Tips for Using Instagram

Should your group use Instagram?

Instagram is a social media platform primarily accessed through mobile phones. It offers some advantages but also some unique challenges and may not be for all groups.

Instagram comes with several limitations that may not be suitable for your group, these include:

- Instagram is set up to keep the audience inside the app and does not encourage users to leave through external links. You can have one link in your profile (see below for a slight workaround) so it is not a great platform for promoting lots of direct links to reviews.
- Instagram is primarily visual – if your group does not have a lot of pictures or the skill set to do graphics, this may not the platform for you.
- The graphics are squares – you can place rectangles, such as blogshots, on Instagram but they are resized to fit into the square and will be smaller. This change in size and the fact that they are mostly viewed on mobile devices, doesn't make it a great platform for sharing blog shots -although you can.

Instagram offers several advantages over other platforms for you group, these include:

- Access to a younger demographic - Instagram is great for targeting a younger demographic: general public, university students, med students, early career clinicians.
- A large audience – There are over 800 million active users. Over 500 million are on the platform on a daily basis and 38 percent checking the site multiple times each day.

- Video **–** Instagram offers the option to do live video streams or add short videos to your 'stories' section that post for 24hours only. This is great way to easily share clips of training sessions or share conferences you are attending.

> TOP TIP: Want to share something on Instagram but your group doesn't have the time to maintain your own account? Share your stories and pictures by emailing mumoquit@cochrane.org We'll share it on the main account and take care of all the related hashtags for you!

What content to share?

Instagram is a great way to showcase your group, what you do, and the people that are involved.

You may wish to show pictures from:

- training courses you hold
- conferences you attend
- around your office
- behind the scenes/meetings
- Symposium and Colloquium pictures

You are also welcome to repost any content shared on the main Cochrane account

Setting it up your Instagram account

Instagram provides detailed instructions for setting up your account. There are two Cochrane-specific things to note though:

Selecting your name

- Your username can have 30 characters and can contains only letters, numbers, periods and underscores (no spaces). It's recommended to NOT use periods and underscores as it makes it harder to find your name when searching.
- We suggest using the same name as your twitter handle.
- We suggested using "Cochrane" and then your group name eg. "cochraneheart" or "cochranecanada" If your name is too long, then use your acronym, eg. "cochraneepoc"

Selecting your profile picture

- As for all social media accounts, we recommend using your Cochrane group's logo as your profile picture. The logo without the writing below or to the side is preferred.

Connecting it to Facebook

- If you have a Facebook Page for your group (does not work for Facebook Groups), you can connect your accounts and turn your Instagram into a business account. This

provides access to your Instagram analytics and allows you to use scheduling programs such as Buffer.

Adding Geographic locations

Adding a geographical location for your posts is very helpful for Centres to use as it can help you reach an audience looking at posts tagged with that specific location. You can select your country or rotate through major cities of your country. For Review Groups you can use your host institution/country or leave blank. See here for instructions.

Using hashtags

Hashtags are a word or phrase preceded by a hash or pound sign (#) and used to identify messages on a specific **topic. It's an excellent way to reach a new audience looking for specific information. You can** look up specific healthcare hashtags in the Symplur index. At Cochrane we use specific hashtags for different products and events to help the Cochrane Community find items across the many accounts.

We have developed a handy cheat sheet of the most common Cochrane-Specific hashtags to use on twitter but this information is applicable to Instagram as well!

It's often a good idea to have a document where you collect hashtags for your group for future reference – see here for a useful article on finding and using hashtags on Instagram.

One Link in your profile

You can only add one link in your Instagram profile. We suggest using a free service such as Linktr.ee to add multiple links. You can see the one for our main account here: https://linktr.ee/cochraneorg When we are promoting a specific review we would then direct people to the link to the Cochrane Library in our profile and how to get to it. It should be noted that the click through rates for Instagram are very low – they have designed Instagram to keep people in the app, not to leave it unless it's a paid advertisement. Please keep this in mind when sharing content – i.e. provide the needed information in the picture description, rather than relying people clicking through to fuller post.

I have a question! I need more help!

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