

Diabetes social media users' preferences for a health promotion intervention



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Abstract. This study aims at understanding the preferences of social media users of diabetes channels regarding diabetes related contents. An online questionnaire was posted on the Norwegian Diabetes Association social media channels. A total of 346 participants answered the questionnaire: 68,5% would like to find more contents on research/innovation; 81,2% preferred text format; 37,3% would like to read posts daily or several times per day; and 84,1% would like to find them on Facebook. The analysis of this study, following a user-participatory approach, will be used to improve content on social media and potentially increase diabetes patients' engagement and satisfaction.

Keywords. Diabetes; Health Promotion; Health Education; Social Media; Facebook; Twitter, Instagram; Community-Based Participatory Research

Introduction

Participatory health approaches are increasingly drawing attention among the scientific community^{1,2}, and could be used to improve health promotion interventions on diabetes. The main aim of this study is to better understand the interests and preferences of social media users of diabetes channels regarding diabetes related contents. Their preferences will be used to create the contents of a health promotion intervention.

Table 1. Demographics of the questionnaire' respondents (Total, n=346)

Demographics	Men	Women	Total (%)
Identification as person			
Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes	54 (15,6%)	133 (38,4%)	187 (54,0%)
Diagnosed with type 2 diabetes	34 (9,8%)	39 (11,3%)	73 (21,1%)
Family member of diabetes patient	13 (3,8%)	58 (16,8%)	71 (2,5%)
Healthcare professional	3 (0,9%)	19 (5,5%)	22 (6,4%)
Age group			
Under 18	4 (1,2%)	6 (1,7%)	10 (2,9%)
18-29 years old	14 (4,0%)	38 (10,9%)	52 (15,0%)
30-44 years old	24 (6,9%)	72 (20,8%)	96 (27,7%)
45-64 years old	46 (13,3%)	93 (26,9%)	139 (40,2%)
65 and over	13 (3,8%)	21 (6,1%)	34 (9,8%)

Method

All social media followers of the Norwegian Diabetes Association were invited to actively participate in the definition of the health promotion intervention by expressing their opinions through an adhoc online questionnaire regarding their preferred contents; contents' format (text, images and/or video); contents' frequency; and preferred social media channels. The online questionnaire was based on LimeSurvey, and it was linked to via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in November 2017. A detailed description of the method used in this study is published elsewhere³.

Results

The questionnaire was answered by a total of 346 informants during one week

(332 reached the questionnaire from Facebook; 14 from Instagram; and 0 from Twitter). Table 1 summarizes the reported demographics of the respondents.

Regarding their preferred contents: 237 (68,5%) indicated they would like to find contents on research and innovation on diabetes; 188 (54,3%) on technical aspects of self-management (e.g. how to use glucose sensors); 161 (46,5%) on personal aspects of self-management (e.g., how to be motivated to follow up with diabetes); 117 (33,8%) would prefer to find interviews or personal histories from other people with diabetes; and 114 (32,9%) would like to find more contents on healthcare services.

A total of 281 participants preferred diabetes related contents in text format;

150 preferred images, and 79 preferred videos. Among 295 respondents, 37,3% would like to find diabetes-related contents on social media daily or even several times per day; while 20,3% would prefer every second or third day; and 42,4% weekly or more seldom. Regarding their preferred social media channels for finding these health promotion messages: 291 chose Facebook; 52 Instagram; and 14 Twitter.

Discussion

Social media users interested in diabetes seem to value receiving health promotion interventions on diabetes through these media. The use of a participatory approach listening to the users' preferences can potentially increase diabetes patients' engagement and satisfaction with the health promotion intervention, and therefore help people attain healthier lifestyles.

References

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