

Social media use by Italian Emergency Medicine and Critical Care physicians and nurses: a national survey

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Introduction

Free Open Access Medical Education (FOAM) is a collection of free resources for enhancing learning in medicine. In the last decade there was a rapid expansion of emergency medicine and critical care (EMCC) blogs involving also Italy. This study examines social media (SoMe) use among EMCC physicians and nurses in our country.

Methods

We conducted an online cross-sectional voluntary, anonymous survey from October 18th to November 18th, 2018. The survey, composed of 28 questions, was distributed using SoMe and sent by email to EMPills blog's newsletter subscribers. Participants were asked about their demographic and professional background, and how they use SoMe for medical education.

Results

We received 409 valid answers included in the final analysis.

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents were less than 45 years old, 45.5% were physicians, 44.5% were nurses and 10% were residents. 94% of the respondents used SoMe for medical education, and 39% of them at least one time per week. Most of participants state that they use Facebook (64%) and Twitter (19%) for medical education purposes and they prefer contents with images and infographics (54%), and authored by reliable professionals (49%).

Respondents used SoMe mainly to stay up-to-date (70%), discover new training opportunities (44%) or share published papers (33%). Most of them would like to find Evidence-Based Medicine resources (85%). The two major hesitations from using SoMe were quality of resources and little time

available. 86% of respondents were interested in using FOAM for earning continuing medical education credits.

Conclusion

Italian EMCC physicians and nurses extensively use SoMe to improve their medical knowledge. This study provides useful information for a higher quality content delivery to the Italian FOAM community.