

Chapter 1

The Use of Social Media by Medical Librarians for Inclusive Engagement in the Management of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria University Teaching Hospitals

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ABSTRACT

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have over the years evolved and synthesized to leverage a wide variety of tasks in all fields of human endeavor including library services. This rapid transformation has not only affected information handling procedures but has equally reshaped approach to the work environment in that librarians attached to medical libraries is required to acquire some knowledge of medicine in order to adequately and efficiently make informed decisions that can positively impact on the general medical practice and specifically the management of HIV/AIDS. The use of ICTs such as social media (SM) has further made the work environment a community pivot, a rallying point, rather than the solitary tedium that has retarded learning, communication, advancement, cooperation, and community support in the past.

BACKGROUND

The internet has greatly influenced SM penetration into all aspects of library services especially in the medical library where community of users (CoUs) can converge, confer and proffer simplified work output, better doctor-patient relationship and effective treatment. Hence, for effective implementation of SM in Nigeria university teaching hospitals, there is the need for the following to be put into consid-

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eration: formulation of online groups; schedule of regular updating of the site and contact information; simplification of keywords for easy content search and profiling; need to always inform members of current items, creating novel ideas as cleverly and satisfying as possible, need to widen out or reach others with novelties, advancement, activities, current drugs for specific ailments, and resistive drugs.

INTRODUCTION

The success of every establishment depend largely on the availability of information at its disposal. University teaching hospitals are charged with the responsibility of providing useful information to its community and for caring for their patients. They depend on the services of the library to be able to meet with this demand. The library itself in modern times largely depends on information and communication technologies (ICTs) in order to satisfy the information needs of both medical staff, students, and the community. ICT has evolved, diversified, and synthesized to leverage a wide variety of tasks in the medical field as such, the fastest means of communication that can get to the intended public mostly would be sought after. Access to current and useful information is an integral part of national development, whilst ICT such as SM plays a vital role in leveraging university teaching hospital objectives in ensuring that adequate and swift response to healthcare service delivery is practiced (Ochonogor & Okite-Amughoro 2018). To achieve this objective, both the medical practitioners, librarians, students, patients, and the stakeholders must be inclusively engaged and ensure a shared and satisfactory obligations.

The use of SM has however made the work environment a community pivot, or a rallying point, rather than the solitary tedium that has retarded learning, communication, health service delivery and advancement, cooperation or collaboration, and community support in the past. The term social media is broad and constantly evolving (Ventola, 2014) and generally referred to as internet-based tools that allow individuals and communities to gather and communicate; to share information, ideas, personal messages, images and other contents; and, in some cases, to collaborate with other users in real time; (Chauhan, & Coffin, 2012; ASHP, 2012; Duke, Anstey, Carter, Gosse, Hutchens & Marsh, 2017; Lambert, Barry, & Stokes 2012; Von Muhlen & Ohno-Machado, 2012; Ventola 2014) to sustain and ensure inclusivity within the health system. Such prevalent usage of SM has triggered the growing need for a corresponding and enhanced awareness of the field upon which groups forming a social network should be based. Hence, sustaining the group by soliciting information from all its members especially those who are vast in topics of discussion.

As SM use in the field of medical profession gains more ground, it provides tools for the sharing of health information, to debate healthcare policy and practice issues, to promote good health behaviors, to engage with the public, and to educate and interact with patients, caregivers, students, and colleagues (Ventola, 2014) including librarians who source, locate, preserve, and share the required information; and stakeholders responsible for the policy formulation and day-to-day administrative care of man and material items of the teaching hospital. Hence, for a modern UTH librarian or generally, clinical medical librarian (CML) to perform their duty of information provision for the community of medical profession, they require at least some degree of medical training. According to Taggart, Grewe, Conserve, Gliwa, & Isler, (2015) SM, including mobile technologies and social networking sites, are being used increasingly as part of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention and treatment efforts. They further asserted that SM is an important avenue for communication about HIV, likewise its use may continue to increase and become more widespread. This increase can only arise when librarians attached to teaching hospitals

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