Using the #SaludTues Tweetchat on Twitter to Build Community Awareness and Advocacy on Alzheimer’s Disease among Latinos

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Introduction

U.S. Latinos are 1.5 times as likely to have Alzheimer’s or other dementias as their white peers. This makes it critical to raise awareness about Alzheimer’s disease and related problems in the Latino community.

Tweetchats on Twitter can be a powerful tool to reach and engage people in raising awareness, discussing solutions, and driving advocacy actions for Latino health issues. In 2014, Salud America!, a national online network to promote Latino health equity based at UT Health San Antonio, launched its own weekly Latino health Tweetchat series using the hashtag #SaludTues.

To raise awareness of Alzheimer’s and other dementias among the Latino community, and spark advocacy for solutions, Salud America! hosted a #SaludTues Tweetchat on Aug. 14, 2018, focused on “Tackling the Latino Alzheimer’s Crisis.” The Tweetchat was co-hosted with three global groups that advocate for Alzheimer’s disease solutions in Latino and other communities. The Tweetchat served a unique testing ground for the fast dissemination and reach of critical health information.

Materials and Methods

To determine the impact of the #SaludTues Tweetchat on Aug. 14, 2018, we extracted Tweetchat data using Symplur analytics software (Symplur LLC).

Using Symplur, we analyzed #SaludTues Tweetchat reach, participant demographics, key words, and other key content and audience metrics during the 60-minute tweet chat and 15 minutes following and before the chat to capture any continued conversation that may have occurred.

Results

Table 1. Tweetchat Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Tweets</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retweets</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweets with Media</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweets with Mentions</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweets with Replies</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Users</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impressions</td>
<td>3,884,995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

> The #SaludTues Tweetchat on Alzheimer’s was co-hosted with three global groups advocating solutions for Alzheimer’s in Latino communities. A total of 69 individuals participated in the Tweetchat, generating 579 tweets and nearly 4 million impressions.

> Most of the Tweetchat participants (53%) were from individuals or organizations working for advocating the importance and crisis of Alzheimer’s disease in Latino community in the U.S. and around the globe.

> Major words used during the Tweetchat were “Alzheimer’s Disease,” “Latino/Latinos,” “families,” “dementia,” “risk factors,” “caregivers,” “services,” indicating strong focus on raising awareness and resources.

Conclusions

- More awareness of and advocacy around Alzheimer’s disease and related problems must be spread in the Latino community.
- Social media monitoring coupled with the conversational nature of Twitter allows for the detection of emerging public concerns in real time, which can be an advantage for health organizations to create awareness of the disease among particular community.
- Tweetchats on Twitter can be a powerful tool for the widespread engagement of the community to raise awareness of Latino health issues, including Alzheimer’s, and stimulate advocacy for solutions.

References