

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND MEDICAL TOXICOLOGY: WHAT'S TRENDING IN 2015**

Kathryn T Kopec, DO

*Carolinas Medical Center, Charlotte, NC, USA*

This session will include an overview of social media resources and their advantages and limitations compared to traditional educational and epidemiologic strategies. Examples of popular social media educational resources and trends will be emphasized, and barriers to wider adoption by the clinical toxicology community will be examined. Research on social media's impact on health care overall is limited, but this field is growing rapidly. Some clinical toxicologists have demonstrated that they are early adopters of this communications technology.

Social media has become a significant resource for medical education, especially with the advent of the FOAM (Free Open Access Medical education) movement. There are a large number of social media outlets that feature current content and educational opportunities created by expanding networks of FOAM educators. Examples include: Twitter, Facebook, Google Scholar, LinkedIn, YouTube, InstaGram, Research Gate and a diversity of blogs and podcasts.

Beyond professional development and academic enrichment, social media platforms can also be used to connect the public with organizations and researchers in novel collaborations. For example, the use of social media in the context of recent infectious disease outbreaks and natural disasters have demonstrated that these ad-hoc information networks can serve as powerful tools in public health research and outreach. Toxicologists can also utilize social media networks to track xenobiotic exposures, detect poisoning trends over large populations, and broadcast alerts to affected populations. More studies are needed to assess the effectiveness of these promising new applications in the global toxicology context.