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A WEEK TO TWEET: FINDINGS FROM YOUNG PARE'S ONLINE COURSE FOR TWITTER NOVICES

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My abstract has been or will be presented at a scientific meeting during a 12 months period prior to EULAR 2018: No

Is the first author applying for a travel bursary and/or an award for undergraduate medical students?: Yes

Is the first author of this abstract an undergraduate medical student?: No

Background: Twitter is a social networking platform that enables individuals to publish short posts called tweets. Twitter enables individuals to reach over 270 million active users on the platform each month.¹ A useful way to develop individuals' confidence on Twitter can be through participating in tweet chats and by conversing at conferences through the use of a preselected hashtag.² Young PARE identified a need among the patient community to provide some training for individuals to get started on Twitter. This mirrored the ongoing work provided by EMEUNET for rheumatology professionals.

Objectives: The aim of the course was to deliver a structured online Twitter learning experience, and to evaluate participants' use and perceptions of the course.

Methods: The course was hosted on Mailchimp over a period of seven days, from Thursday 16 until Wednesday 22 February 2017. Participants wishing to take part signed up to the course via a form advertised by email and online. Participants received an email with a task to complete at 09:00 each day. Despite the daily prompt, the course was self-paced, enabling participants to participate at their own convenience. An anonymous evaluation survey, hosted by bos, was distributed to participants immediately after the course. A combination of 5-point Likert scales, multiple allowable answers and open-ended comments were employed.

Results: A total of 95 individuals subscribed to the course, with 11% responding to the survey (n = 11). Of the respondents, 63.7% were aged 35 years or older. The course was rated as either good (63.6%) or excellent (36.4%), with 63.6% stating that the course met their expectations. The most favoured topics rated as strongly liked or liked by 90.9% of respondents were: (i) Using twitter at conferences; (ii) Public and protected tweets; (iii) Embedding Twitter feeds; (iv) Hashtags; and (v) Sending tweets. However, some participants felt that Twitter was not applicable to their country. Participants also provided constructive feedback for future courses; including more screenshots to guide textual prompts, and the option to house the course in a single, online location that can be accessible at any time.

Conclusions: 'A week to tweet' challenged the misconception that social media is just for young people under 35. The course provided a simplified account of Twitter, from the basics of getting started, through to more complex functions. It appeared to be a welcomed resource for twitter novices, though the instructional content could be simplified, particularly for participants whose first language is not English. Cultural issues were also raised, with some participants feeling that Twitter wasn't relevant in their country. This highlights the need for better awareness of the global functionality of Twitter, and the capabilities of this social networking platform. For future instances, course content should be accessible from an online repository, so that participants can access the course at their own pace. There may be scope for the course to be hosted under the EULAR School of Rheumatology in the future.

References: 1. McNamara P. A Nurse's guide to Twitter. Ausmed Education 2017. Available from: <http://www.ausmed.com.au/twitter-for-nurses/> (Accessed January 2018).

2. Stones SR & Smith J. Social media supremacy: a force of change paving the way for the next generation of healthcare and research Evidence-Based Nursing 2018 21: 2-3. doi: 10.1136/eb-2017-102846

Disclosure of Interest: None declared