

Impact of World Thrombosis Day campaign

Aaron M. Wendelboe PhD¹ | Louise St. Germain BA² | Barbara Krolak BA² |
Thomas Reiser MA² | Gary Raskob PhD¹ | on behalf of the ISTH Steering Committee on
World Thrombosis Day*

¹College of Public Health, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City, OK, USA

²International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis, Carrboro, NC, USA

Correspondence

Gary Raskob, College of Public Health, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City, OK, USA.
Email: Gary-Raskob@ouhsc.edu

Abstract

Thrombosis is an underlying cause of one in four deaths globally. The International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis established the inaugural World Thrombosis Day on October 13, 2014. The World Thrombosis Day campaign aims to 1) highlight the disease burden from thrombosis, 2) increase public awareness of the risks, signs, and symptoms of thromboembolic conditions, 3) empower individuals to discuss their thrombosis risk with their healthcare provider, 4) galvanize organizations across the globe, and 5) advocate for “systems of care” to prevent, diagnose, and treat venous thromboembolism and atrial fibrillation. Public health messages include: “know the risks, signs, and symptoms of blood clots,” “potentially fatal blood clots in the veins can be prevented,” “atrial fibrillation can be diagnosed by a doctor feeling one’s pulse,” and “effective strategies for stroke prevention in patients with atrial fibrillation are available.” To demonstrate the public health impact of the World Thrombosis Day campaign, we measured campaign reach, size and breadth of our partner network, as well as traditional and digital media impressions. The campaign reached an estimated ≥ 2.3 billion people globally in 2016. As part of the World Thrombosis Day campaign, approximately 8,200 activities were held globally and our partner network expanded to ≥ 675 partners across 80 countries in 2016. Social media metrics reached 170 million impressions and traditional media reached 1.9 billion impressions. We appreciate and thank our partners for their contributions and encourage others to support this campaign to reduce thrombosis-related morbidity and mortality worldwide.

KEYWORDS

atrial fibrillation, media, Public health, thrombosis, venous thromboembolism

1 | COMMENTARY

Globally, one in four deaths is caused by thrombosis-related conditions.¹ The International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH) is dedicated to reducing mortality and morbidity associated

with thrombotic conditions and established the inaugural World Thrombosis Day on October 13, 2014– the birthday of Rudolf Virchow, who was a pioneer in the pathophysiology of thrombosis. The aims of the World Thrombosis Day campaign are to (i) highlight the burden of disease and the need for action, (ii) increase public awareness of

*See appendix

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the significant risks, signs, and symptoms of thrombosis, (iii) empower individuals to talk with their healthcare providers about their risk for thrombosis and appropriate prevention, (iv) galvanize organizations in countries across the globe, and (v) advocate for “systems of care” to properly prevent, diagnose, and treat venous thrombosis (VTE) and atrial fibrillation (Afib).

The rapid advancement in communication technology has created a variety of options to facilitate instantaneous and global information dissemination at an affordable cost. Health care and medicine have also leveraged these modalities to develop campaigns to promote awareness and advocacy for specific diseases. For example, campaigns targeting prevention of heart attacks, breast cancer, HIV/AIDS, etc. have demonstrated success applying these technologies to achieve their goals. It is noteworthy that the most well-known campaigns (eg, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, World AIDS Day, and American Heart Association’s Heart Month) have been operating for 25 years or longer. These campaigns play a crucial public health role in raising awareness, preventing disease, and demonstrate that resources directed to communicating prevention messages are cost-effective.

The timing was ripe for the World Thrombosis Day campaign. There are simple public health messages with effective communication channels to the public that can have a direct impact on thrombotic disease awareness and prevention. These messages include: (i) “Know the risks, signs, and symptoms of blood clots;” (ii) Potentially fatal blood clots in the veins can be prevented; (iii) Atrial fibrillation can be easily diagnosed by a doctor feeling one’s pulse, and (iv) Effective strategies for prevention of stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation are available.

Demonstrating the public health impact of any health awareness campaign is difficult to accomplish through direct measurements.² However, the campaign used commonly reported metrics as proxy measures to demonstrate impact. During each calendar year, we measure the global impact of World Thrombosis Day through (i) campaign reach, (ii) size and breadth of our partner network, and (iii) traditional and digital media impressions. Campaign reach was measured by partner event attendance, media coverage, social media engagement, and website analytics. The size and breadth of our partner network was measured by the number of partners, the number of countries in which we have partners, the number of sponsors, and the number of activities held annually. Social media impressions are measured by the number of: “likes” on Facebook, “tweets” using specified campaign hashtags on Twitter, and followers on Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest. Traditional media impressions are measured by the number of countries with media coverage and the number of media stories. These metrics have been collected since the inaugural World Thrombosis Day in 2014, facilitating our ability to measure growth over time.

The results and overall impact of the 2016 World Thrombosis Day campaign are summarized in Figures 1–5. We estimate the campaign reached ≥ 2.3 billion people, which represents a 423% increase in reach from 2015. As part of the World Thrombosis Day campaign, approximately 8200 activities were held globally in 2016, a 26% increase from 2015 (Figure 1). We also expanded our partner network by 111% from the previous year, with more than 675 partners across



FIGURE 1 Global campaign reach of World Thrombosis Day 2016

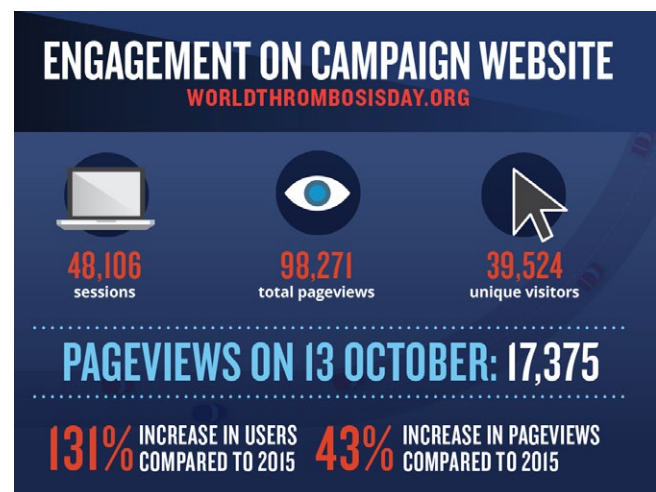


FIGURE 2 Engagement on Campaign Website

80 countries. From healthcare organizations to government agencies, campaign partners represent a variety of sectors and are the energy and action behind World Thrombosis Day. World Thrombosis Day partners include both organizations and individuals, such as hospitals, government agencies, non-profit organizations, private companies, advocacy groups, membership societies, support networks, individual thrombosis survivors and advocates, and more. Campaign partners are located throughout the world, including the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Since the campaign’s inception, partners are continuously recruited and invited to join World Thrombosis Day through targeted outreach, collaborative relationships, traditional and social media, word-of-mouth, and more (Figure 3). Our engagement through social media reached 170 million total impressions, an 88% increase from 2015 (Figure 2). Traditional media accounted for even greater

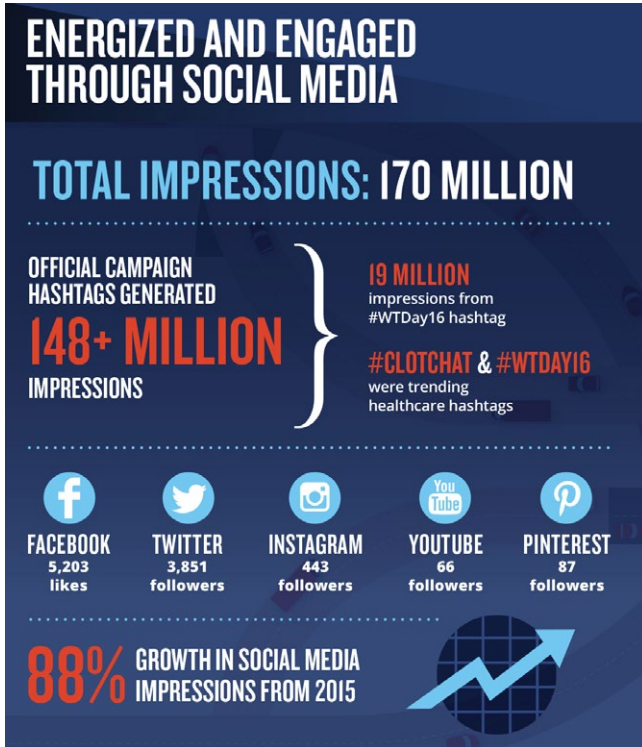


FIGURE 3 2016 social media impressions

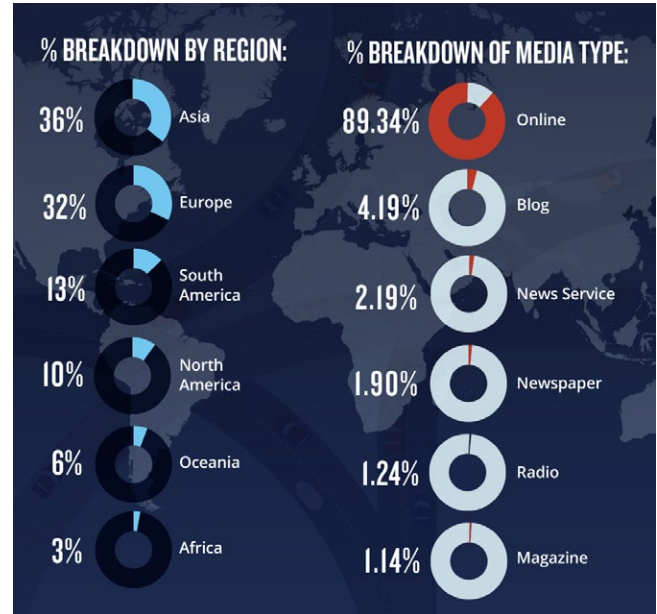


FIGURE 5 Media impact stratified by region and type of media

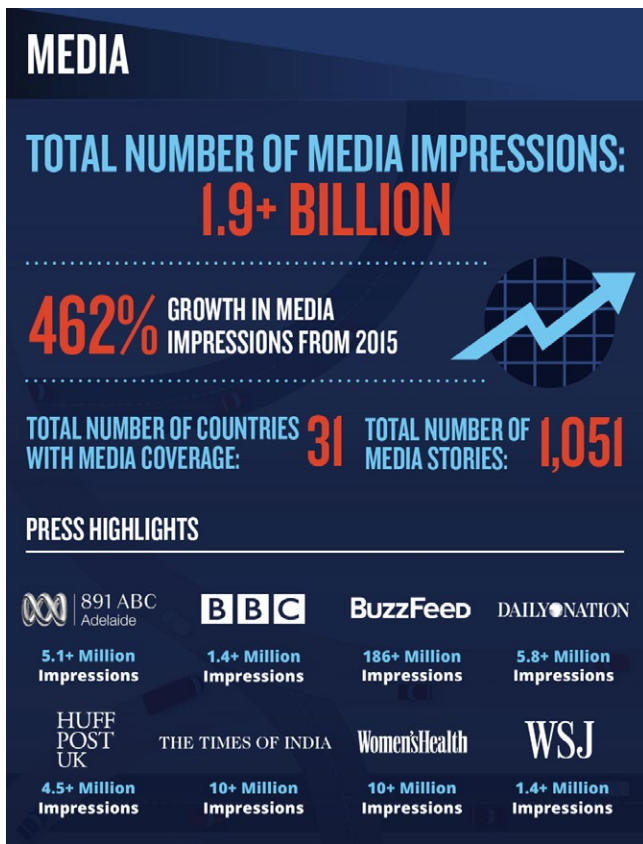


FIGURE 4 2016 traditional media impressions






reach and growth with a total 1.9 billion impressions representing 462% increase from 2015 (Figure 4). Media reach by region of the world is shown in Figure 5. Thirty-one countries broadcasted 1,051 stories to increase people’s awareness of thrombosis, venous thromboembolism, and atrial fibrillation. In addition, the campaign continued to highlight the patient voice, featuring an online gallery of more than 400 survivor photographs and six new in-depth stories of patient ambassadors (Figures 2–5).

We are grateful to all global partners and 14 sponsors who have contributed to the growth and work in achieving the World Thrombosis Day campaign’s aims. In an effort to hold the campaign accountable for the trust and resources given to us, we compared ourselves to other health-related campaigns of similar age (Table 1). Of the organizations included for comparison, the World Thrombosis Day campaign is the most recently established. We have successfully engaged the largest number of partners, though our social media presence is either on par or below the other campaigns.

In addition to increasing awareness of thrombotic conditions among the general public, the steering committee for World Thrombosis Day also aims to make scholarly contributions as we partner with health professionals in the field. We have written: a systematic review of the global burden of thrombosis², surveys of awareness of venous thromboembolism³ and atrial fibrillation⁴, and a position statement on the need for risk assessment for venous thromboembolism to be conducted on all hospitalized patients.⁵

Despite the accomplishments since launching World Thrombosis Day in 2014, there remain many opportunities to grow and amplify our impact across the world, as evidenced by the aforementioned awareness surveys.^{3,4} One important question is “Are we missing your support?” We would appreciate your involvement in World Thrombosis Day. Please let us know how you would like to contribute to preventing thrombotic conditions in your community and around the world.

TABLE 1 Comparison of selected disease awareness campaigns by year established, number of partners, and use of social and traditional media

Campaign name	Host organization	Year established	Total partners	Social media ^a	
				Twitter	Facebook
 WORLD THROMBOSIS DAY 13 OCTOBER	International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis	2014	675	4336	5580
 World Heart Day	World Health Federation	2000	232	12 300	12 184
 WORLD HEPATITIS ALLIANCE	World Hepatitis Alliance	2008	310	7049	6540
 World Kidney Day	International Society of Nephrology, International Federation of Kidney Foundations	2006	11	10 300	46 877
 World Stroke Day October 29	World Stroke Organization	2004	53	1965	469

^aNumber of followers on Twitter and number of page likes on Facebook.

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APPENDIX

Pantep Angchaisuksiri, MD³, Alicia N. Blanco, PhD⁴, Harry Büller, MD⁵, Henry Ddungu, MB.Ch.B⁶, Justin D. Dvorak, PhD¹, Beverley J. Hunt, MD⁷, Elaine M. Hylek, MD⁸, Ajay Kakkar, MBBS⁹, Stavros V. Konstantinides, MD¹⁰, Claire McLintock, MD¹¹, Tetsumei Urano, MD¹², and Jeffrey I. Weitz, MD¹³

3. Faculty of Medicine, Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand

4. División Hemostasia, IIHEMA, Academia Nacional de Medicina, Buenos Aires, Argentina

5. Department of Vascular Medicine, Academic Medical Center, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

6. Uganda Cancer Institute, Kampala, Uganda

7. Thrombosis & Thrombophilia Centre, Guy's & St Thomas', NHS Foundation Trust, London, UK

8. Boston University School of Medicine, Boston, MA, USA

9. Thrombosis Research Institute, London, UK

10. Center for Thrombosis and Hemostasis, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany

11. National Women's Health, Auckland City Hospital, Auckland, New Zealand

12. Department of Medical Physiology, Hamamatsu University School of Medicine, Hamamatsu, Japan

13. McMaster University and the Thrombosis and Atherosclerosis Research Institute, Hamilton, ON, Canada.