Intention-to-Tweet: A Randomized Trial of Social Media from Circulation

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**Background:** Many medical professionals use social media to share medical information. Medical journals use social media to distribute the findings of published articles. However, whether social media exposure to original articles improves article impact metrics is uncertain. We conducted a randomized controlled trial at the journal Circulation to determine whether social media exposure improves article metrics.

**Methods:** At the time of publication, articles were randomized to receive targeted social media exposure from Circulation, including postings on the Facebook and Twitter accounts of Circulation. Randomization occurred using envelope randomization on a per paper basis. We excluded all papers that received a national AHA press release. The primary end-point is mean 30-day article page views (inclusive of downloads, abstract views); data will be abstracted using Google analytics. We will conduct an intention-to-treat analysis comparing mean 30-day article page views by Fisher’s exact test between the papers randomized to social media as compared to those in the control group, which receives no social media from Circulation. Pre-specified subgroups include article type (population/clinical/basic), US vs. non-US corresponding author, and whether the manuscript received an editorial. Assuming a sample size of 119 papers in each group, we will have 90% power to detect an improvement of 20% in the primary endpoint for social media over the control group at a two-sided alpha of 0.05. The study is currently ongoing and will be completed by September, 2014.

**Results:** At the time of presentation, randomization and data acquisition will be complete, the database locked, and analyses completed. At the LBCT session, we will present the primary results of our trial, as well as the pre-specified subgroup analyses.

**Conclusion:** These results will indicate whether a social media strategy for a cardiovascular journal increases the number of times an article is viewed. Randomized controlled trials reported in medical journals are used as the evidence basis for medical decision making. This trial extends this methodology to understand the role of social media-based communication on the impact of information delivery by cardiovascular journals.

Disclosure:

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