

CALL FOR PAPERS

Health Promotion in the Era of Social Media and Digital Communication A Special Supplement Issue of *Health Education & Behavior* (HE&B)

Manuscript Submission Deadline: October 31, 2018

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Health Education & Behavior (HE&B) is calling for papers for a special supplement issue of the journal that will focus on the application and impact of social media and digital health on public health education and behavior. This supplement—which is supported by a grant from the NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research—will include selected presentations from the Digital Health Promotion Executive Leadership Summit, held June 5-6, 2018, in Washington, DC, as well as other innovative applications that are being developed and scaled both nationally and internationally.

BACKGROUND

Digital technologies have become ubiquitous in the United States and throughout much of the world. Recent prevalence estimates from the Pew Research Center indicate that 95 percent of U.S. adults own a cellphone and 64 percent own a smartphone. The digital media landscape—especially social media—shapes people's awareness of health issues and perceptions about health-related behavioral norms. Additionally, digital health education programs and campaigns can help people reach goals, obtain social support, and change their behavior.

Yet, despite the widespread use of mobile phones and social media by the public, the full potential of utilizing digital technologies to support health promotion is yet to be reached. Currently, there is limited integration among the public health, technology, and government sectors. Public health researchers are investigating the impacts and potential of technology, industry is adopting policies and programs aimed at addressing health issues, and government continues to provide medicine, public health, and social services. All too often, however, these sectors operate in silos and have yet to explore a common agenda regarding the use and evaluation of such technology to advance the goals of health promotion. Despite the growing evidence base that supports their use in health promotion, there is a limited understanding of digital health in several key areas. These include:

- *Social media.* The majority of adults uses social media and does so on a daily basis. Studies are needed that examine how these platforms can be used to facilitate and maintain health behavior change, and how social support on social media platforms can be harnessed for health behavior change programs. In addition, studies are needed that document the positive and negative health effects of the current social media environment, as well as ways of partnering with social media companies to shape the media environment in ways that promote health.
- *Theory and digital health.* In-the-moment communication and decision-making are considered hallmarks of communication through mobile phones. Studies are needed that provide insight into the "black box" of theoretical mechanisms that govern real-time interventions. Studies are also needed that examine the types of theories and frameworks that are most appropriate to guide the development of these programs. Of interest are studies that explore the application of existing theories and theoretical constructs, as well as those that develop and test new theories/frameworks including those based on machine learning that can guide the development of mobile-based health promotion programs. Finally, given that quantified self-movement and the proliferation of passive sensors and trackers have led to a growth in people's interest in self-tracking and monitoring of health indices, studies are needed that evaluate the efficacy of the integration of sensors and wireless devices into health behavior change programs, and that look at the role of various quantified-self measures in behavior change programs.
- *Optimizing programs, dissemination, and scaling.* Studies are needed that identify design features that optimize mHealth programs. Studies of interest include those that explore design features such as dose (e.g., frequency of text messages), content of messaging (e.g., framing of messages), inclusion of social support elements, health literacy, and others. In addition, studies are needed that examine novel methods for disseminating and scaling evidence-based programs through social media and other digital channels. Of particular interest are studies that examine optimizing programs, dissemination, and scaling for low-income and hard-to-reach populations.

Manuscripts of interest will be those that address or highlight the areas described above. We are interested in topics that range from mobile tools including, but not limited to, the following: the role of social media in addressing pressing public health issues such as the opioid crisis; children and adolescents' engagement with social media and special concerns for youth; social media and mental health; innovative uses of social media in disease prevention and outbreaks; using social media for digital segmentation to increasing reach and impact; internet data mining for public health insights; the ethics of social media and public health; and social-media based interventions or evaluations.

Manuscripts responding to this call for papers should focus on the application of these technologies to health promotion, health education and health behavior. A variety of reports will be welcomed, including randomized controlled trials, pilot studies, review papers, epidemiological or population-based research studies, statistical analyses, and other content analyses. Papers that highlight specific measurable components for evaluation, or that provide preliminary evidence of acceptability, feasibility, or efficacy, will be considered. Thus, we are interested in technologies that are relevant to a spectrum of health behaviors and focus on anything from adherence, to prevention, to novel interventions, to treatment, to health promotion more generally.

Manuscript submissions are encouraged and will be welcomed from investigators at all levels and from all collaborative group entities, including academic, industry, and government sectors.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Manuscripts must be submitted no later than **October 31, 2018** in order to receive full consideration for publication. All manuscripts should be submitted through the *HE&B* ScholarOne submission portal at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/heb>. A letter of transmittal should accompany the submission and specify that the manuscript is being submitted in response to the Call for Papers for the supplement on Health Promotion in the Era of Social Media and Digital Communication. Detailed instructions for authors and the preparation of manuscripts can be found at http://journals.sagepub.com/pb-assets/cmscontent/HEB/HEB_MS_Guidelines_2015.pdf.

All submissions will go through the *HE&B* peer review process that will be conducted by the guest editors, a guest editorial board of prominent scholars in the field of social media and digital health communication, and other peer referees. Manuscripts that are not accepted for the special supplement issue may be considered for a future issue of the journal.

Questions about submission requirements or other issues should be directed to the *HE&B* Editorial Manager, Liz Marshall at lmmarshall@sophe.org.

ANTICIPATED PUBLICATION

The supplement is expected to be published in August or October 2019.

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

Health Education & Behavior is an official publication and the flagship research journal of the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE). The journal publishes authoritative empirical research and commentary on critical health issues of interest to a broad range of professionals whose work involves understanding factors associated with health behavior and evidence-based social and behavioral strategies to improve health status. The journal audience consists primarily of researchers and practitioners in health behavior and health education. Typical manuscripts published in the journal include empirical research using qualitative or quantitative methods; formative, process, and outcome evaluations; and literature reviews.

Impact Factor: 1.899 (55 out of 156 – SSCI Public, Environmental & Occupational Health); 5-Year Impact Factor: 2.396 (49 out of 156 – SSCI Public, Environmental & Occupational Health)

Source: 2018 Journal Citation Reports® (Clarivate Analytics)

ABOUT SOPHE

The Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) is a 501(c)(3) professional organization founded in 1950. SOPHE's mission is "to provide global leadership to the profession of health education and contribute to the health of all people and the elimination of health disparities through advances in health education theory and research; excellence in professional preparation and practice; and advocacy for public policies conducive to health." SOPHE is the *only* independent professional organization devoted exclusively to health education and health promotion. Collectively, SOPHE's 4,000 international and chapter members' work in universities, medical/health care settings, businesses, voluntary health agencies, international organizations, and all branches of government. Through its publications, SOPHE explores social and behavioral change as they affect health status and quality of life. SOPHE journals—

Health Education & Behavior, Health Promotion Practice, and Pedagogy in Health Promotion—are essential resources for behavioral scientists, community organizers, government agencies, health care educators, health care facilities hospital administrators, insurance company administrators, nurses, physicians, public health and community planners, social scientists, and social workers. SOPHE journals are disseminated to individual members as a SOPHE membership benefit and over 600 institutions and libraries, and also enjoy widespread exposure through consortia arrangements.