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As a #pain #physician: here are my thoughts during #COVID19

- 1-utilize telemedicine (if available, phone calls, e-Rx)
- 3-Stop pain procedures (mostly elective)
- 4-Steroids ↓immunity
- 5-Handel patients pain issues adequately to avoid ER visits
- 6-Narcan saves lives, prevent ER visits

2:51 PM · 3/15/20 · Twitter for iPhone

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lead to the official creation of the joint statement of ASRA and ESRA for recommendations on chronic pain practice during the COVID-19 pandemic which were published on 27 March 2020, only 2 weeks later.⁶ These guidelines were then disseminated via various avenues, including a simple to understand and share infographic via Twitter which has been shared thousands of times worldwide already.

The utilization of social media, especially Twitter, is steadily increasing across all medical specialties. It is now a very common way of disseminating novel research, professional networking and using Twitter to showcase findings at major medical conferences. The case above showcases another, novel way to use Twitter: bringing together worldwide experts in a field to respond uniformly and swiftly to an international urgent situation. We are hopeful that our example will lead the charge to unify physicians worldwide to respond to situations in a timely and uniform manner, to help propel the field forward. Social media is a tool with unlimited potential, so let us use its prowess for the most noble goal in medicine: to help greatest amount of people possible.

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Twitter as a powerful tool for communication between pain physicians during COVID-19 pandemic

To the Editor

In our current digitally connected culture, social media is being used more than ever as a tool for physicians to create and share medically relevant content as well as network and connect with others worldwide. One of the most popular platforms for physicians of all specialties to use is Twitter, which is increasingly used to share scientific information, educate patients and trainees, create and expand networks and highlight contributions of conferences and medical societies.¹ Twitter is especially beneficial as a tool for communication and knowledge exchange in medicine as it allows facilitating knowledge exchange by connecting communities of practice, develops scholarly work via crowdsourcing, facilitates knowledge translation and allows physicians to build a community and stay up to date on the most recent literature and practices.^{2,3} Pain physicians are slowly getting comfortable with social media, especially Twitter, where they started to be active in disseminating knowledge and live commenting on meetings.

With the global pandemic of COVID-19 at play currently, the ability to collaborate instantly with diverse experts remotely makes the use of Twitter and other social media platforms even more imperative for physicians. In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, every medical specialty was affected instantly, and without

any prior guidelines or guidance physicians needed to create resources for their specialties on how to provide patient care during this time, which can be done through various societies or institutions. We write to discuss how the creation of American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine/European Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Therapy (ASRA/ESRA) COVID-19 pain recommendations began as a single tweet and in less than 2 weeks became official recommendation statement from multiple world experts.

On 13 March 2020, the American College of Surgeons released COVID-19 Recommendations for Management of Elective Surgical Procedures, and recommended minimizing, postponing or canceling electively scheduled surgeries and procedures.⁴ There were no suggestions in regard to interventional pain practice, so SN (@NarouzeMD) tweeted on 15 March 2020 his suggestions for practice guidance for pain management physicians during the COVID-19 pandemic (figure 1) and 'tagged' many experts in the field for input. These experts then began to reply with their own experiences and interpretation of the current data as it applied to their daily practice, and 'tagged' other experts in the field worldwide.⁵ Many of the physicians following the thread expressed the need for cohesive guidelines for physicians practicing chronic pain management in relation to this pandemic. This simple tweet and discussion on 16 March 2020

Figure 1 Original tweet on 15 March 2020.

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