



Supporting Young Rural Doctors

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Learning Objectives

- Become aware of the Rural Family Medicine Café project
- Understand the definition of a “young doctor”
- Become aware of the type of support needed by young doctors in rural settings
- Understand the role of social media in networking and information sharing for young doctors
- Understand the role of the Rural Family medicine Café in supporting young doctors in rural settings

What is the Rural Family Medicine Café?

- Social media project utilising several platforms - Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, GoogleHangouts
- Panel of guests discuss a topical issue in rural medicine for 1 – 1.5 hr
- Participants can watch live on YouTube and interact with the panel via the comment section or on Facebook and Twitter using #ruralcafe
- Participants can also watch the café on replay and interact panellists and audience



Rural Family Medicine Cafe



Aims of the Rural Family Medicine Café?

- Discuss current issues in family medicine with a focus on rural settings
- Share experiences in rural medicine
- Share ideas on how to solve common problems in rural medicine
- Increase interest in rural family medicine for medical students and newly qualified doctors
- Create a networking opportunity for those interested in rural family medicine

Why is this important for “young doctors”?

- “Young doctors” refers to a medical doctor within their first 5* years post-graduation
- In some countries newly qualified doctors are often placed in rural areas without training or educational supervision
- Some medical schools require placement in rural areas often without preparation leading to a bad experience and a negative perception

Common Issues for Young Doctors in Rural

- Unique skill set that they must learn on the job
- Poor educational supervision or lack of training structure
- Less educational opportunities than in the urban setting
- Lower income
- Poor support for young families e.g. education for your children, job opportunities
- Increased isolation

Can the Rural Café improve support of rural doctors?

Social media provides health care professionals with tools to;

- share information
- to debate health care policy and practice issues
- to promote health behaviours
- to engage with the public
- to educate and interact with patients, caregivers, students, and colleagues

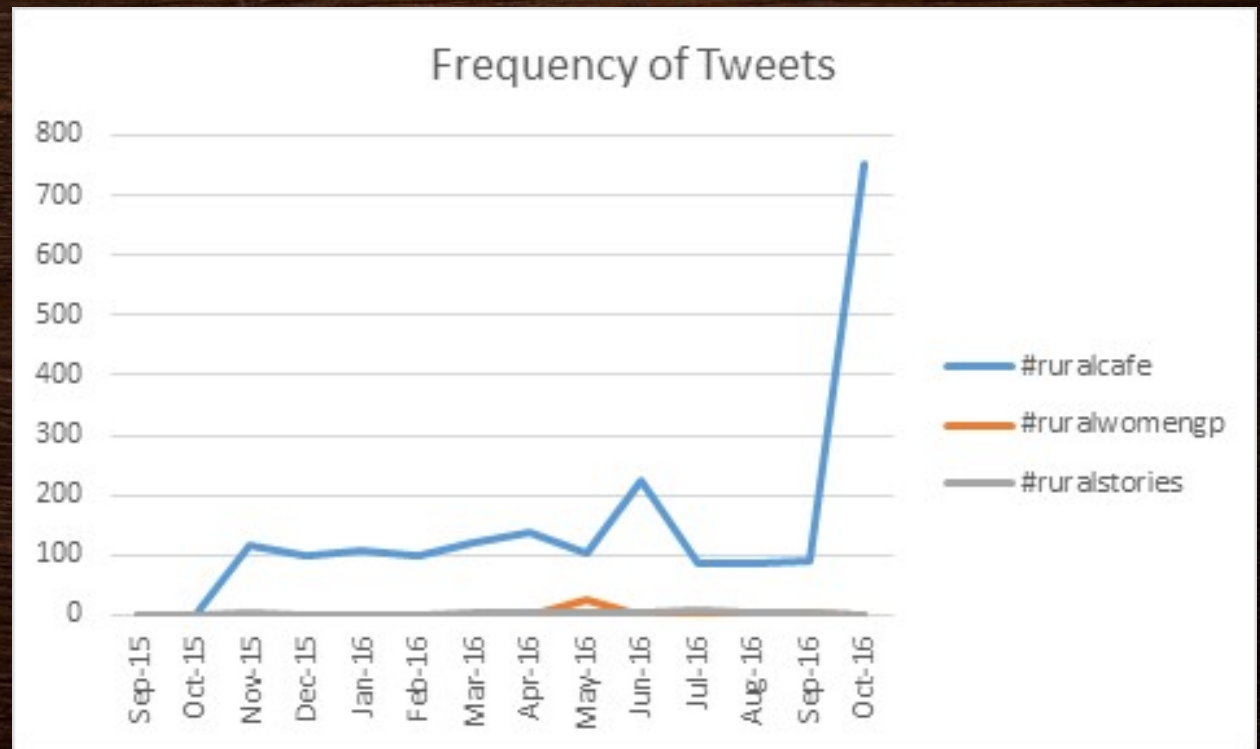
Can the Rural Café improve support of rural doctors?

Anecdotally...

- Getting positive feedback
- Participants were enjoying the café
- Other rural organisations started using the café model
- International and national conferences were hosting cafés

Can the Rural Café improve support of rural doctors?

Social media interaction on the rise?

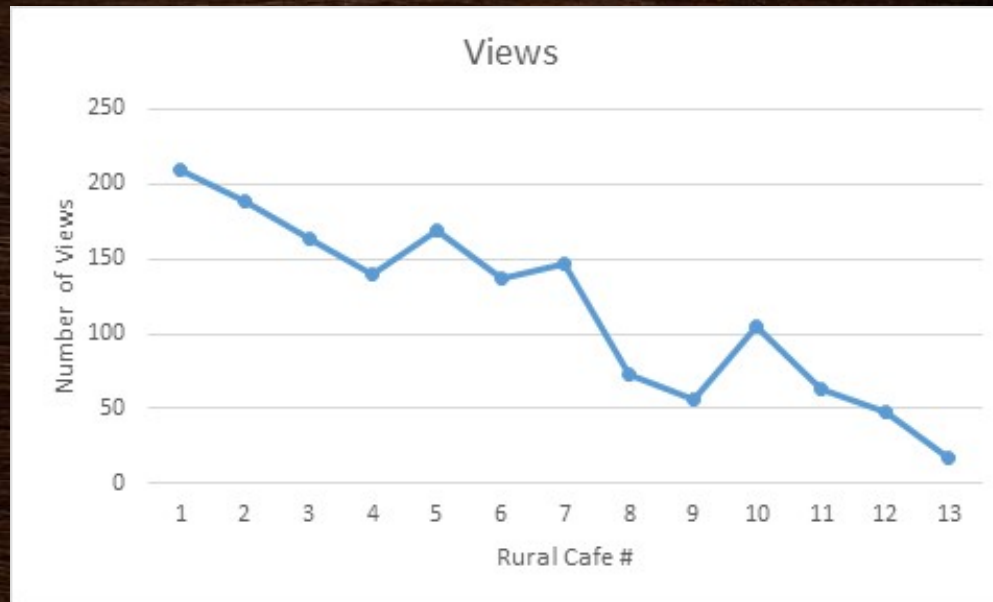


Methods

- A quantitative analysis of Social media (SoMe) activity associated with the RFMC was done by measuring the monthly frequency of #ruralcafe, #ruralwomenGP, #ruralGP, #ruralstories and #ruralmedicine from 2015–2016.
- The number of Facebook page likes and YouTube views was also measured.
- A time series and regression analysis was done to assess the correlation between these variables.
- A qualitative analysis of the content of tweets using the associated hashtags and comments on the RFMC YouTube videos was then done to assess participants' responses.
- To add context to the data collected, 10 regularly attending participants were invited for a semi-structured interview.

Results

- There was a positive trend in the number of Facebook page likes (+273%) and hashtag use (+2458%) but a negative trend (-92%) in the number of YouTube views.

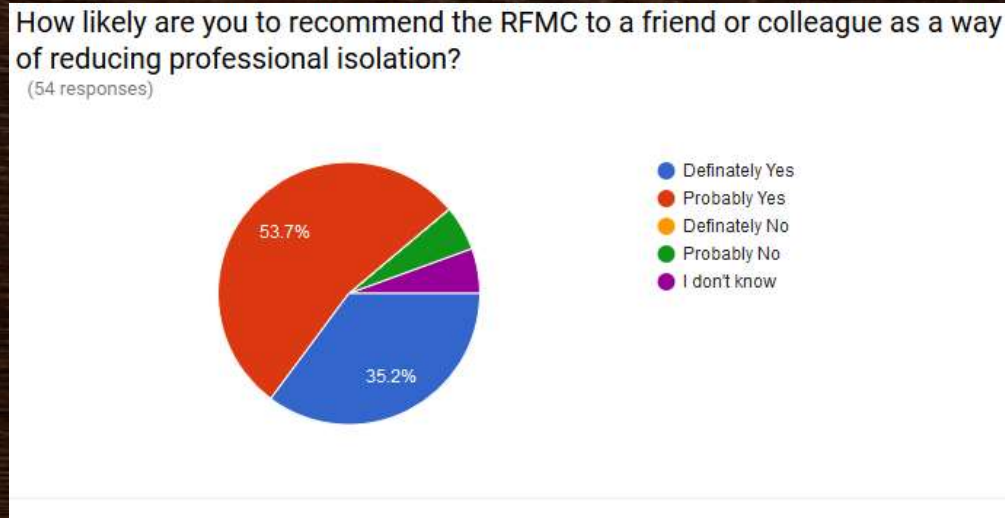


Results

- There was no statistically significant relationship between the number of views on YouTube and SoMe activity ($p=0.141$).
- A significant relationship was shown between the number of Facebook page likes and the number of views on the RFMC YouTube ($p=0.037$).

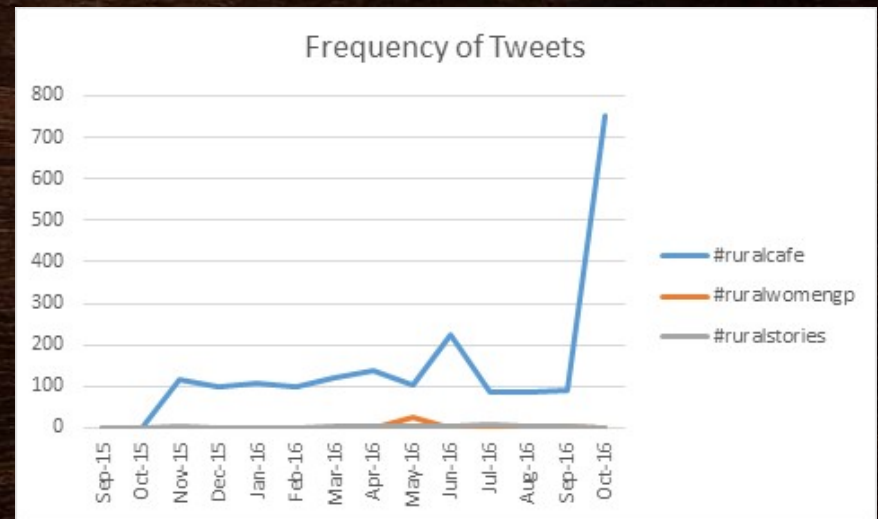
Results

- Qualitative analysis demonstrated that participants felt positively about the RFMC. Recurring themes were; promoting/advocating, public health, engage, inspire, sharing/spreading information, feeling connected/no more isolation



Conclusion

- The rural café was having more activity on twitter and Facebook... but less viewers of the café
- So, what are they tweeting about?
- Spike in activity coincided with World rural conference



Conclusion

- The café works best when those who interact with it can take those connections to the real world
- The increased twitter activity is most likely due to the few participants of the RFMC continuing discussions on SoMe, particularly Twitter, and engaging with other people.
- The RFMC has developed into a virtual community designed for students and professionals in rural health and thus has become a support network which can reduce occupational isolation for engaging participants

Future Research and some stumbling blocks

- The café mostly in English, regional cafés were in the language of the host
- Issues with meetings across several time zones
- Relied on decent internet access
- Technical issues e.g. quality of microphone, background noise
- Social media platforms have changed so format no longer available

Future Research and some stumbling blocks

- Rural Videos has now
- ed and doctors and interested in
- Aim to connect newly qualified doctors with those who are more experienced and provide network through the working party for rural practice



Mentor mentee program



Summary

- Young doctors in rural areas face unique challenges
- Social media is a good forum for sharing information
- Social media projects such as the rural family medicine café can help reduce social isolation but only when this is in conjunction with real life connections
 - Issues of financial support to attend conferences, formal training program etc. still a negative factor

Rural Family Medicine Café research paper:
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2020.595255/full>



Thanks for listening!

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