



## Oral Communication

## Session/Topic: HIV: Walking along the continuum of care

### N. Title:

**OC 73 Social media and people with HIV: work in progress. Results from an Italian survey**

### Authors:

A. Donti<sup>1</sup>, M. Boni<sup>1</sup>, M.M. Daghio<sup>1</sup>, A.P. Cavazzuti<sup>1</sup>, G. Fattori<sup>2</sup>

### Affiliation:

<sup>1</sup>Marketing Sociale Onlus, <sup>2</sup>Social Marketing, Compass, University of Bologna

### Abstract:

**Background:** As it is evident from the literature, the use of Internet, particularly Web 2.0 in healthcare, is now under debate. Mainly, in Italy there is a shortage of specific studies concerning the use of social media and new technologies in the infectious disease field, particularly in HIV/AIDS. In order to explore this issue, we carried out a survey to understand how, today, the use of new media could influence the behaviour of people living with HIV (PLWH) and their physician-patient relationship.

**Material and Methods:** A specific survey of 27 multiple-choice questions directly addressed to PLWH was performed for 3 months (Dec/2016-Feb/2017). It was created and promoted by MKTS (coordinamento nazionale marketing sociale), in collaboration with a Patient/Community Advocacy Group (P/CAG) NADIR. It was distributed through websites, newsletters, facebook, twitter, involving NADIR, as well as other P/CAG: ANLAIDS, ARCOBALENO AIDS, ASA, ASSOCIAZIONE COMUNITÀ EMMAUS, ASSOCIAZIONE INSIEME, CICA, CNCA, LILA, CIRCOLO MARIO MIELI, PLUS.

**Results:** The responders were 255 (M 77.7%; n = 199), age between 41 and 60 years in 61.7% (n = 157) of cases, resident in the Centre-North of Italy in 86.9% of cases (n = 222) with high education (43%, n = 110 secondary school; 39.8%, n = 102 university). 90.6% (n = 230) of responders declare to have a profile on a social media (Facebook in 93.8%; n = 212). Although the Internet is regularly used for personal purpose (97.2%; n = 247), professional (72.4%; n = 184) and relational (55.5%; n = 141), the percentages are reversed for the use in the healthcare sector (33.8%, n = 86).

Specifically, 65% (n = 165) believed unnecessary/useless the use of social media for interacting with their doctor and 45.7% (n = 116) said they do not use internet for communicating with other PLWH. More than 90% of users/patients never uses Blogs, Forums and social networks to communicate with their physician in infectious diseases; also E-mail, SMS and WhatsApp are little used, confirming that "the traditional phone" continues to be the preferred as communication tool (27.7%, n = 70). Of note, that it is viewed favourably the possibility of having both a mobile application - dedicated to the communication with the specialist (doctor) and/or the clinical centre (71.2%, n = 180) - and an on-line counselling service (79.5%, n = 201).

**Conclusions:** Despite a substantial use of social media for personal and professional purpose, PLWH sporadically use these tools to interact with their own infectious disease physician and with his/her community. Face to face doctor-patient relationship remains definitely privileged for communicating health problems. Both mobile applications and counselling services result appreciated for the interaction with the healthcare world. Consequently, these tools are worthy of future study and development, in order to implement a new organizational digital model in this area.