

# Social Media, Technology and Surgery – Creating Awareness



Social media and technologies are a networking computer mediated technology that allows people and other organizations to share, create or exchange information, literature, researchers, videos/blogs, and ideas in virtual communities. Nowadays social media is so active that it has reached every hand in the form of mobiles, laptops, tablets, and televisions, and of course newspaper. Nowadays health care professionals are also connected worldwide through this via WhatsApp, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, journals, literature, and magazines, etc. The use of social media is not only limited to reading and publishing, but now it is also employed in surgeries with the help of computers, cameras, and unit of telepresence from a remote location.

Uses of technology and social media are now becoming available in many areas of health care including surgeries. Operations with the help of computer-mediated technologies are now widely and frequently used in general and maxillofacial surgery, organizations, hospitals, and even in private practice.

Thaker *et al.*<sup>[1]</sup> revealed that of 1323 PatientsLikeMe users, approximately 50% found the site helpful for understanding the side effects of their treatments, and 42% agreed that the site helped them engage with peers who had undergone similar procedures.

Hospitals across the country are turning to social media as a means of distributing their message, educating their patients, and marketing their services.

Barry<sup>[2]</sup> identified the primary social media users for 1800 hospitals using social media: Supplying information to a general audience (97%), providing content about the entire organization (93%), announcing news and events (91%), furthering public relations (89%), and promoting health (90%). Hospital systems such as the Mayo Clinic, Henry Ford Health System, Innovis, and Scripps Health use blogs—or interactive, open communication Web-based pages, linked with Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube—to expand their reach to patients.<sup>[3]</sup>

Surgeons are no different than the general population in adopting new technologies such as social media for their personal use. The American College of Surgeons survey showed that 55% of respondents used Facebook, 48% used LinkedIn, and 82% viewed videos on YouTube for their personal use.<sup>[4]</sup>

The use of technologies and social media aims to improve education, helps to reach advances, and new researches in the same field with understanding its limitations and safety. Laparoscopic, computer assisted, and telepresence assisted technologies are the excellent example of techniques using in the field of surgeries. The use of social media along with technology in education, treatments, etc., has made many things simpler and easier for health care providers, postgraduate students, and researchers not only in surgery but each sector of health care systems.

It is most important for health care provider, doctor, surgeon, scientist, etc., to understand, use and adapt these in their daily life with understanding its limitations and utilizing it's in all means for the growth of the practice, educate students, and better patient care.

In summary, social networking is not a new concept to understand but it is growing day by day. It has gone on for generations: From your grandparents communicating via a handwritten letter to you, your parents communicating via telephone to you, and your children now texting you or perhaps teaching you how to text. Communication and relationship building has always been a part of the human condition. With each technologic advance, information can be disseminated faster, easier, and sometimes even better. To better inform and care for patients it is important that we embrace these advances.

**Anand Kumar**

*Department of Dental Surgery, Moti Lal Nehru  
Govt Medical College Allahabad 211001,  
Uttar Pradesh, India*

**Address for Correspondence:**

Dr. Anand Kumar,  
Department of Dental Surgery, Moti Lal Nehru Medical College  
SRN Hospital, Allahabad - 211001, India.  
E-mail: anandkmr901@gmail.com

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