



# Health Care & Social Media

## CHEAT SHEET

**When health care organizations launch into social media, many start without a strategy. This is ineffective and can be dangerous. We recommend that clients develop a comprehensive social media strategy that dovetails with the organization’s strategic and communications plans. Due to limited time and money, we know that this is not always possible. That’s why we’ve created this “cheat sheet” to allow health organizations to map out some basics of a strategy. Please use and share in the name of better health communications.**

### KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- Really know them**  
Be specific: Create personas; identify influencers, advocates and naysayers.
- Know where they are**  
What platforms are they using?  
What time zones are they in?
- Know what they want to talk about** - - - -  
What’s important to them?  
Care, research, news, advocacy?
- Know how they talk about your subject area online**  
Do they use Pages, groups, hashtags, Listserves?
- Ask them questions**  
What do they want to know? How can you help?
- Respond**  
Be responsive and timely. Answer questions, thank contributors, correct misinformation.



### DEFINE CLEAR OBJECTIVES

- Why social media?** - - - - -  
Is this the right tool for what you want to do?
- Create SMART goals**  
What do you hope to accomplish?  
Raise awareness? Build a community?
- Define KPIs**  
How will you measure your goals?  
Web traffic? Reach? Followers?
- How will you measure?**  
What tools will you use? Google analytics? Free tools?  
Proprietary?



### CREATE KEY MESSAGES

- What do you want to say?**  
Create three key messages and one call to action. Stick to them.
- Assemble your tools**  
Does your organization have a strategic plan or communications strategy?
- Understand your context**  
What are your competitors doing?  
How are you unique?
- Identify your voice and tone** - - - - -  
Who’s talking for your brand? Are you one person or many? What’s your brand character?



### PLAN YOUR CONTENT

- Create a content calendar**  
Know what’s coming up. Plan for events, press releases and conferences.
- Tell stories**  
Share real stories, by and about real people.
- Remember knowledge translation**  
Write for your audiences, not for yourself.
- Share content**  
From your friends, collaborators, employees and parent organization.
- Plan time to respond** - - - - -  
Schedule 2-3 15 minute blocks of time to check your feeds.



### ENGAGE ON FACEBOOK

- Tell stories** - - - - -  
Use photos, metaphors, real people and stories.
- Know when to post**  
Test to find the times of day that are best; include evenings and weekends.
- Ask questions**  
Encourage engagement through questions and apps.
- Use Timeline to tell your story**  
Milestones and defining moments. provide context, credibility and history
- Don’t treat it like Twitter**  
Don’t use #hashtags, @mentions or cross-post



### LEAD (& FOLLOW) ON TWITTER

- Use Twitter to listen**  
Follow others, track #hashtags, monitor discussions about your brand.
- Write tweets to encourage a click, RT or reply** - - - -  
Ask questions, write an incisive headline, use #hashtags.
- Post at least once a day**  
Space out your tweets and don’t spam your followers.
- Use full English as much as possible**  
No1 liks readin twtvs lik dis, lol.
- Know the language**  
@mention, #hashtag, RT, #FF
- Use short links**  
Use bit.lys and ow.lys to track your click-throughs



### MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNTS

- Have a policy**  
Social media is a front-facing medium. Protect yourself and your employees.
- Write guidelines for your team**  
Remind them: don’t share secrets, be responsible, use “our voice,” be smart.
- Have a (dis)engagement plan**  
Plan for comments, questions, trolls and naysayers.
- Manage your time** - - - - -  
Schedule posts, plan your check-ins.

