

## Assess Nurses' Social Media Conduct's Effect on Patient Trust

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### Abstract

*The increasing reliance on social media has transformed how healthcare professionals, including nurses, access and share medical knowledge. Digital platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn provide avenues for professional networking, information exchange, and patient education. However, challenges such as misinformation, privacy concerns, and ethical dilemmas complicate the use of these tools in clinical practice. This study explores the role of social media in nursing, examining its benefits, risks, and the types of health information sought by nurses. A mixed-method, cross-sectional study design was employed, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected from 280 nurses through structured questionnaires and focus group discussions (FGDs). The survey assessed demographic characteristics, social media usage patterns, and perceptions of its advantages and challenges. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, while qualitative insights were derived through thematic analysis using NVivo software. Findings indicate that WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter are the most frequently used platforms for accessing health information. Nurses primarily sought information on patient experiences, health conditions, and second opinions, while topics such as insurance, medication, and therapy details received less attention. Key benefits included increased access to medical knowledge, enhanced professional networking, and emotional support. However, challenges such as misinformation (44.1%), privacy concerns (55.5%), information overload (29.5%), and risks of personal data disclosure (31.3%) were identified as major concerns. The study highlights the significant impact of social media in nursing, providing an essential tool for professional development and patient engagement. However, risks such as misinformation and ethical concerns necessitate guidelines to ensure responsible usage. It is recommended that healthcare institutions implement policies to promote digital literacy and safeguard privacy while maximizing the benefits of social media in nursing practice.*

**Keywords:** Social Media, Emotional Impact, Patient Trust.

### Introduction

As of 2024, the number of internet users worldwide has surpassed 5.18 billion, accounting for over 65% of the global population. Additionally, 4.89 billion individuals actively engage with social media platforms [1]. This rapid technological growth has transformed how healthcare professionals, including nurses, communicate and collaborate. Social media now serves as an essential medium for exchanging clinical knowledge, discussing patient care strategies, and fostering continuous professional development [2]. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp have become integral to nursing practice, providing spaces for discussions on evidence-based practices, sharing insights on patient management, and staying

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informed about emerging healthcare trends [3]. Given the expanding role of social media in healthcare, it is crucial to examine how nurses, especially those in environments with resource constraints, integrate these digital tools into their professional activities. This study aims to assess the influence of social media on nursing practice and its overall effect on healthcare service delivery.

Despite the increasing use of social media within healthcare settings, there remains a significant gap in understanding how nurses in resource-limited environments leverage these platforms for knowledge acquisition and patient care. Existing research has primarily examined broad trends in healthcare professionals' use of social media, often overlooking the specific barriers that nurses face in settings with limited digital infrastructure [4]. Nurses in these environments encounter challenges such as unreliable internet access, inadequate digital literacy training, and a lack of clear policies regulating professional social media use. Addressing these gaps is critical for ensuring that nurses can effectively use digital platforms to enhance healthcare services.

One key area that remains underexplored is how social media influences collaborative decision-making among nurses in remote healthcare settings. Effective teamwork and communication are essential for optimizing patient outcomes, yet research has not sufficiently investigated the extent to which digital platforms support interdisciplinary collaboration in these environments [5]. Another overlooked aspect is the role of social media in shaping professional identity and fostering a sense of community among nurses. Digital platforms can provide a space for peer engagement, mentorship, and professional networking, yet little is known about how this dynamic operates in low-resource healthcare settings [6]. Additionally, while research has shown that nurses frequently use social media for patient education and outreach, the underlying factors driving this engagement remain unclear. Understanding these motivations is crucial for designing strategies that maximize the positive impact of social media on nursing practice.

Given these research gaps, it is necessary to explore how social media can be optimized to support healthcare delivery and professional networking, particularly in contexts where conventional resources are scarce. Digital platforms hold great potential for knowledge dissemination, skill enhancement, and patient education, but without a structured approach to their utilization, their benefits may remain underutilized. This study aims to provide new insights into the ways nurses interact with social media and how these interactions influence their professional development and patient care. By addressing these concerns, the research will contribute valuable knowledge to the field of nursing informatics and healthcare communication.

To guide the investigation, this study will focus on three main research questions: What type of health-related information do nurses seek on social media? What advantages does social media offer to registered nurses in their professional practice? What are the potential risks associated with the use of social media by registered nurses? Answering these questions will help clarify how nurses use digital platforms for clinical and educational purposes, as well as the challenges they face in doing so [7].

The primary objectives of this research align with these questions. First, the study seeks to determine the kinds of health-related content that nurses actively search for on social media. Second, it aims to identify the professional benefits that nurses derive from engaging with digital platforms, such as improved access to medical knowledge, peer support, and professional networking opportunities. Lastly, the study will investigate the possible risks associated with social media use in nursing, including breaches of patient confidentiality, misinformation, and ethical concerns [8]. These objectives will help generate a comprehensive understanding of the impact of social media on nursing practice.

Examining the role of social media in nursing is particularly significant because it addresses a gap in the existing healthcare literature. Most studies on this topic have focused on developed regions with widespread internet availability, leaving a need for research in settings where digital access is more constrained. By contributing new perspectives on how nurses navigate social media under such conditions, this study provides a foundation for future research on digital healthcare communication [9]. It offers insights that can inform educational strategies, ensuring that nurses are equipped with the necessary skills to use digital platforms effectively and ethically.

Beyond academia, the study has practical implications for policymakers and healthcare institutions. By identifying the digital information needs of nurses, the research can help inform the development of policies that enhance access to credible health resources. Additionally, healthcare administrators can use the findings to design training programs that promote responsible and productive social media use among nursing professionals [10]. With clear guidelines and structured interventions, social media can be leveraged to improve communication, professional development, and patient care outcomes.

The integration of social media into nursing practice offers significant opportunities for enhancing healthcare services. However, without a thorough understanding of how nurses engage with these platforms, there is a risk of underutilizing their potential. By investigating the motivations, benefits, and challenges of social media use in nursing, this study aims to provide actionable recommendations that can improve digital engagement in healthcare settings. Strengthening the responsible and effective use of social media among nurses can contribute to better patient outcomes and a more connected professional community.

Ultimately, this research highlights the importance of digital literacy and structured social media usage in nursing practice. By bridging the knowledge gap in this area, the study will provide valuable insights that can help shape healthcare policies and training programs. The findings will be relevant to healthcare institutions, nursing educators, and policymakers seeking to enhance the role of social media in professional nursing practice. With digital communication becoming an integral part of modern healthcare, understanding its implications for nurses is essential for ensuring the delivery of high-quality patient care.

## Methodology

This research utilized a mixed-method approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies within a descriptive cross-sectional framework. This design was selected due to time constraints and the study's academic objectives. Data collection occurred in two phases: initially, structured questionnaires were distributed among the target respondents; subsequently, focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted to explore the use of social media for accessing health-related information. An exploratory descriptive qualitative strategy was employed to analyze nurses' adoption of social media for professional practice, guided by the technology adoption model. The study specifically examined perceived usefulness, ease of use, and behavioral intent, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of factors influencing engagement with social media in nursing care.

### *Study Population*

The study focused on frontline nursing staff working in various clinical units, including emergency services, outpatient care, pediatric and adult inpatient wards, surgical units, specialized care departments, and community health settings. This diverse sample provided comprehensive insights into the research topic.

### *Inclusion Criteria*

Participants were required to provide informed consent, have a minimum of one year of professional experience, and be actively employed during the study period. These criteria ensured that all respondents had sufficient exposure to institutional social media practices.

### *Exclusion Criteria*

Excluded from participation were nurses with less than six months of experience, temporary or volunteer personnel, and nursing students undergoing clinical rotations or internships. This exclusion ensured that responses were obtained from professionals with substantial experience in the field.

### *Sampling and Sampling Technique*

A stratified sampling approach was implemented to ensure representation from various clinical departments. Participants were chosen based on their potential to provide valuable perspectives on social media use in healthcare. Department heads and unit supervisors assisted in identifying eligible respondents. In total, 280 nurses participated in the study, ensuring a robust sample size for comprehensive data analysis.

### *Data Collection Procedures*

The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire, selected for its efficiency in gathering both qualitative and quantitative data from a large respondent pool. Researchers personally distributed the surveys and addressed any clarifications needed by participants. The questionnaire covered demographic details, frequency and purpose of social media use for health information, types of content accessed, and barriers encountered. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, with 280 valid responses received, yielding an 80% response rate—sufficient for meaningful analysis.

### *Focus Group Discussions*

To gain deeper insights, two FGDs were conducted, each comprising seven to ten participants. These discussions explored nurses' preferences regarding social media platforms, engagement with online health content, and associated challenges. A trained moderator facilitated the discussions using a predefined guide. Key topics included preferred health information sources, motivations for using social media, types of content accessed, and perceived benefits and risks. The discussions were recorded using digital audio equipment for later transcription and analysis.

### *Data Analysis Techniques*

Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS software, employing descriptive statistics to summarize findings, which were presented in frequency tables and graphical formats. Thematic analysis was used for qualitative data, utilizing NVivo software to identify recurring themes and patterns. Audio recordings from interviews were transcribed verbatim and verified against field notes to ensure accuracy. This systematic approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of key research questions concerning social media's role in nursing practice.

### *Ethical Considerations*

Prior to data collection, ethical approval was secured from the relevant academic and healthcare authorities. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of their right to withdraw at any point without consequences. Confidentiality was strictly maintained by anonymizing responses and securely storing all collected data. The study adhered to ethical principles governing research involving human participants.

### *Validity and Reliability*

Validity refers to how well the research instruments measure the intended concepts, while reliability ensures consistency in results [44]. The questionnaire was designed to align with study objectives and underwent expert review by a research supervisor. To enhance reliability, a pretest was conducted with ten nurses from outside the study's target population. Feedback from this pretesting phase was used to refine the instrument, ensuring clarity and consistency in responses.

### *Limitations of the Study*

Some respondents expressed concerns about data confidentiality or were uncertain about the study's purpose, which may have influenced their willingness to participate. To mitigate this, clear communication about the study's objectives and confidentiality measures was emphasized, encouraging honest and open

responses. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data posed the potential for bias, although steps were taken to minimize this risk.

## Results

### *Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

The study included a total of 280 nurses. The majority of respondents were female, making up 62.5% of the sample, while 37.5% were male. This distribution reflects the overall trend of a predominantly female workforce in the nursing profession.

The largest proportion of respondents fell within the 31–35 age bracket, accounting for 38.5% of the participants. The second-largest group, aged 36–40, represented 32.0%. Younger nurses aged 23–25 made up only 6.0% of the sample, while those between 41–45 years constituted 10.5%. These figures indicate that the sample is primarily composed of mid-career nurses, with fewer younger or senior nurses.

In terms of educational background, the majority (62.5%) held a bachelor's degree, while 26.0% had a diploma qualification. A smaller proportion (11.5%) had pursued further education and earned a master's degree. These findings highlight a strong emphasis on academic advancement within the nursing profession.

Regarding professional ranking, Nursing Officers were the most represented category, comprising 38.5% of the sample. Senior Nursing Officers accounted for 31.0%, Staff Nurses made up 21.0%, and Midwifery Officers constituted 9.5%. This suggests that a significant portion of the participants held leadership roles within their respective departments.

When examining years of experience, the largest group (38.5%) had between 8–11 years of practice, followed by those with 4–7 years (33.5%). Nurses with 1–3 years of experience made up 10.0%, while 12–15 years of experience accounted for 12.0%. Those with more than 16 years represented the smallest proportion at 6.0%. The findings suggest that the majority of the sample consists of experienced nurses, with fewer early-career or senior professionals.

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>	Female	175	62.5%
	Male	105	37.5%
<b>Age Group</b>	23 - 25 years	17	6.0%
	26 - 30 years	42	15.0%
	31 - 35 years	108	38.5%
	36 - 40 years	90	32.0%
	41 - 45 years	29	10.5%
<b>Educational Level</b>	Diploma	73	26.0%
	Degree	175	62.5%
	Master's Degree	32	11.5%
<b>Nursing Grade</b>	Staff Nurse	59	21.0%
	Nursing Officer	108	38.5%
	Senior Nursing Officer	87	31.0%
	Midwifery Officer	26	9.5%
<b>Years in Service</b>	1 - 3 years	28	10.0%
	4 - 7 years	94	33.5%
	8 - 11 years	108	38.5%
	12 - 15 years	34	12.0%
	16+ years	16	6.0%

*Utilization of Social Media by Nurses*

The study revealed that nurses predominantly used Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter as sources of health-related information. LinkedIn and Google+ were also cited as frequently used platforms. All participants reported having engaged with social media at some point to access health-related content. Additionally, Google was commonly used as a search tool for medical inquiries. The most frequently mentioned platforms included YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Google.

A common sentiment among participants was that they would first search for health-related information online before consulting a colleague or supervisor. One respondent stated:

*"Whenever I have a personal health concern, I typically search for information on Google before discussing it with anyone. When I need advice or real-life experiences, I turn to Facebook or WhatsApp."*

Participants also emphasized the advantage of social media in broadening their understanding and enabling them to compare various sources of information. According to one interviewee:

*"We often rely on our professional networks in Facebook groups and WhatsApp chats to gather relevant medical information. However, Twitter is less popular among us because it lacks the space for detailed discussions on symptoms and diagnoses."*

These findings highlight the widespread integration of social media into nursing practice, particularly as a tool for information-sharing and peer consultation.

*Types of Health Information Accessed*

The objective of this study was to identify the types of health information that nurses access through social media. A 5-point Likert scale was utilized to measure and evaluate their responses. Table 2 presents the findings.

**Table 2. Types of Health Information Accessed via Social Media**

Type of Health Information	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Searching for symptoms	2.85	29.0%	21.0%	11.2%	17.0%	21.8%
Seeking information on health conditions	3.25	16.0%	25.5%	10.0%	16.0%	32.5%
Searching for diagnoses	2.63	22.5%	33.5%	13.0%	17.0%	14.0%
Exploring patient experiences	3.38	14.5%	18.0%	7.2%	34.0%	26.3%
Seeking a second opinion	3.20	21.5%	13.0%	11.0%	31.0%	23.5%
Searching for insurance-related information	2.20	35.0%	39.0%	5.0%	12.5%	8.5%
Looking up medication details	2.45	33.0%	26.0%	13.0%	21.0%	7.0%
Researching therapy options	2.28	31.5%	34.5%	12.0%	11.0%	11.0%

The results suggest that most respondents used social media to explore patient experiences (mean = 3.38), search for information on health conditions (mean = 3.25), and seek second opinions (mean = 3.20). However, there was lower engagement with social media for looking up symptoms (mean = 2.85), diagnoses (mean = 2.63), medication information (mean = 2.45), therapy options (mean = 2.28), and insurance details (mean = 2.20).



### *Symptom Research*

The findings indicate that 40% of participants searched for symptoms online, a trend reinforced by discussions with focus groups. Nurses frequently rely on social media for quick symptom identification, often as a preliminary step before seeking medical attention. As one participant stated:

*"Many people share information regarding common health concerns, including symptoms of various illnesses such as infectious diseases, reproductive health conditions, and general wellness."*

Additionally, some respondents reported that social media facilitates discussions among peers, helping them interpret symptoms and determine whether further medical consultation is necessary.

### *Health Conditions*

The study found that 48% of respondents used social media to research specific health conditions. The accessibility of online platforms and the wide range of available medical content encourage this behavior. Frequently searched topics included chronic diseases, infectious conditions, weight management, and reproductive health concerns.

### *Patient Experiences*

A significant portion of respondents (60%) turned to social media to read about patient experiences. Focus group discussions revealed that online communities play a crucial role in medical information exchange. Respondents used these platforms to learn about treatment processes, recovery timelines, and potential side effects.

One participant emphasized this point:

*"I often read about other people's health experiences to better understand what to expect. Many support groups exist for individuals managing chronic conditions, providing valuable insight into treatment options and recovery experiences."*

### *Seeking a Second Opinion*

The study found that 54% of participants sought second opinions through social media, primarily to confirm an initial diagnosis or gather additional perspectives before seeking further medical consultation. The cost of multiple medical appointments was a common factor driving this behavior.

### *Diagnosis, Therapy, and Medication Information*

Approximately 30% of respondents searched for diagnostic information, while 21% sought details about therapy, and 29% looked up medication-related information. These searches were primarily for non-urgent medical concerns, as healthcare professionals remained the preferred source for critical guidance regarding therapy and prescriptions.

### *Perceived Advantages of Social Media as a Health Information Resource*

The study utilized a five-point Likert scale, as outlined in Table 3, to analyze and interpret participants' perceptions regarding the benefits of social media as a health information source.

### *Enhanced Interaction and Engagement*

Social media plays a crucial role in fostering discussions on health-related topics, with 48.6% of respondents acknowledging its impact (mean score = 3.18). The interactive nature of these platforms allows for quick responses, engagement with diverse audiences, and open discussions without the fear of judgment, making it a more approachable alternative to traditional healthcare settings.

**Table 3. Perceived Advantages of Social Media in Accessing Health Information**

Perceived Benefit	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Enhanced interaction	3.18	19.50%	18.50%	13.40%	22.60%	26.00%
Tailored health information	2.90	29.70%	17.30%	12.80%	15.20%	25.00%
Expanded access to health data	3.61	13.70%	15.70%	7.70%	22.70%	40.20%
Emotional and peer support	3.33	19.80%	15.70%	10.90%	19.60%	34.00%

*Greater Access to Health Information*

A significant percentage (62.9%) of respondents indicated that social media platforms significantly enhance their ability to access health-related information (mean score = 3.61). These platforms offer an affordable and convenient way to acquire knowledge, especially about sensitive health issues, without requiring in-person consultations.

*Customized and Relevant Information*

Social media platforms employ algorithms that personalize health content based on user engagement, search history, and preferences (mean score = 2.90). Respondents appreciated this tailored approach, which allows them to receive health updates, educational materials, and recommendations aligned with their specific concerns. Additionally, using anonymous profiles enables individuals to explore sensitive topics without revealing their identities.

*Emotional and Peer Support*

Over half (53.6%) of participants acknowledged that social media provides emotional support (mean score = 3.33). Individuals facing similar health conditions find reassurance, encouragement, and shared experiences in online communities, which can be a source of motivation and comfort.

*Privacy and Anonymity*

One of the key benefits of social media is the ability to seek health information while maintaining privacy. Respondents valued the option to discuss sensitive health matters—such as reproductive health or chronic conditions—without the fear of stigma, as pseudonyms and private forums allow for discreet inquiries and discussions.

*Cost-Effective Alternative to Traditional Healthcare*

Social media offers an accessible and cost-efficient means of obtaining health information, particularly for individuals who may not have the financial resources for frequent medical consultations. With free access through smartphones and public Wi-Fi, users can explore various health topics without incurring additional costs.

*Challenges in Using Social Media for Health Information*

The study identified several barriers encountered by individuals when relying on social media as a source of health information. The most commonly reported challenges included unreliable content (58.2%), privacy concerns (55.5%), misinformation (44.1%), risks associated with sharing personal data (31.3%), and information overload (29.5%). These issues were assessed using a five-point Likert scale (Table 4).



**Table 4. Key Challenges in Accessing Health Information via Social Media**

Challenges	Least Extent	Small Extent	Neutral	Great Extent	Very Great Extent
Privacy concerns	14.20%	16.00%	14.30%	36.70%	18.80%
Lack of reliable information	18.50%	19.50%	3.80%	35.50%	22.70%
Information overload	27.80%	31.60%	11.20%	25.60%	3.80%
Misinformation	14.40%	7.00%	34.50%	18.50%	25.60%
Risks of data disclosure	25.60%	19.10%	24.00%	13.70%	17.60%

*Privacy Concerns*

A significant proportion (55.5%) of respondents cited privacy issues as a major drawback of using social media for health information. Weak privacy controls on many platforms make it challenging to protect sensitive personal health details, increasing the risk of exposure to third parties.

*Unreliable Health Information*

More than half of participants (58.2%) found it difficult to access credible health information on social media. The abundance of unverified content and the ease with which misinformation spreads contribute to challenges in distinguishing between accurate and misleading health advice.

*Overwhelming Volume of Information*

Approximately 29.5% of respondents reported experiencing information overload. The vast and often contradictory nature of online health information can make it difficult to navigate and interpret, leading to confusion. One participant noted the struggle of sifting through diverse sources to identify reliable health guidance.

*Spread of Misinformation*

Misinformation was a notable concern for 44.1% of respondents, who reported encountering misleading or false health claims. Many social media users share personal experiences as health advice, contributing to the dissemination of inaccurate information that lacks scientific backing.

*Risks of Sharing Personal Data*

More than 31.3% of participants expressed concerns about the risks associated with disclosing personal health details while seeking information or advice. Engaging in health-related discussions on public forums or unregulated platforms can lead to unintended data exposure and potential misuse.

*Cost of Internet Access*

Some respondents noted that the cost of mobile data and slow internet connectivity posed barriers to accessing health information on social media. Despite the availability of free Wi-Fi in some locations, high data expenses remained a challenge for many users.

*Distractions and Unrelated Content*

Social media distractions were frequently mentioned as a challenge, with respondents noting that unrelated content, advertisements, and entertainment often divert attention from searching for health information. One participant reported experiencing frequent interruptions that hindered their ability to focus on researching health-related topics.

## Discussion

### *Health Information Sought by Individuals on Social Media*

This study underscores the growing role of social media in providing health-related information to individuals. Participants reported using social media to access guidelines on disease management, healthy lifestyles, and medical advice. Social media platforms were perceived as more accessible and convenient than traditional sources such as books, brochures, and in-person consultations. These findings align with previous studies highlighting the effectiveness of social media as a communication tool for sharing health information [11]. Additionally, the results support initiatives by healthcare organizations that use platforms like Twitter to disseminate clinical procedures and public health updates [12].

### *Benefits of Social Media for Health Information Seeking*

Social media serves as a valuable resource for individuals seeking health information, facilitating easy access to medical updates, expert opinions, and peer discussions. These findings are consistent with studies by Adjei et al. and Maloney et al., which emphasize the role of social media in health education and public awareness [13] [14]. Many participants noted that social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp and Facebook, enhance communication and information-sharing among users. They enable individuals to discuss symptoms, share experiences, and seek advice from online communities. However, some respondents reported technological challenges, such as network issues and information overload, which could affect the reliability of the information accessed. Despite these limitations, social media remains an intuitive and widely used tool for health-related discussions, supporting findings by Deng et al. and Mitzner et al. on technology adoption [15] [16].

### *Risks of Using Social Media for Health Information*

Participants highlighted several risks associated with obtaining health information from social media. A primary concern was the prevalence of misinformation and misleading content, as social media lacks stringent regulations to verify medical advice. Unverified health claims, often spread by non-medical professionals, can mislead users and contribute to the spread of false health practices. This issue is consistent with concerns raised in studies by Ahmed et al. and Lefebvre et al. regarding the dangers of unregulated health information online [17] [18].

Another key risk identified was the potential violation of privacy. Many respondents expressed concerns about sharing personal health information on public platforms, which could expose them to data breaches or misuse. Additionally, some participants reported that social media could be a source of distraction, leading to increased screen time and reduced productivity in other aspects of daily life. Over-reliance on social media for health information may also contribute to anxiety and unnecessary self-diagnosis based on unverified sources.

Despite these concerns, most participants acknowledged the benefits of using social media for health-related purposes. However, they emphasized the importance of critical evaluation when consuming online health content to mitigate risks associated with misinformation and privacy breaches.

## Conclusions

The study found that WhatsApp is the most frequently used social media platform for health information, followed by Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Social media has become an essential tool for individuals seeking medical knowledge, facilitating communication and knowledge-sharing. Features such as instant messaging and discussion forums enable users to engage with healthcare professionals and peers for advice and support.

However, the findings also highlight the challenges of using social media for health information. The risk of misinformation, privacy concerns, and information overload were identified as major drawbacks. The

study underscores the need for strategies to improve the credibility of health-related content on social media and to educate users on discerning reliable sources.

## Recommendations

- **Promotion of Reliable Health Information Sources:** Health authorities should collaborate with social media companies to promote verified medical content and reduce the spread of misinformation.
- **Educational Campaigns on Digital Health Literacy:** Government agencies and healthcare organizations should implement public education campaigns to improve users' ability to evaluate online health information critically.
- **Privacy and Data Protection Measures:** Authorities should establish regulations to safeguard users' personal health data when engaging with health-related content on social media.
- **Enhanced Internet Access for Health Information:** The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with network providers, should improve internet accessibility, particularly in rural areas, to ensure equitable access to reliable health information.
- **Encouraging Health Professionals to Engage on Social Media:** Healthcare providers should be encouraged to use social media to share evidence-based health advice and engage with the public in a responsible manner.

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can enhance the benefits of social media as a health information resource while mitigating its risks.

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