Social Media: Using it Effectively and Avoiding Legal Pitfalls

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Value in Social Media Presence



- Ability to disseminate information quickly
- Fluid information channel: ability to deliver multiple and diverse messages routinely
- Maintaining credibility by having a presence in social media arena
- Expectation of younger generations?
- Opportunity to build/reinforce your brand/identity

Social Media Platforms Used by PH

- Facebook
- You Tube
- County does not use:
 - Instagram
 - 4 Square
 - Snapchat
 - Tumbler (out of date)
 - Podcasts (older demographics)



Through the Lens of Social Media

- Click on link to access PH's Facebook page
- https://www.facebook.com/catawbacountypublichealth
- PH's Twitter account?
 - Established but never took off
 - Internal v. external needs
 - Relevance v. upkeep demands
 - Might make sense for a larger health department, for us, a little redundant
- 1 tweet = 140 characters (limits message)
 - What "in the moment" would we need to tweet?
 - Don't want to panic people if unable to include sufficient information

Why a Separate PH Social Media Identity?



- To be a resource of accurate public health information
- To reach target audiences through the platforms they use to find information (asked in clinic surveys)
 - Moms
 - Caregivers (Home Health)
- To share important health, prevention messages
- Reinforce our identity
- To be perceived as relevant by younger generations
- To grow word-of-mouth and referrals for our clinics
- To establish an online community that can be easily reached, especially in the case of an emergency



- Promote health
- Influence health decisions
- Deliver motivational messages
- Provide links to resources
- Support other health-related programs
- Reinforce Public Health's identity in community







Facebook (continued)

- If you build it, will they come?
 - Must dedicate significant time to driving traffic to site in addition to maintaining site
 - Facebook icon on marketing materials, e-mail signatures
 - Embedded Facebook feed on Public Health website home page:
 - http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth/
 - Encourage employees to like and share our page and posts

Monitoring Reach

- Use FB tools to track posts and determine share/like trends
 - · What are followers liking/sharing?
 - How can they help multiply reach?
- · Mirror trends to help improve reach of future posts



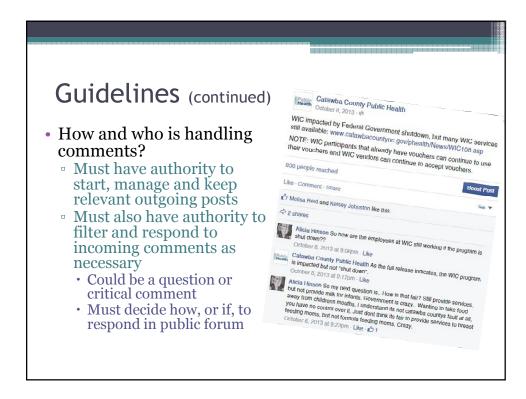
Guidelines and/or Policies

- Protect against too many pages/sites having outdated material
- Administrator can add information and delete page
 - Designated Administrator: PIO
 - Back-up Administrator: Back-up PIO
 - 2 additional health educators have access to post
- Editor (next level down) can do everything BUT delete page

Guidelines (continued)

- Someone should review posts from the public every day
- Staff should, at a minimum, update several times/week (plan ahead for multiple posts)
- Immediate posts for something really important that comes up (i.e. measles)
- Core group has been fairly constant since 2013





Responding to Comments

- Flu
 - Post about writer's sister having died of the flu
 - Went on to blame PH for not doing enough to make people aware of the seriousness of flu
 - Responded with compassion and invited the writer to call us to discuss her concerns
 - Ended message stream with positive outreach
- Sharon Hall Hicks WHY is Catawba County not making more public awareness for the obvious flu pandemic going on in Catawba County???? I lost my sister 2 weeks ago 4 days after she tested positive for the flu. Since I have heard of one young adult being shipped to CMC and... See More January 2, 2014 at 2:50pm - Like - 🖒 1 Catawba County Public Health We are sorry to hear about your loss. Thank you for your concern. Because the flu can result in serious consequences, we actively encourage everyone to protect themselves from the flu, including getting a flu shot, frequent hand washing, and other preventive measures. For more information about flu prevention, please visit www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth/Flu/ January 2, 2014 at 3:20pm - Like Sharon Hall Hicks I understand the prevention but we need more awareness.

 And are you saying these deaths all in the same county from the flu is January 2, 2014 at 3:22pm - Like - 1 1 Catawba County Public Health We understand you have concerns and encourage you to contact our public information officer at (828) 695-5800. January 2, 2014 at 4:12pm - Like Sharon Hall Hicks Thank you for the article that was published by HDR stressing the flu awareness and preventions. Please keep up the notifications etc. as we lost another Catawba county citizen today to the flu. January 12, 2014 at 10:16pm - Like - 1 1

Responding to Comments (continued)

- "Trailergate"
 - CDC trailers came to town for national survey at height of Ebola scare
 - Local social media sites exploded with speculation about why trailers were in the community – assumed they were related to Ebola
 - Pushed out accurate information about trailers to counteract comments via social and traditional media

Didn't try to argue with/contradict speculative comments directly







Legal Issues

- Records Retention Act
 - NC Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and Records - Records Retention and Disposition Schedule
 - · Board of Commissioners must adopt
- Public Records Law
 - Chapter 132 of the NCGS
- Protection of Free Speech

Legal Issues (cont.)

- Use of Photography
 - Where do you get photos?
 - Take your own (with consent, signed release)
 - Purchase stock photos
 - Search online for royalty-free photos (CDC, NC DPH, APHA, etc.)

Retrieving Information

- How long can we go back and read Facebook postings?
- How long do "likes" last?
- Easy to access?
- Hard to access?
- How do we keep it?



Before You Start: What do you want to achieve?

- How will you engage the community?
- Who is your audience?
- How will you promote your social media presence?
- Be deliberate in thinking about what you want to achieve AND how you will manage it from here to eternity

