Media Audiences

There are a number of ways in which you can expand your social media audience. Here are a few tips:

1.   Post signs in your office and lobby areas with your social media handles to drive the public to your social media accounts. Include social media handles on every printed piece. During presentations, announce your social media handles verbally or include them on a PowerPoint slide.

2.   Include links to your social media accounts in your email signature.

3.   Identify employees who have a strong social media following and ask them to share and retweet your posts. Send out an email to staff asking them to share your post about a hot topic or newsworthy event. Hold a contest to see who retweets and shares your posts the most. The winner gets a small prize and bragging rights!

4.   Tag partner agencies in your posts to attract new followers and push your message out to a larger audience. Repost partner agency posts.

5.   Tag staff when appropriate and with their knowledge (i.e. when they are quoted or pictured).

6.   Repost news promulgated by the CDC and the Surgeon General. Add links directing viewers to your website and/or program pages. Consider adding CDC content syndicated information to your website, so that it is up to date with the latest information on newsworthy subjects, e.g., Zika virus or Seasonal Flu.

7.   Post a link to all of your news releases. Residents want to know if you are treating their neighborhood for mosquitoes or if their local beach is closed due to elevated levels of bacteria. This type of news draws followers. Follow this type of news with a health promotion message, e.g., "Replace your sweetened beverage with water for good health."

8.   Embed social media widgets into your website.

9.   Make sure profile and cover images are the right size, your logo is featured prominently, and that you have a reputation for responding promptly to questions, comments and messages.

10.   Host a chat on Twitter or Facebook. Promote the event in advance and use a strong hashtag. Verify that the hashtag is not already being used by doing a search in Twitter and Facebook.

11.   Give something away. Prizes should align with the program or service you're promoting.

12. If you have marketing dollars, allocate a portion to advertise on social media. Your posts will stand out amongst the clutter.

13. Engage influential people popular with your target audience. Whether its mommy bloggers, YouTube stars, actors or politicians, these individuals can amplify the reach of an agency's message.

14. Use visuals and pictures. Create high-quality custom visuals with resources like Canva.com.

15. When people like or interact with your content, invite them to like your page (Facebook) or follow them, if appropriate.

16. Consider using video. Post links to local media interviews with your health specialists. For health promotion, use CDC videos that are available for partners to share on social media.

17. Consider live streaming information from your smartphone.

Increasing Accessibility and Visibility of Social Media Platforms

Follow all local media and federal, state and local public health agencies. This allows them to know that your agency exists on social media. Consider following nonprofits your agency works with and other thought leaders on public health. Also consider following local Hispanic media or media that broadcasts in the foreign language most used in your jurisdiction. Follow social media for other organizations that represent vulnerable and at-risk populations in your local area. Follow the social media accounts of your state health department and all local and regional health departments. Retweet and share their public health messages. Tag them in posts when you work together on a project.
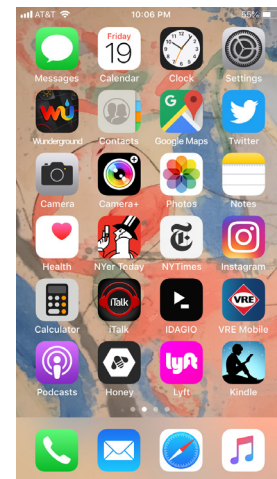
Post at least 2-3 times per week to keep your agency visible in news feeds. To stay visible on Twitter, you will need to post much more frequently--at least daily. Twitter is the primary social media source that people go to for government information per the Pew Research Center. Photos and videos get the most engagement.

Social media are widely used by non-English speaking audiences. Sometimes different language groups in the U. S. use social media platforms from their countries of origin, such as Sina Weibo (also known as Weibo), a Twitter-like platform used in China. Many are using the same platforms that are widely used by English speaking audiences, such as Facebook and Instagram.

Options for reaching other language groups on social media:

Set up mirror accounts

If you have staff who can monitor and post in other languages, you could consider setting up mirror accounts to your English language accounts that would have translated versions of the English-language content and/or content that was specifically created in those languages for the target language group. This helps build a regular audience in that language group.

Example: Departamento de Salud Pública del Condado de Los Ángeles is the Spanish language Facebook site for the Los Angeles County Public Health Department.

Post occasionally in other languages and boost to the target audience

If you occasionally have translated content to post, you could post it to your English language social media accounts. Follow CDC en Español and repost their information (use the translate tool to be sure of what you are reposting). Be aware, however, that the number of people in the target language group that sees your content may be very low since they are unlikely to subscribe to English language accounts.

One way around this on Facebook is to use paid boosts or ads. When you create the audience for a Facebook ad, it will allow to select from some language groups (e.g., Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Punjabi, etc.). Using either paid boosts or ads, you can also segment the audience by interests. Try entering interests that may include members of the target language group, such as "Amharic language" or "Univision."

Check with your webmaster to make sure your website follows U.S. ADA guidelines and is accessible to people of many languages and abilities.

Messaging to diverse populations

Guidance for Integrating Culturally Diverse Communities into Planning for and Responding to Emergencies: A Toolkit. http://www.aha.org/content/11/OMHDiversityPreparednesToolkit.pdf

Advertising on Social Media

There are a number of reasons to advertise on social media. You may want to promote your brand with the objective of increasing website visits, or post engagements, or gaining followers, or awareness of your brand. You may also want to drive conversions. A conversion is "The point at which a recipient of a marketing message performs a desired action." For instance, you may want a specific demographic to open a survey online and complete your questionnaire so that you have better data for program planning. Or, perhaps you want people to go to your website and sign up for local public health alerts so that it's easier to automatically inform the public if there's a public health emergency. These are both examples of conversions.
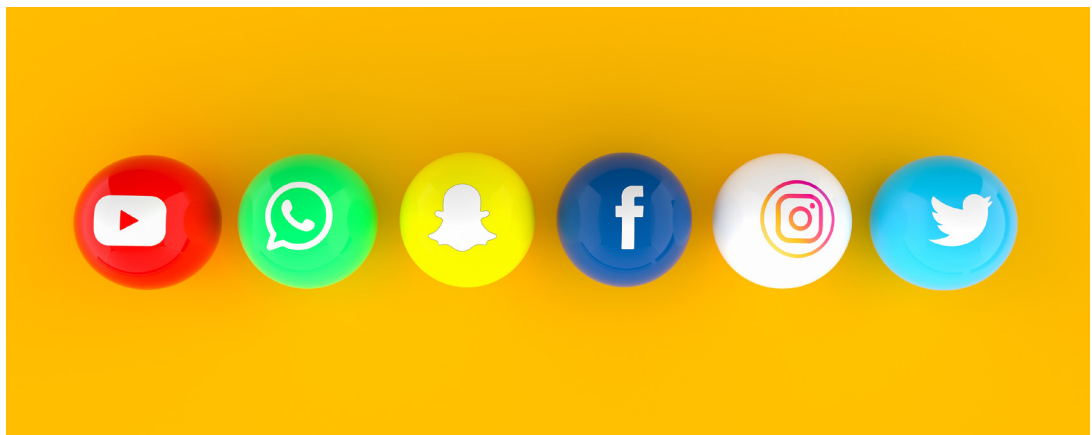
Social media can reduce your overall marketing costs. Social media advertising costs are inexpensive when compared to traditional advertising on radio, TV and print. This is especially true when social media channels provide a means for you to choose your target audience. Facebook allows you to hyper-target your audience so your post shows up in the news feeds of those most likely to be interested in your program or service. You can narrow your audience by demographic, zip code, age, gender, and personal interests.

Most social media sites welcome your advertising and provide help centers for advertising. The table below lists the majority of the top social media platforms, provides a link to an advertising help menu for the platform, lists audience size, and provides a basic demographic profile. It's important to know who uses each social media platform and what the general demographic profile is for each before you purchase advertising. The Pew Research Center offers a snapshot of current social media audiences:

Platform		Advertising Links
	Facebook	Facebook business
	YouTube	YouTube Advertising
	What's App	WhatsApp No-Ad Policy
	Google AdWords	Google AdWords
	LinkedIn Marketing Solutions	LinkedIn Marketing Solutions
	Instagram Business	Instagram Business
	Twitter Ads	Twitter Ads
	Reddit Advertising	Reddit Advertising
	Tumblr Business	Tumblr Business
	Flikr Photo Advertising	Flikr photo advertising
	Snapchat Ads	Snapchat Ads
	Promoted Pins	Promoted pins
	Advertising & Advertisements	Advertising & Advertisements

Live Streaming on Social Media

What is Live Streaming?

Livestreaming is the term used to describe the process of broadcasting live video via different web-based applications to an online audience. You do not need any special equipment beyond a smartphone and/or computer. These videos can be viewed on any internet-connected device including desktop/laptop computers, tablets, and smartphones. Live streaming has exploded in popularity and there is no shortage of platforms offering both free and paid for service. Many public health agencies are now using live streaming tools to broadcast a variety of events such as press conferences, educational public seminars, and other live events.

Live Streaming Platforms

Several popular platforms offer free live streaming services, including:

- Facebook Live: Facebook Live is available to all Facebook pages and profiles on iOS, Android, and the Facebook Creator app. Additionally, live broadcasts can be streamed in Facebook groups and events. Not only does Facebook Live give organizations access to an immense audience—roughly eight-in-ten online Americans (68%) now use Facebook—it also lets you broadcast from a laptop or desktop computer and offers a range of other features, such as notifications, filters, masks, and live reactions. Follow these instructions to start a live video. You can practice with a personal account before attempting to live stream from an official public health account. **Note:** Facebook considers Live video a distinct content type from other video shared on the platform. This distinction is important for brands because it means that the Facebook algorithm treats native video and Live video differently, with Live videos being more likely to appear higher in News Feed while they are live.

- YouTube: YouTube has been offering live-streaming since 2011. In 2016, the site added 360-degree streaming and the ability to stream directly from its mobile app.

- Twitter: Twitter's "Go Live" feature lets you live stream directly from the Twitter app. Twitter's Periscope app is the underlying technology and interface but doesn't require Periscope be installed to stream live on Twitter. If you do have Periscope installed, your followers will be notified when you go live on Twitter.

- Instagram: While Instagram offers a live feature, it is not archived and disappears after the broadcast unless you share it to your standard feed.

Why Livestream at a Local Health Department?

- Live streaming allows real-time information to immediately reach your existing audiences, and through shares and paid promotion (optional), can further extend its reach. Live streamed videos can be archived, reposted, rebroadcast or put on web pages so that those who didn't view it live have opportunities to see it later.

- As a video format, it can put a human face on your department and build a connection with your community. Live streaming also creates opportunities for the public to ask questions live, so can serve as a form of public engagement and feedback.

- It also allows your department to become a broadcast news source, with the health department determining the spokespeople and the message. In fact, some reporters will watch live streamed news conferences and some media outlets will even rebroadcast them.

Suggestions for What to Broadcast for Public Health Departments

- Breaking news or trending topics: Did you just get a severe weather warning? Broadcast live to share and demonstrate tips for how to stay safe. Is it the beginning of flu season? Broadcast a visit with a pediatrician, OB-GYN, or nurse to talk about the importance of getting flu vaccinations.

- Major announcements, media briefings, and campaign launches: Even if you have media attending a briefing, by broadcasting the entire briefing, you'll be able to share everything your experts have to say (in contrast to the edited version that will appear in media). You can also become your own broadcast news station for announcing initiatives that might not otherwise get traction from news media.

- High profile meetings, conferences, and other events: If there's a hot topic at a conference or your department is hosting an important community meeting, you could live stream short, engaging presentations. Live streaming may not be the right medium for longer presentations since social media users generally won't sit through long videos. You could also interview attendees or conference organizers from the floor of the conference.

- Interviews and Q&As: This is a great way to help your community connect with the experts and leaders in your health department. Consider interviews to help residents understand emerging outbreaks and also everyday health issues, such as why we're concerned about e-cigarettes, how does where you live affect your health, or who should get the HPV vaccine.

- Behind the scenes and in the field: Using live streaming video, take your audience to see the work that your department does. What happens during a restaurant inspection? How long are the lines at the vaccine clinic? How is your health department working with schools on improving school lunches or safe routes to school? How do you install a car seat properly?

General Best Practices for Live Streaming

- **Plan your broadcast.** Consider how relevant, timely or actionable the potential livestream will be for your audience. Does it make sense as a livestream as opposed to other format or content? Take the time to think about what you want to say, where you will stand/sit to stream, as well as sound, lighting, backdrop and other visuals.

- **Let your audience know it's coming.** You don't want to throw a party and forget to invite the guests. Using the Facebook Live API, publishers can schedule Live broadcasts in order to build up an audience before they begin streaming. Or you can tweet or post in advance to let your audiences know when to tune in. You may want to notify key journalists or partners through email or other means.

- **Make sure your internet connection is strong.** While a good Wi-Fi is ideal, if it is unavailable, a 4G connection works well.

- **Write a compelling description for your video before going live.** A good title is more likely to capture your audience's attention. It should give context about your broadcast and make it clear why a viewer should watch.

- **Respond to questions/comments.** Social media is all about engagement. Say hello to viewers by name and respond to their questions. If you can't answer them during the broadcast, take the time to go back and answer questions after the stream is finished.

- **Ask viewers to follow you.** Live streaming is a good way to grow your audience. Be sure to tell viewers how they can subscribe to your videos or follow you on other platforms.

- **Broadcast for a sufficient length of time.** The longer you continue your broadcast, the more time people have to discover your stream, watch it, and invite their friends to join in. Depending on the policies of the platform, a broadcast can last up to 4 hours, but around 10 minutes is ideal.

- **Don't publish another post immediately before or after the livestream begins.** Facebook's algorithm may not show the livestream to as many people if you just recently posted.

How to make your livestream broadcasts more polished:

- **Always use a tripod.** This makes your footage much less shaky for viewers, and also frees you to do other things. If a tripod is unavailable, brace your arms against the arm of a chair or table to increase stability

- **Pay attention to the environmental recording conditions.** Often strong light sources or close noise can distract from the subject you are recording, but can be easily avoided by changing the placement of your phone.

- **Shoot horizontally.** Most video footage is recorded in a horizontal (landscape) format, so it will look more natural to your viewers.

- **Charge your phone/computer ahead of time.** Live streaming eats up battery power. If you think you'll be streaming for a long time (an hour or more), have a backup battery or plug into a power source.

- **Use a microphone.** Viewers can tolerate poor picture quality but not poor sound. If it's noisy, plug in a microphone that has an adapter for your phone (see the link to Kerry Shearer for information about gear).

- **Consider visual aids.** If you are doing an interview or panel, consider having some sort of visual aids, such as flip charts or props that can draw the eye or indicates the topic. People may scroll past a video in their social media feed if it just looks like a talking head.

- **Vary your camera angles.** Panning to the audience or to different members of a panel is a good way to keep your broadcast interesting.

- **Make sure live streaming is the best option.** When you are live, there is no way to retroactively edit what your audience has seen. If you want a polished, edited look to your videos, consider other video options.

IV. Using Social Media for Risk and Emergency Communication

During an emergency, local health departments can provide the public and responders with situational awareness, dispel rumors, and establish themselves as the media's first point of contact for a public health story by monitoring social media and posting timely, reliable, and transparent information to social media accounts. Social media strategies should be included in every department's risk communication plan.

While social media can help share critical emergency information, it can also be an opportunity for misinformation and rumors to spread. Public health agencies can use social media to disseminate time-sensitive health information, promote information sharing to encourage behavioral changes (including corrective changes during potential health crises), be a platform for conversation between agencies and constituents (rather than just as an information provider) and allow the public to provide useful information and feedback.

Social media should be one of several tools used to communicate important information during a public health emergency. However, do not rely solely on social media, as it will reach only those with internet access or only those who are connected to your organizations or your followers on social media. Some platforms like Facebook also use algorithms that may limit how many of your followers see your post unless you pay for additional promotion.

It is important to develop social media capacity as part of day-to-day communications for your health department so that staff are capable during the fast pace of social media during an emergency. Routine social media use will also help you identify important social media accounts to follow (e.g., media, reporters, partner organizations, elected officials, emergency management) so that you are best positioned to use social media in a crisis.

Adding social media to emergency communications plans

Plans for social media should include:

- Instructions for how to access social media account login information and passwords

- List of PIOs and other staff trained in social media to monitor and create posts

- Procedures for rapidly approving messages for use in social media through ICS. Creating pre-written messages for anticipated hazards can help save time to ensure timely posting.

- Create a Twitter list containing only media accounts so you can view their Tweets quickly. You can create other Twitter lists or government agencies, community partners, volunteer organizations, etc. to assist with monitoring.

Posting

Social media can play a critical role in the public health risk communication approach to "Be first, be right, be credible." The speed at which social media moves may make it virtually impossible to be the very first with messages about a crisis situation, but public health departments can aim to be the first with public health information in that crisis if we are ready to use social media effectively. By getting credible information out quickly via Twitter, Facebook, live streaming, and other social media, we can feed the information demand with public health messages. Twitter is also an important way to reach reporters and news outlets as many comb Twitter for breaking information.

Quick tips:

- Identify the hashtags that are being used by the public and emergency responders (e.g., #HurricaneHarvey or #WoolseyFire) so that you can tag your posts so that people can find them more easily.

- Tag your tweets (you can tag images as well with up to 10 accounts) with the Twitter handles of organizations, reporters, news organizations, or opinion leaders who you want to see your tweets.

- In addition to the main message of the tweet, include a link to a website with further information.

- Repost from partner organizations, agencies, and other credible sources to help fill the information vacuum.

- To greatly increase the number of people who see your Facebook posts, pay to boost the posts using Facebook ads. Within Facebook ads, you can target your audience by demographic information such as city or zip code, age group, gender, some language groups, and interests (e.g., parenting, diabetes, volunteering, etc.). Even a modest amount of $5-25 can elevate the views of your posts.

Social Media Monitoring

Social media is a two-way street, and allows non-experts to share information just as rapidly as health agencies, if not more so. Monitoring social media during emergencies can help you glean what common concerns and rumors are in your community, identify emerging situations, and provide content from partner organizations that you can share.

Managing misinformation during a public health emergency is an important role that health agencies and other organizations have been forced to take on during disasters and events. It is crucial that public health agencies and organizations are equipped

before a crisis with strategies on how to manage social media on multiple platforms and monitor for misinformation and rumors. Consider using a social media aggregator, such as Tweetdeck or HootSuite, to help you monitor using different keywords, hashtags, or lists. Utilize the search tool in Facebook to find relevant posts on publicly available accounts. You can also create Google Alerts at the time of an incident to find and notify you by email of relevant content based on keywords (e.g. news articles). If funding is available, consider getting demos for subscription-based social media tools which allow for in-depth searches across multiple platforms simultaneously.

Virtual Operation Support Teams (VOST) and Digital Volunteers

A Virtual Operations Support Teams (VOST) as applied to emergency management is an effort to make use of new communication technologies and social media tools so that a team of trusted volunteers can lend online support to agencies or organizations that do not have the resources to manage or monitor social media during an emergency. VOSTs are activated to perform specific functions in support of affected organizations and jurisdictions during an emergency. VOSTs often support social media monitoring and helping spread official messages to help reach wider audiences when the responding jurisdiction doesn't have the necessary resources.

See **Resources** document for examples of how VOST teams work.

V. Additional Resources for Social Media Managers

The following resources provide examples of successful social media campaigns, policies and pre-created message templates as well as how-to guides. Social media information, references and online links change rapidly. The information below was accurate and true at the time this document was created (March 2019).

Social Media Strategy

The Health Communicator's Social Media Toolkit (CDC): https://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/guidelines/pdf/socialmediatoolkit_bm.pdf

Social Media Strategy Development – A guide to using social media for public health communication (European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention): http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/social-media-strategy-guide-for-public-health-communication.pdf

Another resource we could add that we've found to be really beneficial is: http://healthystartepic.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/HS2016CommunicationOutreachToolkit-1.pdf

Livestreaming

Examples

- Mosquito Testing at the Fairfax County Health Department, Fairfax, Virginia
- Mumps Update Press Conference, Public Health – Seattle & King County

Resources:

- Kerry Shearer, the livestream expert. Kerry offers tips, training and tools for shooting, editing and promoting videos for social media sites. He also used to work as a local health department PIO, so he understands the context in which we work. http://kerryshearer.com/

- Tips for using Facebook Live from Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/facebookmedia/best-practices/live

VOST (Virtual Operations Support Team)

Virtual Operations Support Blog: http://vosg.us/blog/

This is a blog for a network of VOS Teams in the US and abroad, with news in English and Spanish and information for the specific VOS Teams. It also houses research and training resources, including:

- A collection of slide decks, white papers and webinars about using digital volunteers

- Templates for ICS forms and training materials for digital volunteers

- A VOST workbook

Social Media for Emergency Management: A Good Practice Guide

VOST is included in many areas of this May 2014 guide by WREMO, the Wellington Region Emergency Management Office, New Zealand. WREMO won The 2014 IAEM-Global Technology & Innovation Award, Division 2 winner for its use of social media as an engagement tool to help build strong communities, promote disaster preparedness through clever marketing, and communicate official emergency management information during and after an event. The agency's innovative approach to building an audience before an event has helped to redefine the meaning of Social Media Emergency Management (SMEM) and has created the largest following on Facebook for an emergency management office in the world per capita.

Download: Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (New Zealand) Social Media in Emergency Management – A Good Practice Guide 2014

Caroline Milligan, NZ VOST Team Lead, contributed to the development of this guide, which any organization can adopt.

Social Media Monitoring Case Study

Tamer Hadi of New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene has developed an approach for integrating social media monitoring into the Incident Command System at a public health department. He developed an excellent slideset for the NACCHO Preparedness Summit and also a journal article in Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness, "Integrating social media monitoring into public health emergency response operations."

Columbus Public Health Office of Emergency Preparedness – Preparedness Partners Webinar Series

Virtual Operations Support Teams (VOST) – 1 hour presentation by Lloyd Colston, Cheryl Bledsoe and Mary Jo Flynn on August 14th 2013.

Stream the webinar: http://bit.ly/1ptbPZz

Download the webinar: http://bit.ly/1lhkUHf

WebEx ARF player required for playback. Download ARF player.

Pre-Created Messaging

This resource from Drexel University's Dornsife School of Public Health features message templates for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, and includes content relevant to the preparedness, response, and recovery phases of 23 different public health disaster scenarios. It also features distinct messages that target the unique needs of individuals with access and functional needs, including those with physical disabilities and communication difficulties. The messages have been reviewed by subject matter experts in hazard content areas and in public health risk communication. They were designed to help public information officers and other spokespersons create and deliver timely, accurate, and consistent information that will likely be needed during a public health emergency. http://drexel.edu/dornsife/research/research-centers/center-for-public-health-readiness-communication/social-media-library/

CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Resources

Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Manual (2014 Edition)

CDC's Emergency Preparedness and Response Social Media

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – Social Media and Disasters

National Public Health & Information Coalition

Using Social Media in a Disaster (Drexel University)

Social Media Policies

CDC Social Media Toolkit: https://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/guidelines/

Web 2.0 Governance Policies and Best Practices:
http://bit.ly/2XVfCf8

NACCHO's Social Media for Risk Communications policy statement: http://bit.ly/2LAwqRY

Photo Editing

- http://www.ripl.com/ – iphone only app = bit adds animated text to photos easily.
- Pixlr.com – photo editing app.
- http://ezgif.com/ – with the questionable legal standing of pop culture gifs, we sometimes use this to make our own GIFs out of video. (also this one: http://giphy.com/create/gifmaker)
- ProCam – app for greater control over phone camera settings.
- Imovie &/or AdobeClip – great for easy phone video editing. Clip allows you to start a project on your phone, save it to the cloud & finish it on your desktop with Adobe CC.
- http://sproutsocial.com/landscape – Photo resizing tool. Works best with plain (no text) images. You upload the photo and select which platforms/ways you want to post the photo and it automatically resizes it for you and gives you a zip file to download.

New and Emerging Trends

Keeping up with the changing social media landscape can seem like a full-time job. Just when you think you've mastered one platform, a new one comes along. Not every new platform or app is going to be useful to your organization. The following resources can help you decide if what's hot right now can help you achieve your communication and marketing goals while staying within your budget.

Mashable

Search Engine Journal

Hootsuite

Digital Trends

GovDelivery Blog/Granicus

DigitalGov

Social Media at CDC

American Public Health Association

CDC HealthComm Works

GovTwit

Miscellaneous

Social Media News and Information:

- Government Social Media Organization – top resource for all things government social media.
- SocialTimes.com – resource for staying updated on social media industry news.
- socialmediaexaminer.com – for information.
- feedly.com – app for finding interesting things to post.
- getpocket.com – app for saving articles etc.
- theskimm.com – app for daily news summary.

Easy Design/Layout

- Canva.com – app for easy designing.
- Picmonkey.com – app for easy designing.

Other

- https://developers.facebook.com/tools/debug/ – We post a lot of our e-newsletters as web pages, and Facebook hasn't had time to craw the page to pull the page info and images, so it sometimes comes up looking wonky. We put the page URL into this tool and it makes Facebook manually crawl the page so that it pulls up the preview looking right.

Appendix

Examples of social media policies from local health departments:

- Cambridge Public Health Department (Cambridge, MA)
- Ottawa County Department of Health (Ottawa County, MI)
- Shelby County Public Health Department (Memphis, TN)

Title: CPHD Social Media Policy	Policy Number:
	Policy Type: Departmental
	Effective Date: July 1, 2015
Replaces (supersedes): Title:	Policy Chronicle: Date Original Version of Policy was Effective: Most Recent Review (month/year): Reviewer Signature:　　　　　　　　　Date: Previous Reviews:
Area of Operations: All CPHD Staff	
Regulatory Agency:	Approvals: (Refer to policy for required signatures)
Keyword(s)	Social Media, Social Networking

I. Purpose

The Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) recognizes the value of social media as a way to share information, engage the community, build relationships with residents and partners, and reinforce its brand. This policy establishes guidelines for the creation and use of social media sites (including, but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter) by CPHD staff and programs.

II. Personnel

All CPHD staff are subject to this policy, with particular focus on staff in roles that are likely to manage departmental or program social media accounts.

III. Definitions

CPHD social media accounts refer to both *departmental accounts* (e.g., CPHD's YouTube channel) that represent the department as a whole and *program accounts* that represent individual programs or campaigns.

Social media refers broadly to Web-based platforms, applications, and technologies that enable people to create and share content, and to interact with one another online. Popular social media sites for organizations are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, and Tumblr.

Social networking sites are online communities that offer a meeting place for individuals to share experiences and information. Facebook and Twitter are examples of social networking sites.

IV. Policy

General Policy

1. All staff using CPHD social media accounts must comply with the terms and conditions set forth in this policy.
2. All staff using CPHD social media accounts must comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the CHA's Web 2.0 Policy: Participation in Social Networking and Use of Social Media (A-ISN-0034).
3. All staff using CPHD social media accounts must comply with all applicable laws and regulations. These include (without limitation) HIPAA and other privacy laws as well as copyright and other laws protecting property rights. See page 4 for additional information.
4. All staff using CPHD social media accounts must adhere to Cambridge Health Alliance's Ethical Guidelines and must comply with all applicable CHA policies including Obtaining Patient Authorization (A-HIM-0014); Permitted Uses and Disclosures [of protected health information] (A-HIM-0012); Internet Use Policy (A-ISN-0002); User Confidentiality Agreement (A-ISN-0006); Protection from Malicious Software (A-ISN-0029); and such other policies as may apply to the specific social networking activity.

Account Management & Creating New Accounts

Program Accounts

1. All CPHD staff who wish to create a social media account for their program must complete the following steps:
   a. **Approval:** The Communication Team (Erin Dillon, Suzy Feinberg) and the Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO), with input from Social Media & Website Committee members, are responsible for approving requests to create new program social media accounts.
   b. **Training:** Each approved account must have at least two staff members (when possible) dedicated to maintaining the account and trained in social media. At least one staff person must be a member of the Social Media & Website Committee.
   c. **Planning:** Program staff must work with the Communication Team to complete the *Social Media Action Plan* worksheet and have it approved by the CPHO.
   d. **Site Creation:** The "look and feel" of all new social media pages must be approved by the Communication Team and CPHO before launching. Staff will need to have the following approved: (1) user name or handle, (2) 'Bio' or 'About Us' section, and (3) all visual elements, including but not limited to the icon/avatar and cover photo.

2. CPHD program staff are responsible for the maintenance of their program social media account(s).
   a. **Monitoring:** Program account managers are responsible for the quality and accuracy of their social media posts. The Communication Team will not review or approve individual posts. However, to ensure (1) the accuracy of posted information and (2) adherence to the CPHD and CHA social media policies, the Social Media & Website Committee (chaired by Communication Team members) will review and discuss program social media pages at monthly meetings.
   b. **Modification/Removal:** The Communication Team and the CPHO reserve the right to request that staff modify social media content or remove pages.
   c. **Compliance:** Staff who have approved social media accounts are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.

Departmental Account(s)

1. The CPHD Communication team is responsible for creating new departmental social media accounts. To launch a new account, the Communication Team must complete the following steps:
   a. **Approval:** The Communication Team must receive approval from the CPHO to create a new departmental social media account.
   b. **Training:** Each approved account must have at least two staff members (when possible) dedicated to maintaining the account and trained in social media. All staff who maintain departmental accounts must be members of the Social Media & Website Committee.
   c. **Planning:** The Communication Team, with input from the Social Media & Website Committee, will complete the *Social Media Action Plan* worksheet and have it approved by the CPHO.
   d. **Site Creation:** The "look and feel" of all new social media pages must be approved by the CPHO before launching. Staff will need to have the following approved: (1) user name or handle, (2) 'Bio' or 'About Us' section, and (3) all visual elements, including but not limited to the icon/avatar and cover photo.

2. The CPHD Communication Team is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the departmental social media account(s).
   a. **Monitoring:** The Social Media & Website Committee will routinely provide oversight of departmental accounts to ensure (1) accuracy of posted information and (2) adherence to the CPHD and CHA social media policies.
   b. **Modification/Removal:** The CPHO reserves the right to request that staff modify social media content or remove pages.
   c. **Compliance:** Staff who maintain departmental social media accounts are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.

Employee Use and Conduct

1. **Personal Use:** Unless working on an approved CPHD social media site or accessing social media as part of an approved CPHD work duty, staff may only access social media on personal time.
2. **Conduct:** Staff representing CPHD on social media sites will conduct themselves at all times in accordance with CPHD and CHA rules, regulations, and policies.
   a. All social media content must be respectful, professional, and representative of CPHD. Do not post anything that harasses, threatens, bullies, or discriminates against staff or other audiences.
   b. All posts made from program or departmental social media accounts must reflect the views and values of CPHD, not personal beliefs.
   c. Consider every posting carefully. All posts on social media should be considered public and permanent.
   d. CPHD social media users should respect the rules of each social media platform, and strive for transparency and openness in all interactions.
3. **Media Inquiries: Social media use may lead to increased inquiries from the media. If contacted by a reporter, staff are required to direct the reporter to the Communications Specialist/Public Information Officer.**

Privacy and Copyright

1. **Privacy:** No patient information of any kind may be posted or disclosed on any social media site. HIPAA and all other patient privacy laws apply to disclosure of patient information on social media. All CHA policies regarding confidentiality also apply.
    a. Staff must obtain a signed media release form before using any person's image (including photo or video) in a social media post.
2. **Copyright**: When posting, CPHD staff should respect copyright law and be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others. Staff may not post any third party's copyrighted materials or other intellectual property on social media without consent of the owner. Note: this includes many photos and other graphics found online (e.g. Google Images).
    a. Staff can find and use images free of copyright (typically published under Creative Commons Public Domain deed CC0; meaning the image's creator has dedicated the work to the public domain by waiving all of his or her rights to the work under copyright law). Options for staff include:
        i. Pixabay: http://pixabay.com/
        ii. Morguefile: http://www.morguefile.com/
        iii. Creative Commons: http://creativecommons.org/
        iv. Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/
        v. Google images: Under 'Search Tools,' select 'Labeled for reuse' https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/29508?hl=en
    b. Stock photos may also be purchased from www.istockphoto.com.
    c. Any questions should be directed to a member of the Communication Team.

Content Guidelines and Audience Engagement

1. Staff should use social media accounts to promote CPHD's vision, mission, and core values.
2. All social media posts should be used to achieve social media goals, as determined in each account's *Social Media Action Plan* worksheet. For departmental account(s)*,* this includes:
    a. Sharing information with audiences.
    b. Engaging the community.
    c. Building relationships with residents, workers, city departments, partners, and the media.
    d. Reinforcing the CPHD brand and projecting our core values.
3. With regard to "hot topic" issues (e.g., disease outbreak or exposure announcement; human case counts, politically sensitive data), communication staff will confer with the CPHO and other management or program staff as needed to determine the appropriate social media strategy and/or messaging.
4. All social media posts, regardless of author, should use the CPHD "voice" – professional, friendly, caring, helpful, and respectful. The tone of posts may vary depending on the situation and intended audience; serious/authoritative (e.g. in a crisis situation) to fun (i.e. event promotion) to conversational (e.g. discussion of new regulations). Posts should avoid using jargon or language that is paternalistic; utilize accessible, audience-appropriate language. Any questions about tone, voice, or language should be directed to a member of the Communication Team.
5. Content priorities should reflect topics of high interest to the CPHD and/or program audiences (typically Cambridge residents, workers, and students).
6. Staff should expect to engage in "two-way communication" with the public and other audiences by:
    a. Responding to comments as appropriate.

b. Participating in conversations as appropriate.
c. Encouraging conversation among participants as appropriate.
d. Sharing city, community, and funding partners' content as appropriate.
e. Soliciting community input and feedback on various issues.
7. When possible, social media postings should link back to the CPHD website (www.cambridgepublichealth.org) or individual program website.
8. Additional guidance on content creation, etiquette, interacting with audiences, and responding to negative comments can be found in *Social Media Guidance for CPHD Program Staff*.

Audience Conduct

1. CPHD reserves the right to remove any user content (e.g. comments and replies) that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable laws. User content that contains any of the following, but not limited to, is subject to removal from CPHD and/or program pages:
   a. Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic content and/or language.
   b. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, family status, military status, or source of income.
   c. Defamatory or personal attacks.
   d. Threats to any person or organization.
   e. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to the advertising of any business or product for sale.
   f. Conduct in violation of any federal, state, or local law, rule, or regulation.
   g. Encouragement of illegal activity.
   h. Information that will compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
   i. Content that violates a copyright of any party.
   j. Random or unintelligible comments.
   k. Any other content deemed inappropriate by CPHD.
2. Comments in clear violation of this policy will be moderated and/or removed if needed by program account managers or a member of the Communication Team. The CPHO will make the final decision on whether or not to remove any content in question.

Security

1. The Communication Team will keep a "master list" of all departmental and program social media passwords.
   a. If a program's Facebook account is connected to a personal account, program staff must add a member of the Communication Team as a page administrator.
2. Staff cannot share social media passwords with anyone who is not an approved user.

Appendix

Examples of City of Cambridge departments using social media:

- City of Cambridge

   https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeMA.Gov | https://twitter.com/CambMA

- Community Development Department

   https://www.facebook.com/CDDat344 | https://twitter.com/CDDat344

- Department of Human Service Programs

   https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeDHSP | https://twitter.com/cntrforfamilies

- Police Department

   https://www.facebook.com/CambridgePolice | https://twitter.com/CambridgePolice

- Department of Public Works

   https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeDPW | https://twitter.com/CambridgeDPW

See full list: http://www.cambridgema.gov/socialmedia.aspx

Examples of other city and county health departments on social media:

- Ottawa County Department of Public Health (Ottawa County, MI)

   https://www.facebook.com/OttawaCounty | https://twitter.com/miOttawa

- Kanawha-Charleston Health Department (Charlestown, WV)

   https://twitter.com/kchdmd

- City of Pasadena Public Health Department (Pasadena, CA)

   https://www.facebook.com/cityofpasadena | https://twitter.com/PasadenaGov

- Seattle & King County Health Department (King County, WA)

   https://twitter.com/kcpubhealth

- Brookline Public Health Department (Brookline, MA)

   https://www.facebook.com/pages/Brookline-Department-of-Public-Health/152515524763622

- Shelby County Health Department (Memphis, TN)

   https://twitter.com/ShelbyTNHealth | https://www.facebook.com/ShelbyTNHealth

Last updated: July 1, 2015

The OCDPH's brand is a visual representation of the department's programs/services and it symbolizes its culture. Brands are powerful when used consistently. The brand guidelines is a tool to help maintain consistency; when using the department logo, business identity materials, promotional pieces, messaging and any other communication needs upon request. With consistent messaging, quality programs/services and excellent customer service; the department will continue to strengthen public perception and be known as a credible, capable, valuable and trustworthy health resource.

MISSION

Ottawa County Department of Public Health will assure conditions in which all people can achieve optimum health.

VISION

Healthy People

VALUES

Equality
All people will be valued and treated with dignity and respect.

Integrity
We will uphold the highest level of ethical standards.

Excellence
We will provide the highest quality programs and customer service.

WE PROMISE TO

- monitor health,
- conduct research,
- detect emerging diseases,
- investigate health problems,
- enhance prevention,
- develop public health policies,
- promote healthy behaviors,
- create healthy environments,
- and provide leadership.

Contact

Kristina Wieghmink, M.Ed.
Communications Specialist
(616)494-5597
kwieghmink@miOttawa.org

Logo Use

- Do not modify or stretch the logo disproportionately.

- Do not compromise the legibility of the logo.

- Do not change the logo colors or typeface.

- Full color, one color and black & white jpg and pdf logos are available. Other file types are available upon request.

*mi*Ottawa Department of
Public Health

*mi*Ottawa Department of
Public Health

C=98 R=28 M=85 G=53 Y=36 B=94 K=27 Hex# 1E355E PANTONE® 534C	C=23 R=171 M=100 G=31 Y=88 B=46 K=15 Hex# AA1F2E PANTONE® 187C

Communication Tools

K:\\Communications folders

- Admin
  - Awards
  - Policies
  - Reports

- Branding Templates
  - Appointment Cards
  - Brand Standards Guide
  - Email Signature
  - Envelopes
  - Fax Cover Sheets
  - Labels
  - Letterhead
  - PowerPoint

- Community
  - Events
  - Kindergarten Round-Up
  - Other Counties
  - Resources

- Image_Video Library
  - Admin
  - Clinical Health
  - Community Events
  - Community Health
  - Consent Forms
  - Emergency Preparedness
  - Environmental Health
  - Facilities
  - Staff Members
  - Videos

- News Releases
  - CDC
  - Kent County
  - MDARD
  - MDHHS
  - Muskegon County
  - Oakland County
  - Other
  - Ottawa County
  - State of MI

- OCDPH Logos
  - County Seal
  - Large_BW_noseal
  - Large_BW_seal
  - Large_color_noseal
  - Large_color_seal
  - Small_color_noseal
  - Small_color_seal
  - Web_color_seal

- Promotional Materials
  - Clinical Health
  - Communications Plan Form
  - Community Health
  - Department Yearbook
  - Digital Sign
  - Directory of Services
  - Environmental Health
  - Website Shortcuts

Website Shortcuts

- miOttawa.org/miHealth
- /annualhealthreports
- /beachwatch
- /birthcontrol
- /childservices
- /CSHCS
- /dental
- /diseaseinfo
- /diseasereporting
- /EH
- /EHforms
- /flu
- /food
- /foodresources
- /health2013
- /health2014
- /health2015
- /healthdata
- /hearingvision
- /immunize
- /landevaluation
- /medexaminer
- /mediaroom
- /MIHP
- /nutrition
- /prepare
- /recycle
- /ROADD
- /SAP
- /schoolreporting
- /SexEd
- /sexualhealth
- /tfe
- /travel
- /2013_2014_BMI
- /2013YAS
- /2014BRFS
- /2015CHIP
- /2015CHNA
- /2015CHNAreport

Social Media Sites

- Facebook.com
  - /ecoOttawa
  - /flugranny
  - /miOttawaBeachWatch
  - /miOttawaHealth
  - /OttawaCountyFoodNetwork

- GovDelivery at miottawa.org/Connect

- Twitter.com
  - /miOCDPH
  - /miOttawabeach

- YouTube.com/miOttawa

- Other County Sites at miottawa.org/Connect

Communications Policy

Communication involves dissemination of timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information (internally and externally); about the department's policies, programs, services and initiatives. The OCDPH's Communications Specialist/Public Information Officer's role is to maintain positive, mutually beneficial relationships with employees, media professionals and the public. This person is assigned as the primary media contact, outbreak or public health emergency communications correspondent, brand manager, social media/website administrator and program/service promotional materials and educational campaigns consultant.

Department Brand
The OCDPH's brand is a visual representation of the department's programs/services and it symbolizes its culture. Brands are powerful when used consistently. The brand guidelines is a tool to help maintain consistency; when using the department logo, business identity materials, promotional pieces, messaging and any other communication needs upon request. With consistent messaging, quality programs/services and excellent customer service; the department will continue to strengthen public perception and be known as a credible, capable, valuable and trustworthy health resource.

Media Contact
All incoming and outgoing communications with the media (requests for information, incident statuses, comments, data/statistics, interviews, on-site visits, guest appearances, news releases, etc.) are facilitated by the communications specialist. If (s)he is not available, direct requests to the appropriate section manager. Depending on the circumstances of the inquiry, the section manager may appoint a staff member to release specific information.

Social Media Sites
Users and visitors to Ottawa County social media sites are notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between the county and members of the public. Ottawa County reserves the right to remove published content that does not comply with privacy policies and the moderation rules set forth below;

- is far off-topic.
- is abusive, obscene, indecent or offensive.
- is defamatory, harassing or hateful.
- has not been authorized with the necessary rights, licenses and consents to post.
- constitutes spam, unauthorized advertising or solicits.
- contains long embedded URLs.
- invades anyone's privacy or impersonates anyone.
- encourages conduct that may or will constitute a criminal offense, give rise to civil liability or otherwise violates any local, state, national or international law or regulations.
- appears to contain irrelevant or excessive links or appears to contain code.

Communication Project Requests
Request for communication deliverables, promotional materials and educational campaigns require a completed communications plan form and a consultation with the communications specialist. Deliverables may include (but not limited to); news releases, public service announcements, website updates, social media posts, online blogs or comments, community calendar posts, radio and television appearances, newsletters (digital or print), paid advertisements, posters, postcards, fact sheets, pamphlets/brochures, rack cards, banners, promotional products, signs, billboards, lobby television ads, email blasts, presentations, infographics, video productions, audio recordings (podcast), County Administrator's Digest articles, County Connections employee blog posts, etc. The completed communications plan form must be received by the communications specialist at least 2 weeks, preferably 3 -4 weeks, prior to the requested delivery date of any communication materials.

Community Outreach
In order to efficiently coordinate community events, fairs, open houses, conferences, lectures, etc; any scheduling or organizing of an outreach activity must also be coordinated with the communications specialist. Activities are logged; in order to know whose doing what and when. This reduces duplication and increases department collaboration. In addition, tracking community outreach activities provides information on whether or not the activity was beneficial to the department and if staff members will accept future invitations.

Photography
Please refer to K:\Communications\Image_Video Library_Consent Forms for information on when a photography release form is required. Blank consent forms are available in this folder.

SHELBY COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MARK H. LUTTRELL, JR.
MAYOR

ALISA R. HAUSHALTER, DNP, RN
DIRECTOR

HELEN MORROW, MD, MPA
HEALTH OFFICER

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Shelby County Health Department Social Media Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the usage of social media which includes but is not limited to: media sharing, blogging, social networking, document and data sharing repositories, social bookmarking and widgets. This policy also serves to remind employees when using social media, they have no expectations of privacy and generally, all information stored on Shelby County Government or Shelby County Health Department (SCHD) systems may be reviewed, evaluated, analyzed, gathered, and saved without obtaining permission from employees to the extent permitted by law.

Definitions

Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence allowing interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, internet websites, internet forums, and wikis. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, Reddit, Instagram and any future outlets.

Scope

This policy applies to SCHD employees in the following categories: appointed administrative officials, consultants, contractors, full-time, part-time, students fulfilling academic requirements and volunteers. All SCHD employees are expected to abide by and act according to this social media policy.

All SCHD staff and volunteers will receive a copy of the *SCHD Social Media Policy* and be required to confirm acknowledgement and receipt with a signature. A copy will be placed in Human Resources personnel files.

All employees are reminded of their role as a representative of SCHD. It is an expectation as noted in the policy that wrongful use of social media should not occur, and individuals can be subjected to disciplinary action for inappropriate usage.

To compliment current communications practices, SCHD employees are reminded not to interact with members of the media, including via social media sites, on behalf of the division unless authorization has been permitted by the SCHD Public Information Officer or their representative.

When utilizing social media to convey a personal opinion, it should not reflect nor represent SCHD. Additionally, commentary should be respectful and unbiased. In most cases, it is the expectation that SCHD employees will not identify themselves as such.

The SCHD Social Media Policy may be updated at any time due to the evolution of technology. Employees are advised to regularly visit the Shelby County Government intranet for new information.

Personal Expectations

SCHD employees are representatives of Shelby County Government and thus held to a high standard. Personal social media activities should not be conducted during normal business hours. Negative or controversial statements that could be linked to Shelby County Government should not be posted. If an internal conflict occurs, the dispute is to be resolved internally and not shared with clients and external partners. Internal information should not be shared. Public information shared by official SCHD social media accounts is permissible.

Professional Expectations

Social media use shouldn't interfere with an employee's responsibilities at SCHD. Shelby County Government computer systems are to be used for business purposes only. When using Shelby County Government computer systems, use of social media for business purposes is allowed, but personal use of social media networks or personal blogging of online content is not allowed.

Enforcement

Social media should not be used in a manner that is, or may be construed as, illegal, improper, inappropriate, or offensive to individuals. Nor shall it be disruptive to operations of SCHD. Each employee is responsible for the content of any online posts that appears on his or her account. Any violation of this policy may trigger disciplinary action up to and including termination.