



FACT SHEET ON SOCIAL MEDIA

What is social media?

A form of electronic communication such as websites for social networking (Facebook) and micro blogging (Twitter) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content such as videos (YouTube).

Many of the Senior Medicare Patrols across the country are involved in social media. A business Facebook page, a Twitter account and a Blogs are some examples. These are excellent ways to advertise what SMP is all about and spread the valuable message.

Are seniors interested in social media? According to Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project (February 2013)

	65+ Age Group	50-64 Age Group
Facebook users	35%	57%
Twitter accounts	2%	10%
Pinterest*	4%	12%
All Social Media	32%	52%

* Pinterest is an image/video pin board style sharing website with people who have similar interests.

One way SMPs can increase their followers is by distributing business cards with Facebook, blog, Twitter and website addresses at presentations and events.

What is a Facebook personal profile?

An individual creates a Facebook account, sets up a profile, (including privacy choices) and then gains friends by sending and receiving friend requests. He/she posts and updates items such as statuses (what they are doing, where they have traveled, etc.) Thoughts, links, events photos and videos that will appear in their newsfeed, a rolling story of the days and life to which their invited friends can comment. There is also a personal email for private correspondence. Public information can be "reposted" to other friends Facebook pages.

What is a Facebook Business page?

This is a public profile created for business, brands, celebrities, causes, non-profits organizations, etc. Business pages do not gain **friends** but instead collect **fans**, which are the general public who choose to "LIKE" the page and read the information, photos, events that the business puts on its page. A person can always choose to "UNLIKE" the page and that page will not appear in their personal Facebook page newsfeed. Senior Medicare Patrols generally have business pages.

What kind of information can be published on Facebook pages?

- Notice of upcoming events
- Pictures of volunteers participating in presentations or events
- Recruitment information for potential volunteers
- Trivia and *Did You Know* tidbits about the mission of SMP, funding, volunteer responsibilities, statistics about the work we do, etc.
- Much more following the guidelines each SMP has for publishing

What is a Blog?

The word web log shortened to the word blog. A blog is a website where discussion, commentary, opinions and information about activities and experiences of either a single author or multiple contributors. Usually interactive and allows visitors to leave written comments and also by encouraging them to link to other sites of similar interest.

What kind of information could appear on a Blog?

- Short articles highlighting outstanding SMP volunteers, Volunteer Managers
- Links to other senior-related websites
- Volunteer resources and opportunities
- Calendar of events

What is Twitter?

An online social networking and micro blogging service that enables users to send and read tweets which are text messages limited to 140 characters. Registered Twitter users can read posts and repost tweets but unregistered users can only read them. Twitter is public meaning anyone can follow anyone's tweets, as they do not need to be approved as in Facebook.

Because statistically seniors are not involved as much with Twitter, SMPs can build their followers for Twitter with the professional community of social workers, nurses, physician, directors, managers and staff of senior related non-profit organizations as well as businesses that cater to seniors. It is encouraged that the Twitter followers re-tweet the tweets as to increase the community of people who will learn about the SMP message.

What kind of information can be "tweeted" on a Twitter account?

- Medicare fraud hotline information for professionals
- Links to FL-SMP website and other websites of interest to professionals
- Information to join SMP in the fight against Medicare fraud and abuse
- Event information

How can SMP volunteers help with the "Let's Be Social Campaign" and stay connected with SMP?

1. Subscribe to your state's SMP blog, if applicable.
2. If you are a Facebook user, find the page and LIKE it.
3. Follow SMP on Twitter.
4. Promote social media at events and presentations you are participating in.
5. Encourage your Facebook and Twitter friends to follow SMP.