THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICINE CONFERENCE

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BACKGROUND

• 14th International Conference on Emergency Medicine (ICEM 2012)
• >200 speakers
• 2400 delegates
• Growing numbers of “virtual delegates” at medical conferences

STUDY QUESTION

• How did speakers and delegates at ICEM 2012 utilise “new” web-based media?
METHODS

• Part A
  • Speakers identified via the organising committee
  • A database was constructed detailing the presence and activity of speakers on social media platforms

• Part B
  • Using the twitter archiving website symplur.com every tweet about the conference using the hashtag #ICEM2012 was tracked
  • All tweets were reviewed and classified by three of the authors into predetermined categories
RESULTS

• Part A
  • 41.5% of speakers had a LinkedIn account
  • 15.6% of speakers had a twitter handle
  • 9.4% had an active website or blog
  • 0.9% were active on Google+

• Part B
  • There were over 4,500 tweets about ICEM 2012
  • Over 400 people generated tweets about the conference
  • Only 34% of these people physically attended the conference
  • 74.4% of original tweets generated were directly related to the clinical and research material of the conference (next slide)
RESULTS

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF #ICEM2012 TWEETS
TWITTER PARTICIPATION AT #ICEM2012

Look who’s talking…
#ICEM2012
NETWORK CENTRALITY ANALYSIS

LEGEND:
EACH NODE = A TWITTER HANDLE
NODE SIZE = NUMBER OF TWEETS
CONNECTIONS = CONVERSATIONS
CONCLUSION

- At ICEM 2012 there was significant use of the social media platform Twitter for communication of research findings and dissemination of education.
  - **Biggest:** Twitter activity was substantially greater than that reported at previous Emergency Medicine conferences.
  - **Room for improvement:** limited use of social media platforms by speakers prior to ICEM 2012 suggests there is scope for increased recognition by the medical establishment of the utility of social media in the sharing of research and education.
  - **The virtual delegate:** social media technologies facilitate real-time global participation in conference activities beyond the confines of the conference venue.