Guidelines for mental health researchers using Twitter

Erin Madden[1], Katrina Prior[1], Tara Guckel[1], Sophia Garlick-Bock[2], Zachary Bryant[1], Siobhan O'Dean[1], Smriti Nepal[1,3], Caitlin Ward[4], Louise Thornton[1,5,6]

Author Affiliations:

[1] The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use, Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney, Sydney NSW Australia

[2] ReachOut Australia, Pyrmont NSW Australia

[3] Sax Institute, Haymarket NSW Australia

[4] Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney, Sydney NSW Australia

[5] The University of New South Wales, Sydney NSW Australia

[6] The University of Newcastle, Newcastle NSW Australia

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We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respects to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.

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Who are these guidelines for and when should they be used?

- These guidelines are intended for mental health researchers using Twitter to disseminate research findings

- The guidelines have two key aims:

1. To increase engagement with mental health research Tweets (i.e., increase number of favourites, comments, video views or Retweets)

2. To increase user awareness and confidence in determining which mental health research Tweets are evidence-based (e.g., what is the information, and where has it come from?)

- We note that these guidelines are preliminary, and welcome feedback from researchers using the guidelines to disseminate findings. If you have any suggestions or enquiries, please email matilda.centre@sydney.edu.au or mention us via @TheMatilda_USyd

How were these guidelines developed?

- These guidelines were developed to accompany the research publication Madden, E., Prior, K., Guckel, T., Garlick-Bock, S., Bryant, Z., O'Dean, S., Nepal, S., Ward, C., Thornton, L. (2023). "What do I say? How do I say it?" Twitter as a knowledge dissemination tool for mental health research. *Journal of Health Communication*, DOI: 10.1080/10810730.2023.2278617

- This publication aimed to answer the questions of 'what do I say' and 'how do I say it' for effective dissemination of mental health research via Twitter by analysing a large sample of mental health research Tweets (n=300)

- Results showed that researchers may be able to maximise engagement on Twitter by highlighting the population groups that the research applies to and enriching Tweets with multimedia content, however the evidence basis of research Tweets could not be reliably determined

- The authors subsequently developed these freely available guidelines and accompanying examples of their use in practice for mental health researchers using Twitter

The Guidelines

Based on findings from a thorough analysis of 300 mental health research Tweets from two large, nationally representative Australian mental health research organisations, preliminary guidelines were developed for mental health researchers using Twitter to disseminate findings.

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Guidelines for mental health researchers using Twitter

What do I say?	How do I say it?
1. Tell the audience **what** the information is, and **where** it came from (i.e., your key finding and the evidence-basis is clear) 2. Tell your audience **who** you're speaking to (i.e., if your finding relates to a specific population group, make it clear)	3. Use media that adds to the Tweet, expanding on **what** the information is and **where** it came from (e.g., images, videos) 4. Use hyperlinks to verify research information in Tweet 5. Minimise over-use of hashtags (i.e., seek out hashtags that relate to specific events, communities or conversations)

Madden, E., Prior, K., Guckel, T., Garlick-Bock, S., Bryant, Z., O'Dean, S., Nepal, S., Ward, C., Thornton, L. (2023). "What do I say? How do I say it?" Twitter as a knowledge dissemination tool for mental health research. *Journal of Health Communication*, DOI: 10.1080/10810730.2023.2278617

Examples of the Guidelines in use

We reviewed Tweets from our dataset that contained evidence-based information (n=147) to find common examples of how real Tweets did or did not utilise recommendations made in the guidelines. We then 'mock Tweets' as examples of how Tweets might look after all the recommendations in the guidelines had been implemented.

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Example of Tweet containing expert opinion via a conference presentation

👎 Not using guidelines

- ❌ Evidence basis of information on slide is unclear (**what** is the information, and **where** did it come from?)

- ❌ Specific population group that research findings relate to is unclear (**who** is this research for?)

- ❌ No hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- ✔️ Image used adds to Tweet (information is coming from researcher at a conference)

- ✔️ Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific event/project)

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Thanks to Erin Madden, Research Officer at #ComorbidityProject where significant work is being done to build capacity in treating comorbid mental and substance use disorders #AADANTConference2021

12:00 PM · Jun 1, 2021

Example of Tweet containing expert opinion via a conference presentation

👍 Using guidelines

Through a combination of the image and Tweet, evidence basis of information on slide is clear (guidelines and training resources for co-occurring mental and substance use disorders, based on literature reviews and consultations)

Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (alcohol and other drug workers)

Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific event/project)

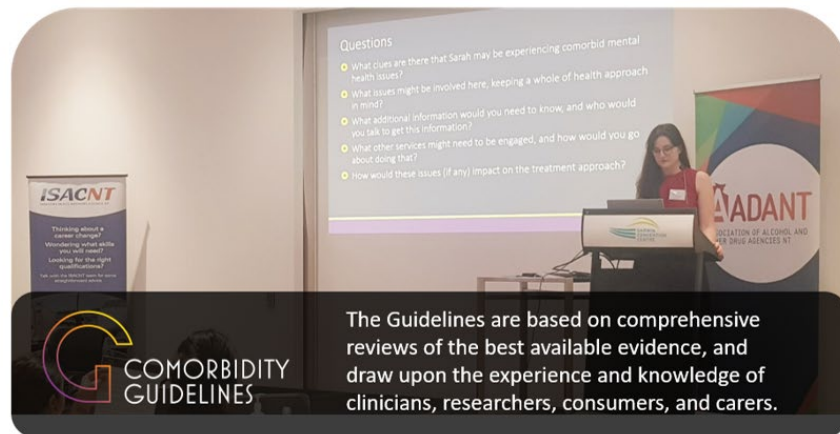THE UNIVERSITY OF
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@EB_Madden presents the #ComorbidityGuidelines, which provide evidence-based training for alcohol and other drug workers on how to identify and manage co-occurring #mental and #substanceuse disorders. Register for training: bit.ly/XXXXXXX #AADANTConference2021

The Guidelines are based on comprehensive reviews of the best available evidence, and draw upon the experience and knowledge of clinicians, researchers, consumers, and carers.

COMORBIDITY GUIDELINES

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Example of Tweet containing expert opinion via news article or blog post

👎 Not using guidelines

- ✗ Evidence basis of information is unclear (**what** is the information, and **where** did it come from?)

- ✗ Image used adds nothing to Tweet

- ✓ Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- ✓ Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (young people)

- ✓ Hashtags are not over-used (relate to specific conversations)

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Fact: early childhood #trauma can have lasting impacts on a young person's development. Learn more about how trauma, #mentalhealth and #substanceuse are linked.

Latest mental health and substance use news updates – the Matilda Centre
The latest updates in world leading research focusing on improving outcomes for those impacted by mental health and substance use conditions.
🔗 sydney.edu.au/matilda-centre

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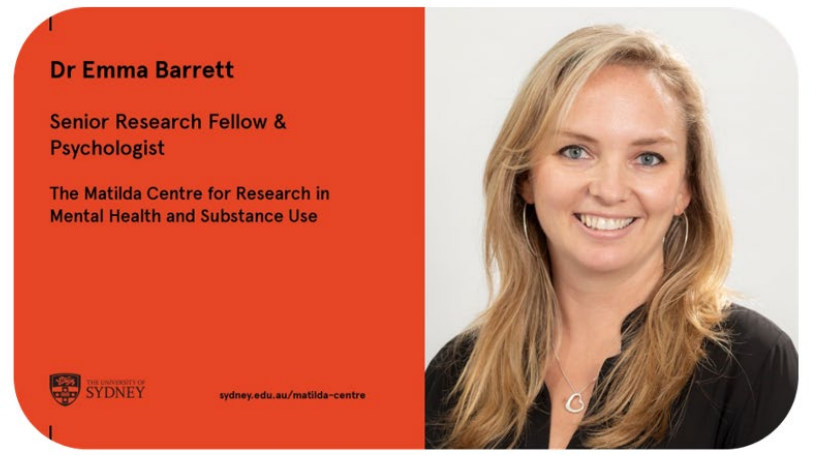# Example of Tweet containing expert opinion via news article or blog post

👍 Using guidelines

- Evidence basis of information is clear (prevalence of trauma in young people, comes from analysis of a clinical trial)

- Image used adds to Tweet, shows information is also based on expert opinion

- Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (young people)

- Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversation)

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This month we interviewed Dr Emma Barrett about the hidden epidemic of child and adolescent #trauma. Her analysis of the CAP study, a longitudinal control trial involving >2,000 school students, showed that 54% had experienced trauma before 18 years of age. Read:
bit.ly/XXXXXXX

Dr Emma Barrett

Senior Research Fellow & Psychologist

The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use

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Example of Tweet containing expert opinion (other event)

👎 Not using guidelines

❌ Evidence basis of webinar is unclear (information presented is clear, but **where** did it come from?)

❌ Image used adds nothing to Tweet

❌ Specific population group that findings relate to is unclear (clinicians, clients or both?)

✅ Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

✅ Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversations)

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Did you miss our #anxiety and #alcohol use webinar yesterday? We explored how and why anxiety and alcohol use frequently co-occur, and what treatment methods work best. Watch online here:
https://youtu.be/XXXX-00000

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Example of Tweet containing expert opinion (other event)

👍 Using guidelines

- Evidence basis of webinar is clear (overview of prevalence, presentations and treatment for anxiety and alcohol use by clinician and researcher, expert opinion)

- Image used adds to Tweet

- Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (clinicians)

- Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- Hashtags are not over-used (relate to specific conversations)

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Did you miss our evidence-based practice webinar on #anxiety and #alcohol use with clinician and researcher @lex_stapinski? A/Prof Stapinski provided an expert overview of prevalence, presentations and treatment. Watch online here: https://youtu.be/XXXX-00000

COMORBIDITY GUIDELINES

Funded by
Australian Government
Department of Health

Delivered by
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ANXIETY AND ALCOHOL USE: WHAT CLINICIANS NEED TO KNOW

Presented by
A/Prof Lexine Stapinski

1 in 6
Australians experience anxiety at a level that causes them to have problems in their day-to-day lives

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Example of Tweet containing an evidence-based report

👎 Not using guidelines

- ❌ Evidence basis of information is unclear (**what** is the information, and **where** did it come from?)

- ❌ Image used adds nothing to Tweet

- ✅ Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (all Australians, federal policy)

- ✅ Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- ✅ Hashtags are not over-used (relate to specific conversations)

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Our submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry is now available at bit.ly/XXXXXXX Our submission describes what we think is essential to lessening the burden of #mentalhealth and #substanceuse disorders for all Australians

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Example of Tweet containing an evidence-based report

👍 Using guidelines

Through a combination of the image and Tweet, evidence basis of information is clear (key recommendations in submission are clear, expert advice as source is clear). Notably, mentions of accounts replace hashtags to illustrate number of experts providing input.

Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (all Australians, federal policy)

Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

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Congratulations to our amazing team of researchers for providing expert advice on this Productivity Commission submission! @MTeesson, @DrCathChapman, @NickieNewton, @lex_stapinski, @christina_marel, @KChampion1, @EB_Madden, @KateRoss20 and @ProfFranKayLamb.

Read: bit.ly/XXXXXXX

Productivity Commission Mental Health Inquiry Draft Report: Matilda Centre submission overview
- Greater focus on evidence-based early intervention and prevention approaches, social and emotional wellbeing in schools
- Greater focus on holistic approaches to comorbidity of mental health and alcohol and drug use
- Prioritise youth voices such as our youth advisory board

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Example of Tweet containing an evidence-based resource (treatment program)

👎 Not using guidelines

- ❌ Evidence basis of information is unclear (**what** is the treatment program, and **where** did it come from?)

- ❌ No media used to support Tweet

- ✅ Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (people experiencing PTSD and substance use)

- ✅ Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- ✅ Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversation)

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Read more about our #PTSD and #substanceuse treatment trial currently recruiting participants. Treatment is based at our centre in Darlinghurst bit.ly/XXXXXXX

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Example of Tweet containing an evidence-based resource (treatment program)

👍 Using guidelines

- ✓ Evidence basis of information is clear (treatment program is a clinical trial, previous trial has peer-reviewed publication showing efficacy)

- ✓ Image is used and adds to Tweet

- ✓ Specific population group findings relate to is clear (young people experiencing PTSD and substance use)

- ✓ Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- ✓ Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversation)

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A peer-reviewed study of our innovative COPE clinical trial showed that 13 sessions of integrated CBT for adults experiencing #PTSD and #substanceuse resulted in significant improvements. We are now recruiting for a youth-focused program (COPE-A). Read more: bit.ly/XXXXXXX

COPE-A
Treating substance use and trauma among adolescents

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Example of Tweet containing an evidence-based resource (factsheet)

👎 Not using guidelines

Evidence basis of information is unclear (**what** is the resource, and **where** did it come from?)

Specific population group that findings relate to is unclear (**who** is this resource for?)

Image used adds nothing to Tweet

Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversation)

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Our new resource explores #medicalcannabis and summarises the latest evidence for its use to manage medical conditions. Download here: bit.ly/XXXXXXX

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Example of Tweet containing an evidence-based resource (factsheet)

👍 Using guidelines

- Evidence basis of information is clear (an expert reviewed factsheet on medical cannabis)

- Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (parents and teachers)

- Video used adds to Tweet (provides some examples of facts from resource)

- Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

- Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversation)

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NEW FACTSHEET | What is #medicinalcannabis? Our latest resource is expert-reviewed by @DrStockings, and summarises information for parents and teachers on the side effects, legal status and medical uses of medicinal cannabis. Download here: bit.ly/XXXXXXX

DRUGS A-Z

What is medicinal cannabis?

Medicinal cannabis is the use of the cannabis sativa plant for any medical purpose

▶ 25 views   0:02 / 0:10

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Example of Tweet containing a peer-reviewed publication

👎 Not using guidelines

Evidence basis of information is unclear (finding is clear, but **where** did it come from?)

Image used adds nothing to Tweet

Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (young people)

Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversation)

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A mobile phone app can improve health behaviours among young people experiencing #mentalhealth issues, a new study by researchers at the Matilda Centre has found. Read more: bit.ly/XXXXXXX

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Example of Tweet containing a peer-reviewed publication

👍 Using guidelines

Through a combination of the image and Tweet, evidence basis of information is clear (finding is clear, and that it comes from peer-reviewed publication is clear)

Specific population group that findings relate to is clear (young people)

Hyperlink to verify research information in Tweet

Hashtags are not over-used (relate to a specific conversation)

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A new study by @Louise_Thornton and colleagues piloted a multiple health behaviour change app recording changes in diet, exercise, substance use and mood. Participants who completed the program showed small but positive changes across all areas. Read more: doi.org/10.2196/10228

New peer-reviewed publication

A small pilot trial of mobile phone-based lifestyle program MyHealthPA found improvements in health behaviour amongst young people aged 19-25 years, especially those experiencing mental health issues

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