



**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

This is a repository copy of *Impact of social media on adult CF centres across the UK*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:

<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/94229/>

Version: Accepted Version

---

**Proceedings Paper:**

Fitch, G, Etherington, C, Whitaker, P et al. (1 more author) (2015) Impact of social media on adult CF centres across the UK. In: Thorax. British Thoracic Society Winter Meeting 2015, 02-04 Dec 2015, London, UK. BMJ Publishing Group .

<https://doi.org/10.1136/thoraxjnl-2015-207770.364>

---

**Reuse**

Unless indicated otherwise, fulltext items are protected by copyright with all rights reserved. The copyright exception in section 29 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 allows the making of a single copy solely for the purpose of non-commercial research or private study within the limits of fair dealing. The publisher or other rights-holder may allow further reproduction and re-use of this version - refer to the White Rose Research Online record for this item. Where records identify the publisher as the copyright holder, users can verify any specific terms of use on the publisher's website.

**Takedown**

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing [eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk) including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



[eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk)  
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>

## **Impact of social media on adult CF centres across the UK**

**G Fitch, C Etherington, P Whitaker, D Peckham**

Leeds Adult CF Unit, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Leeds, UK

People with chronic health conditions use social media to share experiences and seek advice from peers. Similarly healthcare organisations are using these tools to engage and communicate with patients. The aim of this study was to investigate the opinions of health care professionals on the use, motives and impact of social media used by patients and staff in UK CF centres.

Members of the Leeds adult CF MDT developed an online survey with 18 core questions relating to social media. The survey was sent to the clinical lead of each CF centre in the UK. The lead was asked to complete the survey and to pass it on to key members of their team to complete. Mixed methods were used with categorical, Likert and free text options.

66 respondents from 9 professional groups and 19 centres across the UK completed the questionnaire. 16/44 professionals had never used social media and 35/60 reported that their centre had no social media presence. There was belief that social media was having a negative impact on certain aspects of care including spreading inappropriate gossip and in some cases bullying. Only 30.2% of respondents felt social media had a positive impact at their centre in contrast to 73.3% of responders who felt social media had been used in a negative way. Verbal communication, directing individuals to use departmental social media channels and communication of acceptable behaviour to all patients via a website or newsletter were methods shared to deter negative content. Despite their negative experiences many felt social media had the potential to be a positive experience in areas such as communication with patients, education, adherence, peer support, amongst others.

Negative experiences involving social media use by patients predominate. Different methods to tackle these problems have been adopted. Sharing our experiences and being alert to such problems should help minimise distress in the future. Many potential areas of positive use exist and should be exploited.