Lung Cancer Awareness Month
Social Media Toolkit
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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help stakeholders establish a Lung Cancer Awareness Month social media strategy, manage social media accounts, implement Facebook and Twitter best practices, disseminate Lung Cancer Awareness Month messaging and evaluate their social media efforts.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOLKIT?

Public health professionals, cancer control professionals, coalitions, community-based organizations and other stakeholders can use this toolkit and adapt its messaging for their unique audiences and areas of expertise.

WHAT IS LUNG CANCER AWARENESS MONTH?

Lung Cancer Awareness Month is an annual observance held throughout the Month of November. It is intended to raise awareness of lung cancer and to fundraise for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, survivorship and cure. “More people in the United States die from lung cancer than any other type of cancer” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2016). In 2013, over 212,000 men and women were diagnosed with lung cancer (CDC, 2016). November is also an opportunity to support those affected by lung cancer. Lung Cancer Awareness Month begins on November 1 and ends on November 30.

SOCIAL MEDIA 101

According to a 2014 Pew Research Center survey, “74% of online adults use social networking sites.” (Pew Research Center, 2014). In addition, Hughes (2010) found that, “one-third of adults access social media related to health” (p. 3).

Social media represents a unique opportunity to reach a large audience of both consumers and professionals. It is more important than ever that online medical and health information is “trustworthy, engaging, and accessible to digitally empowered consumers” (Hootsuite, n.d., p. 2).

When designing and thinking about your social media strategy, consider your audience, the channel(s) you want to use, your objective(s), or what you are trying to achieve, as well as how you will measure success. Remember that your social media activities should ultimately support your organization’s goals (Hootsuite, n.d.).

Looking to establish a social media strategy for your organization or make the case for why it’s important? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers “SocialMediaWorks,” an online step-by-step tool to create and establish a social media strategy. The site also offers pre-tested and effective messages as well as evaluation strategies, tools and templates.

Don’t have the time or capacity to implement this toolkit? Don’t fret! You can still engage your audience by retweeting messages from @GWCanCer

Looking for more in-depth info on social media channels and communication strategy? Check out our Media Planning and Media Relations Guide or our other social media toolkits.

Remember to tailor messaging to your target audience or audiences. Your organization offers unique strengths and expertise; make sure to capitalize on them to make your campaign effective.
SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest and more: Social media is growing every day, along with opportunities for outreach.

TWITTER BEST PRACTICES

- Keep Tweets short, between 100-110 characters. This allows other users to Retweet while adding their own comments.
- Add photos or videos. Adding a photo boosts Retweets by 62% on average (Twitter Government and Elections Team, 2014).
- Tweet at author or organizational Twitter handles when possible. Note that Tweets that begin with a username will now reach all your followers (this means you no longer have to use the “.@” convention in order for your Tweet to be seen by all your followers).
- Twitter, Tweetdeck, Sprout Social and Hootsuite all have options to shorten links as you write Tweets. Other options for shortening links are provided under Additional Tools and Resources.
- Promote engagement with other organizations by liking or Retweeting their content. You can even add your own comment before Retweeting.
- Be responsive and recognize Retweets, @ mentions and when others share your content. It doesn’t take much, but a simple “thank you” goes a long way toward building engagement.
- Remember that Tweets cannot be edited once they are posted, so proofread before you post!

FACEBOOK BEST PRACTICES

- Shorter posts (around 250 characters) get up to 60% more distribution than longer posts (CDC, n.d.).
- Use photos or videos to make your posts stand out. Posts with photos receive up to 50% more likes than non-photo posts (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013). However, be aware of Facebook’s policies about what can be posted and identifying people in photos without consent (CDC, n.d.).
- Use a conversational tone and explain to your audience why the content should matter to them (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Posts that start conversations by asking questions and responding receive approximately 70% above-average engagement (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Vary your post type. Users don’t engage the same way with every post (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Track your results and act on them. Facebook offers analytic data that you can use to find out what posts are being “liked” or shared and which ones aren’t. Focus your efforts on what is working (CDC, n.d.).

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATING ABOUT LUNG CANCER

The first step in any communication campaign is to define your audience. When communicating about lung cancer, your audience may be newly diagnosed patients, survivors, caregivers, health care providers, employers or others. All of these audiences may have different messaging needs and may be reached through different channels. However, there are some commonalities in that cancer communication must help patients: “(1) Receive bad news, (2) handle the emotional impact of a life-threatening illness, (3) understand and remember complex information, (4) communicate with multiple health professionals, (5) understand statistics related to prognosis, (6) deal with uncertainty while maintaining hope, (7) build trust
that will sustain long-term clinical relationships, (8) make decisions about treatment, possibly including participation in clinical trials and (9) adopt health-promoting behaviors” (Epstein & Street, 2007).

WHEN COMMUNICATING ABOUT LUNG CANCER...

- Consider health literacy and numeracy
- Promote patient-provider discussions of family history and risk
- Provide information about long-term care and survivorship issues in addition to treatment information
- Remind providers about the importance of communication and its impact on patients’ quality of life
- Address and combat stigma

Consider health literacy and numeracy

- Use simple language and avoid terms not often used outside of the scientific community. Explain how data influences your audience and why it’s relevant (NCI, 2011).
- Organize information so the most important points are first (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.).
- If presenting data, use integers instead of decimals as they are more convincing and easily recalled (Witteman et al., 2011). Visual representations of data, like icon arrays are most effective.
- Where possible, point consumers to supporting materials, visuals and reliable sources of information such as trusted websites or physicians (for example, CDC or NCI).

Promote patient-provider discussions of family history and risk

- Familial history of lung or other cancers may increase risk for lung cancer in nonsmokers (Mayne, Buenconsejo and Janerich, 1999).
- Chen and Kaphingst (2010) found that current and former smokers are not as likely to “integrate their family history into their risk perceptions” of developing lung cancer (p. 31).

Provide information about long-term care and survivorship issues in addition to treatment information

- CDC recommends that follow-up care to lung cancer survivors should focus on tobacco cessation, increased physical activity, good nutrition, ongoing vaccinations, regular cancer screenings and pain management (Underwood et al., 2012).
- The American College of Surgeons requires Commission on Cancer (CoC)-accredited programs to “provide a summary of treatment and a follow-up plan to all patients completing cancer treatments” for curative intent (American College of Surgeons, n.d.).
- Let patients know about specific resources they can request, such as survivorship care plans or long-term recommendations about screening and follow-up.
- Lung cancer survivors with metastatic non-small-cell lung cancer benefited from introduction of palliative care early in the course of treatment and reported prolonged survival, improved quality of life and mood (Temel et al., 2010).

Remind providers about the importance of communication and its impact on patients’ quality of life

- Cancer patients and survivors often face “cancer information overload” and may feel overwhelmed by information and unable to process it (Chae, Lee & Jensen, 2015).
- Patients frequently report health professionals as their most important information source, emphasizing the critical role that providers can play in addressing the information needs of patients (Finney Rutten et al., 2005).
• According to Gordon et al. (2006), black patients receiving initial lung cancer treatment recommendations tended to report their physician as “less supportive, less partnering, and less informative than white patients” (p. 907). As a result, black patients reported lower levels of trust in their physician (Gordon et al., 2006).
• Smokers and low socioeconomic status groups often report perceived barriers to lung cancer screening such as blame and stigma around lung cancer as well as the mistaken belief that lung cancer is not a treatable disease (Quaife, Marlow, McEwen, Janes & Wardle, 2016). When screening is recommended, messages should be targeted, nuanced and address these barriers.

### Address and combat stigma

• Lung cancer is often socially stigmatized, which can lead to emotional distress and limited illness-related disclosure (Hamann, Ostroff, Marks, Gerber, Schiller & Craddock Lee, 2013). Providers should avoid stigmatizing the illness and be aware of the pervasive influence of societal stigma on both smokers and nonsmokers with lung cancer.
• Stigmatization can also potentially deter patients from seeking support (Chapple, Ziebland & McPherson, 2004).
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tweets</th>
<th>Facebook Posts</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 11/1</td>
<td>We’ve made progress, but #lungcancer is still the leading cause of cancer death in the U.S. Get the facts: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/22NjsPE">http://1.usa.gov/22NjsPE</a></td>
<td>Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of illness and death in the U.S., yet more than 42 million Americans continue to smoke cigarettes. What are the true costs of smoking? From your body to society, everyone pays. Get the facts on smoking in the U.S. as we kick off Lung Cancer Awareness Month! <a href="http://bit.ly/2ali4AF">http://bit.ly/2ali4AF</a></td>
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<td>Wed 11/2</td>
<td>There are actions you can take to ↓ your risk for #lungcancer: #1? Don’t smoke or #quitsmoking: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/24xeDtd">http://1.usa.gov/24xeDtd</a></td>
<td>November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month. Did you know that there are steps you can take to reduce your risk of lung cancer? Don’t smoke or quit smoking, avoid second hand smoke and get your home tested for radon: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/24xeDtd">http://1.usa.gov/24xeDtd</a></td>
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<td>Thu 11/3</td>
<td>Each year, 150,000+ Americans die from #LungCancer. That's almost 411 deaths every day. But you can reduce your risk. Find out more: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Y7b4d7">http://1.usa.gov/1Y7b4d7</a></td>
<td>Cancer is a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control. Lung cancer is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells because of changes in the genes (DNA) inside the lung cells in one or both of the lungs. Read more about this disease: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1WDLygo">http://1.usa.gov/1WDLygo</a></td>
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<td>Fri 11/4</td>
<td>Some #cancersurvivors are at increased risk for #LungCancer. Survivors who smoke should call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to get help.</td>
<td>Rose’s story highlights the dangers of smoking and its connection to lung cancer. Learn more by watching a video about the very difficult treatments needed to save her life: <a href="http://bit.ly/2aluN6z">http://bit.ly/2aluN6z</a></td>
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<td>Mon 11/7</td>
<td>Get your home tested! The second leading cause of #lungcancer is radon, a radioactive gas found in nearly all soils: <a href="http://bit.ly/2a36tYF">http://bit.ly/2a36tYF</a></td>
<td>Smoking causes lung cancer. Cigarettes are dangerous because they contain nicotine, an addictive chemical. Find out if you are addicted to nicotine by taking this quick quiz and find resources to help you overcome your addiction: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/22Nlorl">http://1.usa.gov/22Nlorl</a></td>
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<td>Tue 11/15</td>
<td>You can ↓ your risk of #lungcancer by quitting smoking. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to build a quit plan w/ @SmokefreeGov: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/28ixFYl">http://1.usa.gov/28ixFYl</a></td>
<td>Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas. You can’t see radon and you can’t smell it or taste it, but it may be a problem in your home. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. Get your home tested: <a href="http://bit.ly/2a36tYF">http://bit.ly/2a36tYF</a></td>
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<td>Wed 11/16</td>
<td>You can take steps to ↓ your risk of #lungcancer. Avoid smoking or #quitsmoking &amp; decrease radon exposure. Learn more: <a href="http://bit.ly/2ags4e4">http://bit.ly/2ags4e4</a></td>
<td>You can take steps to reduce your risk of #lungcancer. Avoid smoking or #quitsmoking and decrease your exposure to radon. Learn more about reducing your risk: <a href="http://bit.ly/2ags4e4">http://bit.ly/2ags4e4</a></td>
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<td>Fri 11/18</td>
<td>A #lungcancer diagnosis can be overwhelming. Here are top 5 Qs to ask your doc to help you understand your options: <a href="http://bit.ly/29S4eTw">http://bit.ly/29S4eTw</a></td>
<td>Being diagnosed with lung cancer can be overwhelming for patients and caregivers. Here are the top 5 questions to ask your doctor to help you understand the diagnosis and options to make decisions that are right for you: <a href="http://bit.ly/29S4eTw">http://bit.ly/29S4eTw</a></td>
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<td>Tue 11/22</td>
<td>African Americans get #lungcancer more than any other ethnic/racial group. Access resources to help you #quit smoking <a href="http://bit.ly/29S34rd">http://bit.ly/29S34rd</a></td>
<td>Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the U.S. A recent study found that emerging tobacco products, such as e-cigarettes and hookah are gaining popularity among middle and high school students. Learn more: <a href="http://bit.ly/2a13aOi">http://bit.ly/2a13aOi</a></td>
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<td>Wed 11/23</td>
<td>Hookah is still smoking! Hookah users may get the same diseases as cigarette smokers, including #lungcancer <a href="http://bit.ly/2adrbVa">http://bit.ly/2adrbVa</a></td>
<td>Although many hookah users think it is less harmful, hookah smoking has many of the same health risks as cigarette smoking, including lung cancer, even after the smoke is passed through water: <a href="http://bit.ly/2adrbVa">http://bit.ly/2adrbVa</a></td>
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<td>Thu 11/24</td>
<td>#Thanksgiving is time for family! Remember: if you smoke around them, you also put them at risk for #LungCancer <a href="http://bit.ly/2adrzTF">http://bit.ly/2adrzTF</a></td>
<td>Happy Thanksgiving! As we gather with our friends and family this holiday, remember to pass the turkey, not the secondhand smoke. If you smoke around your family, you also put them at risk for lung cancer. Learn more: <a href="http://bit.ly/2adrzTF">http://bit.ly/2adrzTF</a></td>
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<td>Mon 11/26</td>
<td>There were 100 million deaths worldwide from tobacco use in the 20th century. More facts from @truthorange: <a href="http://bit.ly/2asftHJ">http://bit.ly/2asftHJ</a></td>
<td>Tobacco hurts the LGBT community and kills more people in the U.S. than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, homicide, suicide, illegal drugs and fires combined. Learn more from FDA’s This Free Life Campaign: <a href="http://bit.ly/2a8wYak">http://bit.ly/2a8wYak</a></td>
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<td>Wed 11/28</td>
<td>#Lungcancer doesn’t just affect smokers. Family history may also play a role. Learn more: <a href="http://bit.ly/2aeTTql">http://bit.ly/2aeTTql</a></td>
<td>Did you know that lung cancer may also have a genetic component? Having a parent, brother or sister or children who have had lung cancer may increase your risk. Learn more about family history and other risk factors from CDC: <a href="http://bit.ly/2aeTTql">http://bit.ly/2aeTTql</a></td>
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<td>Thu 11/29</td>
<td>Breaking the stigma around #lungcancer starts with us. Learn more: <a href="http://bit.ly/2a33SOm">http://bit.ly/2a33SOm</a> #LCSM</td>
<td>Lung cancer survivors are often socially stigmatized by friends or family members. End the silence and the stigma today. Here are some practical tips: <a href="http://bit.ly/2a33SOm">http://bit.ly/2a33SOm</a></td>
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OTHER IDEAS TO PROMOTE LUNG CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Host or Participate in a Twitter Chat

Twitter chats are a great way to expand your audience and promote engagement with other partners and organizations. You can organize a Twitter chat yourself or simply participate in another one. Twitter chats are live moderated Twitter conversations focused around a specific topic, using a single hashtag. They usually last an hour and involve a list of pre-circulated questions to participants. If you are organizing a chat, reach out to partners early and provide the list of questions as far in advance as possible.

Host a Twitterview

A Twitterview is an interview conducted through Tweets. A Twitterview is a form of Twitter Chat where individuals participate in a live moderated Twitter conversation focused around a specific topic using a single hashtag.

For a Twitterview, typically an interviewer asks questions directly to the interviewee and participants can follow the conversation through an event hashtag. You may also open up the interview to questions from the audience. The benefits of a Twitterview include the creation of relevant and interesting content, dissemination of accurate and evidence-based information, increased visibility of your organization and increased engagement with followers.

Pick a hashtag. Using hashtags is a way to group and organize messages together. In Twitterviews, hashtags are used to distinguish your interview from regular Tweets in the feed. Your followers will also be able to filter and track your Twitterview posts by searching your hashtag. Symplur amalgamates popular and established Tweet Chat hashtags on health care topics. If you use an established hashtag, your Tweets may reach audiences that you usually do not reach. If you would like to create your own hashtag, make sure it is short and intuitive. Don’t be afraid to use abbreviations and acronyms, because your questions and answers including the hashtag must be under 140 characters.

Pick a date and time, then secure a speaker or speakers to be interviewed. Potentially influential speakers might include researchers, cancer survivors or caregivers, health care providers or other subject matter experts. Provide your speaker(s) with a list of what questions will be asked before the event, so they can prepare their answers in under 140 characters, which can take time and editing. Decide in advance whether you are going to open up the interview to your followers and let your speaker(s) know what to expect. Consider using a website to help manage the Twitterview such as TweetChat or TWUBS.

Promote the event to your followers. Host the event, running it similarly to how you would host a live in-person meeting (introduce topic, speaker, your organization). Number your questions starting with a “Q“ for question. For example: Q1: What questions should #lungcancer survivors ask their doc? #LCSMChat. Your speaker(s) can either “reply” to the question you Tweet or Tweet starting with an “A” and the corresponding number. For example: A1: Start w/questions about short- and long-term side effects & screening #LCSMChat.
Retweet or favorite the best questions posed by your followers and answers by your speaker(s) and be sure to share relevant links and resources. After the event, archive an event summary and share with participants and your other followers. Consider using Storify to create a visual transcript of the Twitterview.

**Best Practices for Engagement Events and Activities**

- Plan early and well
- Expand your audience and reach by partnering with another organization
- Make sure you use an original hashtag (unless it makes sense to use an established hashtag)
- Prepare as many questions and responses in Tweet format as possible in advance
- Involving well-known local figures may help raise the profile of your event(s) and increase participation and engagement

**MEASURING SUCCESS**

Looking to measure the success of your social media campaign? Twitter and Facebook both offer free analytic tools to allow you to demonstrate the impact of your social media efforts.

Twitter Analytics allows you to see and download detailed tracking information about Tweet activity, engagement, audience and trends over time. Log in to analytics.twitter.com/about with your Twitter username and password to learn more.

Facebook Insights allows users to track page likes, post reach, number of visits, specific posts as well as who is following your page. According to Facebook, “posts that get more likes, comments and shares show up more in News Feed and are seen by more people. Posts that are hidden, reported as spam or cause people to unlike your Page reach fewer people.”

Klout tracks the influence and reach of your social media profiles and provides a score based on how others are interacting with your content across multiple networks. It also provides information on your top posts so you can see what content is generating action from your networks.

**ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES**

**Owly**: Link shortener from Hootsuite

**TinyURL**: Link shortener that allows for customization of URLs to make them more memorable

**Goo.gl**: Link shortener that allows for tracking of clicks

**Hootsuite, Sprout Social**: Online platforms that allow organizations to schedule Tweets and Facebook posts, keep up with their feed (the posts of those they follow), and collect basic analytics for evaluation

**Tweetdeck**: Platform from Twitter that allows for pre-scheduling Tweets, including pre-loading photos

**Thunderclap**: Social networking tool that allows you to “crowdsource” your social media campaign to increase its
impact

**Periscope**: Live-streaming video app so you can show events or videos live to your audience on social media

**Klout**: Service that tracks your organization’s level of online social influence

**Canva**: Allows users to create visually appealing graphics and photos for social media and print materials; includes a collection of low-cost or free stock photos and backgrounds

**CDC Public Health Image Library (PHIL)**: Free image library.

**CDC "photostream" on Flickr**: Website designed for public image sharing. CDC images include public health photos and graphics developed for public health events that users can comment on and share.

**CDC Infographics**: Gallery of CDC-designed infographics to visually communicate data or information

**GLOSSARY**

**Facebook**: A social networking site that allows people to create personal profiles and stay connected with others ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com))

**Feed**: News feeds which you receive straight into your account

**Followers**: People who have agreed to receive your Tweets or Facebook posts

**Hashtags (#)**: A form of metadata tag that makes it possible to group messages

**Retweet (RT)**: Re-posting of someone else’s Tweet

**Tweets**: 140-character text messages

**Twitter**: An online social networking and microblogging service that enables users to send and read short 140-character text messages, called “Tweets” ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com))

**Twitter chat**: A live moderated Twitter conversation focused around a specific topic using a single hashtag

**Twitter handle**: Your Twitter name that begins with the “@” sign. For example: @GWCancer

**Twittersphere or Twitterverse**: The total universe of Twitter users and their habits

**Twitterview**: A combination of the terms Twitter, a popular microblogging platform, and interview. It is a type of interview for which the medium restricts the interviewer and interviewee to short-form responses

See Twitter’s “Twitter Glossary” for more.
REFERENCES


