



Editor's Notes...

For our December issue, the newsletter has two feature articles. The first is a reflection on past, present, and future SIGHealth accomplishments from our chair, Dr. Cynthia LeRouge. The second article highlights the growth of Twitter as a popular social networking site and identifies several healthcare applications that embrace the Twitter platform.

This month's newsletter continues with the new format and presents an overview of the upcoming networking and publishing opportunities. I hope our colleagues who have the opportunity to attend ICIS will also make time to attend the informal meet and greet on Wednesday, December 16. In January, SIGHealth will also have an informal round table at HICSS during the Wednesday luncheon. Also, early January holds several journal submission deadlines for SIGHealth special issues. Specific details of these networking and publishing opportunities are included here and our Website.

Let me also express a note of sincere appreciation to our out-going chair. Cindy's article highlights our SIG accomplishments over the past four years and challenges us to continue to grow SIGHealth to its potential. Thank you Cindy for all of your dedication and hard work as a SIGHealth officer and thank you for your future contributions as a valuable SIGHealth member.

Warmest regards during the holiday season,

Jim Ryan, Ph.D.
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Feature Articles...

Looking Back over the Past Four Years...

Cynthia LeRouge

When Jim Ryan, our current newsletter editor, asked me to look back during my tenure with SIGHealth to showcase some of the highlights of the organization during my tenure as an executive officer, the first words that came to my mind were sustenance, growth, structure, and commitment. Some say to go with your first thoughts. So, let me elaborate ...

Sustenance – SIGHealth's primary activity and presence for many years was a very healthy track (pun intended) at AM-CIS. Those involved have done a great job of sustaining this success. This same attitude of "keeping it going" has worked with most of the endeavors the organization has pursued as a long-term perspective.

Growth – We have grown both in the number of members and what we do. Some of the highlights of growth over the past four years include:

- The development of a SIGHealth web site (see <http://www.aissighealth.com>)
- SIG-sponsored special issues - past (ECIS) – present (reminder – JAIS call papers due on January 15) and future (two possible proposals are in the works)
- A pre-conference workshop
- Informal social events at multiple conferences with health care topic presence.
- Conference coordinators at all major AIS conferences to promote mini-tracks, panels, and presentations of interest to those in our domain
- Providing a repository of health information systems dissertation abstracts (see <http://www.aissighealth.com>)
- A regular newsletter

Looking Back over the Past Four Years (continued)...

Cynthia LeRouge

Structure – For our members, our Web site serves as a great, centralized information hub. Our Publicity Coordinator supplements this with things like email and IS-World postings to ensure members are informed of key events. In addition, we have added LinkedIn to provide a means of member-to-member communication of any form that can be used by those that opt into our LinkedIn group.

Our growth in terms of presence and activities mandated quite a few revisions to early by-laws. Some of those revisions involved expansion to a full SIGHealth board with three elected officers and nine appointed officers (see <http://www.aissighealth.com>). Many may not realize that the entire board now teleconferences on a monthly basis to coordinate activities and share ideas. In addition, we have moved into a virtual project management system to store important files, to do lists, and officer meeting notes to ensure plans and files are in place and accessible.

Commitment (a little or a lot)- The ability to sustain and grow an organization requires manpower and commitment. SIGHealth would not have achieved advancement over the past four years without the gift and sacrifice of time and effort by many. All those involved in contributing to these efforts and the general promotion of this research area should be congratulated and commended. Each of these efforts takes a lot of time and dedication that often goes without a thank you from the many that benefit.

As SIGHealth moves forward, my hope is that each member can contribute at least a little to sustain what those in the past have built and to go beyond with new or extended activities. Something as small as suggesting that a colleague with this research interest join SIGHealth can enhance our current “membership drive” to further network and connect those in the community with this research interest. Writing an article for the newsletter or contributing to a new or existing resource is a possibility. If you see an event, you can be sure additional hands are needed, even to distribute handouts. And, of course, serving as an officer, either appointed or elected allows you to greatly influence our future and keeps fresh ideas and energy flowing in. Those interested in expanding involvement in any way can always contact the chair; this is a very welcomed email or call.

In closing this article and my term, I wish Rich Klein, your new Chair, and SIG-Health a wonderful future of sustenance, growth, structure, and commitment. ■

Healthcare Twitter?...

Jim Ryan

This past February, compete.com published their ranking of the top 25 social networking sites from January 2009 site metrics. To no one's surprise, Facebook and MySpace were ranked in the top two spots, respectively. However, in third place was Twitter, up from a previous January 2008 ranking of 22. The Twitter growth percentage, according to social-media-optimization.com, was 1,227% over 12 months. Similarly in a December 2009 ebizmba.com ranking, Twitter tallied over 23.5 million monthly visitors behind MySpace and Facebook, but well ahead of LinkedIn. Interestingly among these top four social networking sites, a May 2009 Anderson Analytics survey (n=1,000) identified significantly lower age-group penetration for Twitter and LinkedIn across all five generational groupings from World War II to Z. These statistics reflect the growth and potential growth for Twitter as a popular social networking site. Real-time information pushed through the Twitter platform this past year also included Healthcare tweets (e.g. micro-blogs of 140 characters or less). This article briefly highlights a few of the Healthcare tweets regarding patients' status, step-by-step surgery procedures, as well as answers to health issue and prescription questions.

The well-being of a patient during and after any healthcare procedure is an information concern for individuals following the patient's well-being. Using the Twitter platform, patient status information as a tweet is pushed out and logged as public information to whoever follows the Twitter account. The following high profile tweets illustrate the utility and reach of patient status information via Twitter. In early January, CNN newscaster Rick Sanchez Twittered his own arthroscopic knee surgery to over 116,000 followers, from pre-op until the receipt of his anesthesia. The NY Post reported on the Twitter stream as the newscaster's tweets discussed his preference for full anesthesia and he tweeted in post-op recovery on the success of having part of his medial meniscus removed. Another high-profile patient update tweet came from actress Elizabeth Taylor who tweeted “Dear Friends, I would like to let you know before it gets in the papers that I am going into the hospital to have a procedure on my heart” on October 6 at 1:50 p.m. to over 165,000 followers of her

Twitter account (*DameElizabeth*). Two days later on October 8 at 6:12 p.m., the actress tweeted “Dear Friends, My heart procedure went off perfectly. It's like having a brand new ticker. Thank you for your prayers and good wishes.” CNN reported on these tweets and that the purpose of the heart procedure was to repair a leaky valve. When these tweets were taken from the *DameElizabeth* Twitter account in early December, the number of followers had risen to over 189,000.

Teaching hospitals also value the scope and reach of Twitter to educate both the public as well as physicians on leading edge surgical procedures. The first surgeon Twittered surgery was performed this past January at the Henry Ford Medical Center (HFMC) in Detroit, Michigan. The Twittered surgery followers were 450 medical professionals attending a robotic surgery conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. The robotic assisted surgical procedure removed a patient's cancer tumor and the surgery tweets made history as a new distribution channel for medical education. Later in February, CNN reported on the second surgeon Twittered surgery at HFMC, recognizing surgical procedure tweets as a natural outgrowth of the social networking media revolution. This year HFMC surgeons Twittered five different surgical procedures, including brain surgery. The most recent being in October for a kidney transplant having over 3,000 followers to the *HenryFordNews* Twitter account. Also in October, a University of Alabama-Birmingham Hospital (UABH) surgeon Twittered their first surgery to demonstrate a robotic surgical procedure that removed a patient's left adrenal gland for treatment of resistant hypertension. As supplemental background information, UABH published supporting Webpages and video where the surgeon explains an overview to the whole surgical process from patient diagnosis to choosing the best treatment option as well as the step-by-step tweets to over 700 followers at *UABmedicine*.

A new twist on the asynchronous Twitter information flow is available at the Website changehealthcare.com, which offers free tools to individuals for managing healthcare costs. Among these tools is a Twitter application *ASKch* that automatically answers healthcare questions. *ASKch* uses the Twitter platform for facilitating quick responses to direct messages. Due to the nature of the [changehealthcare](http://changehealthcare.com) information exchange, the direct messages from the Website are not public tweets. *ASKch* responds in 60 seconds to questions formatted according to Website template. The *ASKch* application fields questions such as costs of prescriptions in your neighborhood, the availability of generics for your prescription, pharmacies offering generic discounts, as well as definitions for prescriptions and health issues from a database of healthcare claims. The Twitter account *ASKch* acknowledges that its mission is to promote transparency and cost savings in healthcare with over 1,100 followers.

All of the preceding practitioner examples of healthcare Twitter are only a few of the existing adaptations from healthcare information push, pull, and/or exchange which incorporate the Twitter social networking site. As social networking media continues to mature and Twitter continues to gain popularity, this interesting convergence of healthcare Twitter should prove to provide further practitioner examples and future research opportunities. ■

Networking Opportunities...

ICIS 2009 Informal Reception...

SIGHealth will host an informal meet and greet reception during ICIS 2009. Mark you calendars for this fun event and plan to attend on Wednesday, December 16th from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in Sonoran H and I. We look forward to seeing all the SIGHealth members in attendance and please bring any colleagues that have interest in SIGHealth.

HICSS 2010 Informal Round Table...

SIGHealth will have an informal round table meeting during the HICSS 2010 conference luncheon on Wednesday, January 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.. Look for the tables identified with SIGHealth signs. We look forward to seeing our members that will be attending the conference and please bring any of your colleagues that have interest in SIGHealth.

Publication Opportunities...

AMCIS 2010 SIGHealth Tracks

Next August in Peru, SIGHealth will offer publication opportunities in the following six mini-tracks:

Business Processes and Standards for Healthcare Integration

e-health and Quality

Business Modeling in e-health

Electronic Medical Records and IT

Role of Technology in Improving Healthcare Delivery Processes

Consumer-Centric Health IS

More details and mini-track chair contacts will follow in the January 4th, 2010 call for papers on the AMCIS website...

ACM Journal of Data and Information Quality Call for Papers - Special Issue on Healthcare

Abstracts are due November 20, 2009. Papers are due January 9, 2010. [More Details](#)

Journal of the AIS Special Issue on Health Care IT: Process, People and Patients

Papers are due January 15, 2010.

Refer to the SIGHealth Website for submission directions. [More Details](#)

CFP: Special Issue on “E-Health: Accessing Knowledge for Global Health”

Papers are due January 15, 2010. [More Details](#)

Fourth International Conference IT in Health Care: Sociotechnical Approaches (ITHC2010)

Papers are due January 15, 2010. [More Details](#)

CFP: Special Issue of International Journal of Medical Informatics on Supporting Collaboration in Healthcare Settings

Papers are due March 31, 2010. [More Details](#)
