



ELSEVIER



Research Article

# Use of Online Media for Professional Development Amongst Medical Radiation Practitioners in Australia and Canada

Lori Boyd, RTR, MA<sup>a\*</sup>, Celeste Lawson, PhD<sup>b</sup>, Lisa DiProspero, MRT(T), MSc<sup>c</sup>,  
Kieng Tan, Med, MRT(T), MEd<sup>c</sup>, Kristie Matthews, RT, MTrainDev<sup>d</sup> and  
Nabita Singh, MBioEnt (Hons)<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

<sup>b</sup> School of Education and the Arts, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia

<sup>c</sup> Department of Radiation Oncology, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

<sup>d</sup> Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## ABSTRACT

Online media allows access to professional development (PD) regardless of geographical location and has the potential to provide equitable, immediate and quality PD. Online media includes online information and social media. The purpose of this mixed methods research study was to investigate the perceptions and use of online media for PD amongst medical radiation practitioners within Australia and Canada. An online survey was circulated to members of the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT) and the Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (AS-MIRT). The survey collected data within three domains: current use, satisfaction of use, and future use. A four point Likert scale was used for both satisfaction with the online platform and frequency of use. Two hundred and thirty-nine responses were collected. Results indicated that the online mechanisms most frequently used by respondents for PD were Google, self-directed learning, and intranet. A correlating degree of satisfaction was indicated with the use of these platforms. The least used online media for PD were social media platforms including health related blogs, LinkedIn, Twitter, health related and professional applications, Facebook, and online journal clubs. Online media is well suited to PD for medical radiation practitioners. The platforms that are preferred offer speed and ease of access regardless of geographical location or occupation. Whilst inherent risks and instances of unprofessional online behaviour are acknowledged, Australian and Canadian practitioners are keen to learn what social media PD opportunities exist. Findings indicate that radiation therapists are more receptive to explore new social media platforms and tools than are radiographers. There is an opportunity to incorporate formal

PD for medical radiation practitioners within recognised social media platforms.

## RÉSUMÉ

Les médias en ligne permettent l'accès au perfectionnement professionnel (PP) sans égard au lieu géographique et ont le potentiel d'offrir un PP équitable, immédiat et de qualité. Les médias en ligne comprennent les médias sociaux et les médias d'information. Le but de cette recherche en méthode mixte était d'examiner la perception et l'utilisation des médias en ligne chez les praticiens de l'imagerie médicale et de la radiothérapie en Australie et au Canada. Un sondage en ligne a été distribué aux membres de l'Association canadienne des technologues en radiation médicale (ACTRM) et de l'Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy. Le sondage a permis de recueillir des données dans trois domaines: utilisation actuelle, satisfaction face à l'utilisation et utilisation future. Une échelle de Likert en quatre points a été utilisée pour la satisfaction face à la plateforme en ligne et pour la fréquence d'utilisation. Au total, 239 réponses ont été reçues. Les résultats indiquent que les médias en ligne les plus souvent utilisés par les répondants pour le PP sont Google, l'apprentissage autodirigé et l'intranet. Un degré de satisfaction en corrélation a été indiqué avec l'utilisation de ces plateformes. Les médias en ligne les moins utilisés pour le PP étaient les médias sociaux, incluant les blogues sur la santé, LinkedIn<sup>®</sup>, Twitter<sup>®</sup>, les applications reliées à la santé et les applications professionnelles, Facebook<sup>®</sup> et les clubs de journal en ligne. Les médias en ligne sont bien adaptés au PP pour les praticiens de l'imagerie médicale et de la radiothérapie. Les plateformes préférées offrent la vitesse et un accès facile sans égard au lieu géographique ou à l'occupation. Bien que les risques inhérents et les cas de comportement non

\* Corresponding author. Lori Boyd, RTR, MA, Department of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria 3800, Australia. Phone: +61 3 9905 6018.

E-mail address: [lori.boyd@monash.edu](mailto:lori.boyd@monash.edu) (L. Boyd).

professionnel en ligne soient reconnus, les praticiens australiens et canadiens sont intéressés à découvrir les occasions de PP qui existent sur les médias sociaux. Les constatations indiquent que les radiothérapeutes sont davantage enclins à explorer les nouvelles plateformes et

les nouveaux outils offerts par les médias sociaux que les radiographes. Il existe une occasion d'incorporer le PP formel pour les praticiens de l'imagerie médicale et de la radiothérapie dans les plateformes de médias sociaux reconnues.

*Keywords:* radiography; radiation therapy; social media; professional development; online learning

## Introduction

Online media includes online information from the intranet, web pages, blogs, and apps and interactive and collaborative social media platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and online journal clubs [1,2]. Online media allows access to professional development (PD) regardless of geographical location or occupation [3]. Although issues with connectivity and speed can be a concern [4], online learning that includes social media has the potential to provide equitable, immediate, and quality PD for medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners [3]. In the context of this article, the term “medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioner” refers to practitioners in medical imaging or radiation therapy roles, including radiographers/radiological technologists, radiation therapists, sonographers, and nuclear medicine technologists [5]. Previous research that focused on the perceptions of radiation therapists (RTs) at a major cancer centre in Melbourne, identified a reluctance by RTs to engage with online media, especially social media, for PD [5]. This small study, however, found that 80% of the RTs surveyed at that site access their PD online [6]. As there is a paucity of research in this area, especially with regard to medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners, the authors sought to expand on the existing knowledge base through conducting an international study in two countries where medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners are employed in similar roles—Australia and Canada.

According to a nonbinding resolution passed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in June 2016, access to the internet is now a basic human right [7]. More than 80% of the population in large economic countries either uses a smart phone or the internet, including 93% in Australia and 90% in Canada. Of these, the vast majority rely on the internet daily, including 77% in Australia and 70% in Canada [4]. The trend is universal: access to the internet is increasing every year. The study also found that higher educated people had access to the internet more than less-educated people, with the trend also holding true for age, where younger people (aged under 35 years) are more likely to access the internet than older people [4]. The dominant language on the internet is English, and the majority of tasks are checking emails, conducting research, getting news, social networking, and doing banking, with an average Australian spending 10 hours a day online [8]. Social media, in particular, is increasing in popularity, with 56% of people accessing social media sites more than five times a day [8]. The implications for workplace online access are immediately apparent.

The divide between work and home is diminishing, as it becomes easier for people to continue to work from a variety of locations [9].

What is not clearly understood is how online access to education materials for medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners, including PD, can capitalize on this universal trend [10]. For the purpose of this article, online media will refer to information contained on the internet, whereas social media are the networks and interactive abilities contained therein [2]. This distinction is important because PD is well established online [10], while the use of social media is less understood in PD<sup>11</sup>. Previous research has identified advantages in using social media as a source of PD in radiography and medical radiation practice [3,5,6]. Lawson and Cowling [12] established that online and social media can provide immediate and equitable access to information at a time and in a form relevant to the user. This is a critical point where the work environment is socially or geographically isolated, and reliance on online PD mechanisms such as webinars may be increased [13,14]. What has not yet been established is whether medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners would use social media for PD if it was presented to them [5,6]. Existing PD tends to synchronous forms [10], which dictates time and space in their completion. Social media is real time and instantaneous [2], providing access at a time when it is required. This study investigated attitudes of online media use among medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners in Australia and Canada, with a view to establishing satisfaction and use of specific tools and platforms relevant to PD.

The aim of the study was to identify preferred methods of accessing online PD, to inform the development of online tools and materials.

## Materials and Methods

A nonidentifiable online survey (via Qualtrics) was circulated by email to members of the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists and the Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy, following institutional ethics approval from Monash University. The survey comprised questions regarding demographics and preferences for online tools and material. A mixed methods design collected both quantitative and qualitative data regarding current use of online media for PD, satisfaction of use, likelihood of future use, and degree of agreement with 15 statements related to the use of social media for PD. The level of use

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/8606800>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/8606800>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)