



Utilizing Medical Advisory Councils for Effective Community Engagement and Advocacy

Kansas Academy of Family Physicians, Wichita, Kansas



Introduction

Healthcare provider input is essential to health policy initiatives, adding legitimacy and leading to forward progress. Health coalitions struggle with strategies to engage providers in community efforts. Conversely, healthcare providers often lack the time to effectively reach the general public. Since approximately 68% of all U.S. adults now use social media at least on a weekly basis, it is even more important for the health community to update its communication approaches.

Tobacco Free Wichita Coalition (TFW) was formed in 1970 as a grassroots collaboration "to protect the residents of Wichita/Sedgwick County from the adverse effects of tobacco". The Kansas Academy of Family Physicians (KAFF) serves on TFW's Leadership Team, which has shaped the coalition's physician-focused initiatives. This included the establishment of a ten-member Medical Advisory Council (MAC) in 2015, which aims to:

- Provide connections to the medical community
- Review material / communication for medical accuracy
- Provide testimony and formulate recommendations
- Communicate health messaging through media outlets and social media channels

In April of 2015, a MAC meeting was held to celebrate successes and identify needs for the Council. Media training was the number one need identified by members.

This presentation will discuss lessons learned for engaging providers in a social media-based health communication campaign.

Objectives

1. To amplify accurate and trustworthy health messaging
2. To engage physicians in public health initiatives
3. To increase progress in health policy and reform regarding tobacco issues

Methods

Funding

- KAFF received a \$10,000 Tobacco "Mini-Grant" from the American Academy of Family Physicians to host a media training and engage MAC in social media efforts

Media Experts

- Contracted with "The Social Nurse" and Nye & Associates to conduct media trainings
- Contacted local reporters (TV, radio & print) to participate in media panel

Trainings

- Held multiple "Social Media 101" trainings (in-person & online), recorded for future use
- Held 1/2-day media training included an expert panel, provided communications tips, and practiced interviewing techniques on "hot topics"

MAC Social Media Plan

- Researched health-specific hashtags & registered #KSHealth
- Developed instructions for #KSHealth & sample social media posts
- Promoted #KSHealth to MAC & statewide partners
- Connected TFW Twitter & Facebook to other health pages
- Tracked reach with free analytic tools

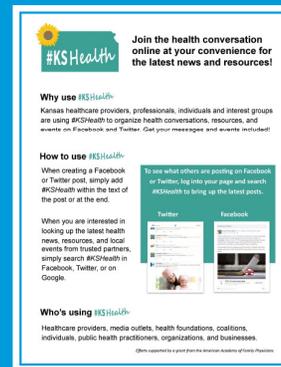
#KSHealth

MAC members utilized a hashtag to help curate health conversations, resources, and events into one stream, as well as to easily track related social media posts.

The group researched hashtags currently being used and found that a few Kansas health news partners, foundations, and organizations were starting to use #KSHealth, which allowed MAC to build interest through current health conversations.

Staff registered the #KSHealth hashtag through "Symplur" and developed an instruction sheet explaining the use of hashtags to amplify health messages with the help of a social media consultant.

#KSHealth is one avenue for healthcare providers to share accurate health messaging and catch up on the Kansas health conversation.

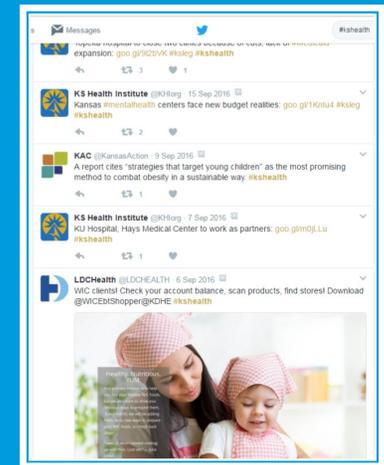


#KSHealth guide

Results

During this project MAC members have:

- Established procedures for using #KSHealth on social media to track MAC posts
- Generated health messages on Facebook and Twitter, including content for the general public and providers
- Recruited four additional physicians to MAC
- Increased the number of health organization followers for TFW's Facebook page by 500% from Oct 2016-April 2017.
- Increased overall followers for TFW's Facebook & Twitter pages by 15% & 30%, respectively



#KSHealth screenshot



MAC members preparing media interviews



Local television and newspaper reporters providing advice

Acknowledgements

- Funding provided by the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation
- Social media expertise provided by "The Social Nurse"
- Media expertise provided by Nye & Associates
- Media panel commentary provided by Kelsy Ryan (*The Wichita Eagle*) & Denise Killian (*KSN-TV*)
- Thank you to the healthcare providers serving on TFW's Medical Advisory Council.