Using Social Media to Increase Accessibility to Online Teaching Resources

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Abstract
The key learning points of Surgical Grand Rounds (SGR) are often not accessible at times of exam revision for students. We sought to use Twitter as an online teaching repository. A SGR Twitter profile was created. 23 SGR presentations were made accessible on Twitter over a 3 month period. 93 students were invited to complete a questionnaire assessing usage of the repository. 84 (90%) in total responded, of these, 25 (80.6%) felt that the online provision of SGR through twitter was "useful". The majority (71%) felt that the online content was easily accessible. The novel use of social media is a useful adjunctive educational tool in accessing an online repository of SGR presentations.

Introduction
Surgical Grand Rounds (SGR) have traditionally been a keystone of clinical medical teaching. Despite the educational potential of SGR, often the material presented is not routinely stored. Presentations are often transiently available and not accessible for medical students at key times of revision for examinations. Previous studies have demonstrated the efficacy of novel web-based technology such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter as educational tools1-3. Twitter is an online social media service that enables users to send and read “tweets”, a message of 140 characters, and is accessible across a range of platforms including laptops, smartphones and tablets. In this study we sought to describe the usage of Twitter to allow a readily accessible, searchable online repository of SGR presentations for final year medical students.

Methods
The Twitter profile @surggrandrounds was created. Presenters at SGR were asked to email presentations in Microsoft PowerPoint format to a central Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland email address. Presentations were edited to remove any images or text which might compromise the anonymity of the cases being presented. The PowerPoint files were then saved in portable document format (PDF). The website www.SurgInfection.com is one maintained by the authors for the purposes of ‘tweet’ on the @surggrandrounds Twitter profile. The creation of @surggrandrounds Twitter profile was announced at the commencement of the academic year for the final year medical students attending the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. After students on clinical rotation assessed usage and perceived collated on Microsoft Excel and exported to SPSS version 20 for statistical analysis.

Within a two week period following its launch the @surggrandrounds profile had more than 120 medical students of 43 Tweets were sent, and 28 SGR presentations were made accessible on Twitter over a 3 month period. 93 students were invited to complete a questionnaire assessing usage of the repository. 84 (90%) in total responded, of these, 25 (80.6%) felt that the online provision of SGR through twitter was “useful”. The majority (71%) felt that the online content was easily accessible, with 8(25.8%) undecided, and 1(3.2%) stating the content was not easily accessible. All of the respondents (n=31, 100%) who had used the @surggrandrounds Twitter feed to access SGR presentations felt that it should continue as part of surgical clinical teaching in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

Results
Within a two week period following its launch the @surggrandrounds profile had more than 120 medical students following the Twitter feed. Over the three month period a total of 43 Tweets were sent, and 28 SGR presentations were made available. Overall 93 final year students were invited to complete the Likert-based questionnaire, there were 84 respondents giving a response rate of 90%. A total of 31 respondents (36.9%) used the @surggrandrounds Twitter feed to access SGR presentations over the three month period. Of these 25 (80.6%) felt that the online provision of SGR through twitter was “useful”. The majority

References