

# Twitter Usage Continues to Spread in Health Arena

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Utilizing social media to make information more transparent and accessible is a rising trend in the health and human services market. With increasing interest and focus on health reform, the need for information to be obtained quickly is highly desired by people in the field. Health and human services groups are also on [Twitter](#), including [TechAmerica](#), which uses the social media tool to advertise upcoming workgroup meetings and industry conferences.

GovWin analysts use Twitter to tweet about conferences and meetings they will attend or have attended as a way to let members know their presence at events. GovWin also uses Twitter to keep people abreast of the latest happenings and showcase analyst blogs and reports. State agencies have created Twitter handles to tweet about community health or risks. For example, the [Washington State Department of Health](#) recently tweeted about radiation levels in order to alleviate any fear of exposure in the community. Several other agencies including the [Alaska Department of Health and Social Services](#) and the [Oregon Health Authority](#) have been tweeting information pertaining to radiation levels brought on by the tragedy in Japan. Tweeting this information allows agencies to reach out to the community and keep them posted on health concerns.

Other departments utilize Twitter to assist in raising awareness for certain topics, such as Utah's Heart Health campaign. This campaign, spearheaded by [Utah's Department of Health](#), advises citizens on how to stay healthy and has created an array of sub-handles such as "healthfinder," "Fruits\_Veggies," and "BiologicalH2O" as a way to provide useful information and guidance. By doing this, states are able to generate themes and offer information to the community in real time. State agencies also use their Twitter accounts to post information about upcoming meetings and provide links to agendas and other materials. Also, with the rise in popularity of smartphones, obtaining this information has become increasingly accessible. Further, Twitter's retweet feature allows information to spread even faster and to a larger audience.

Even localities and hospitals have set up Twitter accounts to share information. For example, the [Maricopa County Public Health Department](#) tweets recipes and ways its population can achieve healthier lifestyles.

Furthermore, people are able to utilize Twitter to get a sense of relief by keeping abreast of what is going on and understanding how they are affected. This is a great way for people within the community to get the information and assurance they need in real time without having to contact officials directly. Twitter's 140-character limit forces tweeted information to be concise and quick.

## GovWin's Take:

Twitter is a great way for vendors to network with various stakeholders in the health and human service arena. Social media allows information to be easily accessible. For that, as state agencies become more and more fashioned toward tweeting and other forms of social media, vendors should really take advantage of the transparency and establish connections to these sites. Be sure to follow GovWin's health and human services team [@GovWin\\_HHS](#).