



The use of social media

Benefits and pitfalls

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Learning objectives

- Uses and pitfalls in dentistry/ orthodontics
- Using it effectively and wisely
- Guidance on the use of social media
- Expectations on us as professionals

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**What do we think when we hear the term
“social media?”**

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Definition of social media

- Web-based services that facilitate collaboration between users
- Users can create and share content



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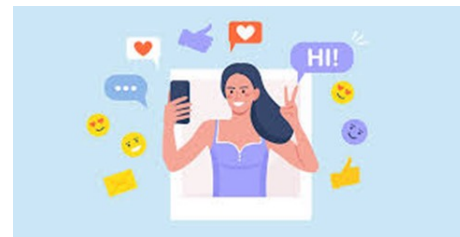
Social media usage



- >3.5 billion daily social media users worldwide
- 3 hrs/day average daily usage (Tjepkema 2020)
- Significant impact on our daily lives
 - Personal
 - Professional
- Influences our behaviour and decisions
- May cross privacy boundaries
- ***What are the positives and drawbacks of social media?***

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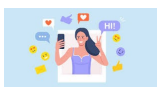
Positives of social media?



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Positives of social media

- Connection
 - Community/"Finding your voice"
 - Offering support
- Networking
- Income source: influencer
- Share information
- Educational resource
- Promotion of service/ product
 - National/ international exposure
 - Cost-effective
 - Accessible



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Potential drawbacks of social media?



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Drawbacks of social media

- Security Risks
- Misinformation/ lack of evidence
- Addictive
- Aspirational
- Impact on mental health
- Cyberbullying- comments
- Privacy issues/ confidentiality
- Time-consuming
- Unrealistic expectations
- Due to volume hard to identify high quality information



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Uses of social media in orthodontics

- Delivered interactively in various formats
- Engage with patients in non-traditional formats



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Information source for patients



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Are our patients scrolling?



- 90% millennials active social media users (Emarketer 2020)
- Siddiqui et al. 2022
Survey 125 orthodontic patients
 - 99% access to social media
 - 64% aware social media platforms available to help with ortho treatment
 - 30% had used social media related to their treatment
 - Instagram
 - Snapchat
 - 73% would use social media in future to support their treatment

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Information source for patients

- Our patients are using the internet to access info regarding treatment
- Supplementing verbal/ written instructions with You Tube video improved knowledge on fixed appliances (*O'Brien and Dunne 2017*)
- Patients exposed to TADS on social media more likely to accept as treatment option (*Sampson 2021*)
- Variable quality/accuracy : You Tube often contain pt videos
 - Inappropriate adds
- Important patients have access to evidence-based info to support decision making

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Information source for patients

- ***Frawley et al. 2019***
 - Patients reported deficiencies in info they were provided by clinicians
 - ***Sought info from other sources including social media***
 - Looking for other patients experiences that they can relate to going through similar treatment
 - Potential limitation:
 - ? may be more likely to share negative experiences
 - May be better to encourage pts to speak to close friends/ relatives who have experienced orthodontics
 - ***Use of trusted resources and recommending these to pt's***

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Information sources

- https://youtu.be/MN1BPzI3zLU?si=yPFemYPtj-OGYd_c



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Education and networking

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Education and networking

- Education source for professionals
 - Blogs disseminating new research:
 - Kevin O'Brien's Orthodontic Blog
 - Orthodontic Fundamentals/orthoreads - Padhraig Fleming
 - Orthodontics in Summary - Farooq Ahmed podcast
 - Facebook groups – dentistry and orthodontics:
 - Discuss patient care
 - Private
 - Unregulated: caution
 - May be dominated by more opinionated individuals
 - Comments facilitate discussion amongst professionals



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Education and networking

- Education source for patients:
 - Closed groups can be used to facilitate support amongst groups of patients/ parents e.g cleft lip and palate
 - Can access information regarding key stages of treatment pathway from trusted and reliable sources
 - Provides a support network

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Advertising and Marketing

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Advertising and marketing

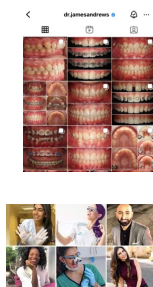
- Explosion in use of social media platforms for marketing products and practices
- Social media accounts for 76% marketing strategy in orthodontics
- More popular than practice websites
- 3 main methods:
 - Organic marketing to individuals who have chosen to follow practitioner/ practice
 - Direct paid advertising to social media platform e.g smile direct club
 - Social media influencer promoting service/ product

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Advertising and marketing

Clinicians increasing their presence on social media:

- Building a "community"
- Demonstrating their service to current/ potential patients
- Business-to-business networking:
 - recruit staff
- Offers targeted, powerful and cost-effective marketing: wide reach
- Patient stories/ staff activities/ educational material



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- Platforms full of videos like this

- What's effective?

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Accuracy of Instagram posts: marketed products

Alkadhimi et al 2022

- Scrutinize claims made within Instagram posts related to 6 popular marketed ortho products
 - #Carrieremotion, #damon, #Invisalign, #acceledent, #propelorthodontics, #myobrace
- 300 post from clinicians, labs, companies or practices



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Findings

- 472 claims made- treatment duration 26.5% posts
- Accuracy: 60% of the claims were judged to be "false"
 - Not supported by evidence
 - Efforts need to be made to promote accurate orthodontic info and verify marketing claims on these platforms

#carrieremotion "Main advantages of Carrier Motion 3D... Significantly shorter treatment time... obtaining greater cooperation from the patient and consequently a faster and more stable result..."

#damonbraces "The Damon System has been proven to treat faster and require fewer appointments than traditional braces..."

#invisalign "Why Dr. A uses Damon Braces... if doesn't cause as much tenderness compared to traditional braces..."

#acceledent "Some of the health benefits of Invisalign... Reduced pain from TMJ disorder symptoms caused by misalignment..."

#propelorthodontics "Propelalign... is a 3D printed... clear aligner... treatment... treatment... treatment..."

#myobrace "Myobrace... corrects... corrects... corrects..."

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Marketing and Advertising

- Careful not to make misleading claims when advertising
- Good practice to declare any conflict of interest
- All members of the team need to be aware of:
 - GDC Professional Standards
 - Consent
 - Data protection: GDPR

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GDC Standards for the dental team

1	Put patients' interests first
2	Communicate effectively with patients
3	Obtain valid consent
4	Maintain and protect patients' information
5	Have a clear and effective complaints procedure
6	Work with colleagues in a way that is in patients' best interests
7	Maintain, develop and work within our professional knowledge and skills
8	Raise concerns if patients are at risk
9	Make sure our personal behaviour maintains confidence in us and the dental profession

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GDC guidance social media (2016)

- ***'You must not post any information or comments about patients on social networking or blogging sites.'***
- ***'If you use professional social media to discuss anonymised cases for the purpose of discussing best practice you must be careful that the patient or patients cannot be identified.'***

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GDC guidance on social media (2016)



When using social media, you must:

- Maintain and protect pt's info which could identify them without their **explicit consent**
- Maintain appropriate boundaries you have with pts and team members
- Comply with your employers internet/ social media policy

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GDC guidance on social media (2016)



You must treat colleagues fairly and with respect, in all situations and all forms of interaction and communication. This includes interaction and communication on social media.



Do not instigate or take part in any form of cyber bullying, intimidation, or the use of offensive language online.



If you share any such content posted by someone else, you can still be held responsible even though you did not create it.

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Personal accounts



- Social media has blurred boundaries
- Standards same as face to face
- Expected to behave professionally and responsibly
- Personal online image can impact your professional life
 - Do not post/ share info including photos which damage public trust in profession
 - Review privacy settings
 - Assume everything shared online will be there permanently and could be seen by anyone
- Defamation Act 2013: damage to someones reputation

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GDC Guidance on advertising (2013)

- Any advertising, promotional material or other info you produce must be:
 - Accurate and not misleading
 - Could lead to fitness to practice investigation
 - Care when explaining your services to them: should be factual, balanced and enables them to make informed choice
 - Misleading claims can raise expectations that cannot be fulfilled: putting pt's at risk of harm
 - Make clear may not be appropriate for every pt

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Conclusions

DO

Act professionally
Treat people with respect
Maintain confidentiality and privacy at all times
Maintain proper professional boundaries
Think before you post!!

DON'T

- Bully, harass or intimidate
- Unlawfully discriminate
- Post inappropriate comments
- Share info about patients without explicit consent

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