Social Media for Dissemination of Pediatric Anesthesia Content - a Hashtag Analysis

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INTRODUCTION
• Social media is increasingly being utilized as a mechanism to disseminate information to patients and healthcare professionals.
• Twitter can be a powerful tool for networking and collaboration while participating in conversations related to the latest research, patient advocacy and current controversies.
• The role of social media in connecting the Pediatric Anesthesia community has not been described.
• The objective of this study was to characterize the use of a popular social media platform, Twitter, for sharing content relevant to Pediatric Anesthesia.

METHODS
• In April 2016, the PedsAnes hashtag was registered in the Symplur Signals Database for use with Pediatric Anesthesia content.
• This retrospective study utilizes the Symplur Signals Database to track use of the hashtag (#PedsAnes) from March 2016 to January 2017.
• This database provides number of users and tweets using the hashtag, tweets per user, and impressions (tweets x number of followers).
• Tweet transcripts were analyzed for content and tweets were categorized as either academic (research, clinical guidelines, etc.) or non-academic (social, administrative, etc.).

RESULTS
• Between April 2016 and January 2017, the number of monthly tweets ranged from 35 to 636, peaking in October.
• The number of Twitter users using #PedsAnes to engage in Pediatric Anesthesia content ranged from 12 to 134, also peaking in October.
• The number of impressions ranged from 19,798 to 885,116.
• The percentage of academic tweets ranged from 34% to 69%, with the average of all tweets being 52% academic.

CONCLUSIONS
• Use of the hashtag #PedsAnes on Twitter demonstrated a substantial increase in Pediatric Anesthesia community engagement on this social media platform during the time period evaluated.
• The creation of a unique hashtag for Pediatric Anesthesia facilitated the ability to easily search for and share content-specific tweets.
• Adoption of #PedsAnes was rapid, however, user growth has plateaued.
• Future research is needed to investigate trends in social media use in Pediatric Anesthesia, including engagement at conferences.