Using Facebook as an Advocacy Tool

APHA
AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
For science. For action. For health.

Facebook has 2 billion monthly users and offers excellent opportunities to motivate your own network to take action on public health issues. Here are some general tips for crafting effective Facebook posts and sample posts.

GENERAL FACEBOOK TIPS:

- Use photos and links in your posts as much as possible – this will capture people's attention more than plain bodies of text.

- If you plan to write your own post, remember that the content of the post is more important than achieving a certain post length. Some Facebook posts are one sentence long, while others are 3-4 sentences. Think about your Facebook network and what will work best for your unique set of followers.

- When crafting a post, you want to be sure to have an "ask" of those reading your post. Providing information is helpful, but try to leave people with something they can act on immediately. One of the best ways to do this is through an action alert to Congress. The sample posts below include action alerts as their "ask."

- When posting a link such as a link to an action alert, you can take some easy steps to format your post in an attention-grabbing way that will encourage people to read it and take action:
    - o   Paste your link into your Facebook status box – hit space to see the preview.
    - o   Once the link has loaded, you can delete it and add the text you would like to include to direct your network to click the link you have provided.

- When mentioning another agency, organization or group in your post, you can "tag" them in your post so that your network can learn more about the organization you tagged. Doing this is easy:

    - o   Type "@" followed by the complete name of the organization you wish to tag.
    - o   Once you type "@" followed by the first few letters of the organization, a drop-down list will appear according to the Facebook pages that exist for the letters you have typed.
    - o   For example: "@Centers for Disease Control (CDC)".
    - o   If the organization is highlighted in blue, you have been successful in tagging!

SAMPLE FACEBOOK POSTS:

Public Health Funding

Include this link in your post:

https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/action-alerts/funding

Long post: Funding for the public health system is critical to Americans' health and results in millions of lives saved, especially through the work of the @Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the @Health Resources and Services Administration. The future of our nation's health depends on a strong and well-equipped public health infrastructure. Tell Congress to make our nation's health a priority!

Short post: Act now to make our nation's health a priority – tell your members of Congress to fund public health!

> TELL CONGRESS: "PRIORITIZE PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING!"

Affordable Care Act

Include this link in your post:

hhttps://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/action-alerts/health-care-access

The Affordable Care Act has helped 20 million people gain affordable health coverage and is helping to shift our health system from one that focuses on treating the sick to one that focuses on keeping people healthy. We should continue to build on these successes and further expand health insurance coverage to the more than 28 million people who remain uninsured. Unfortunately, House and Senate Republicans are pursuing legislation that would force more than 22 million Americans to lose their health insurance coverage and eliminate the Prevention and Public Health Fund, among other damaging provisions. Tell Congress to oppose efforts to repeal or weaken the ACA!

> TELL CONGRESS: "PROTECT OUR CARE"

Short post: Gutting the Affordable Care Act is not the way to improve public health. Send a message to your members of Congress and urge them to oppose efforts to repeal or weaken the ACA!

Prevention and Public Health Fund

Long post: Since 2010, the Prevention and Public Health Fund has made national investments in health to improve quality of life and health outcomes. So far, the fund has invested in a wide range of evidence-based programs, including community and clinical prevention initiatives, public health research and tracking, immunizations and screenings. These programs have all been indispensable to creating healthier communities. However, the Prevention and Public Health Fund is constantly at risk for funding cuts and elimination. Tell your members of Congress to protect the fund!

> TELL CONGRESS: "PROTECT THE PREVENTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH FUND"

Short post: The Prevention and Public Health Fund is at work in our states and our communities and must be protected. Reach out to your congressional leaders to express your support!

Climate Change and Health

Include this link in your post:

https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/action-alerts/climate-change

Long post: Climate change threatens human health and well-being in many ways, through increased extreme weather events, wildfire, decreased air quality, threats to mental health, increased risk of cancer and illnesses transmitted by food, water and disease from carriers such as mosquitoes and ticks. The sooner we take action to reduce heat-trapping carbon pollution that is contributing to climate change, the sooner we can improve our nation's health now and for future generations. Unfortunately the Trump administration and some in Congress are working to roll back the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan, which would drastically reduce carbon pollution from coal-fired power plants and eliminate funding that is assisting state and local health departments to prepare for and respond to the health impacts of climate change in their communities. Send this important message to your members of Congress today!

Short post: Climate change is an urgent public health issue. Tell your members of Congress to act now!

> TELL CONGRESS:
> "CLIMATE CHANGE
> NEGATIVELY
> IMPACTS HEALTH"