Conclusion: Here we describe a novel in vitro model of skin fibrosis. Our data show that vascularized skin equivalents can reproduce all skin layers affected by fibrosis, that, upon exposure to TGFβ, these models recapitulate key features of fibrotic skin and that these skin models can be used as a platform for evaluation of antifibrotic drugs in a setting with high relevance for human disease.

References:

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Time2Work - why and how to act

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Background: In 2019, EULAR launched the #Time2Work campaign [1] to raise awareness of the impact of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases on individuals, society, and the economy. Building on this theme, the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance (CAPA) developed a social media campaign and Twitter chat in collaboration with international patient advocates and organizations. The Twitter chat built upon CAPA’s successful development of workplace resources for people living with arthritis [2].

Objectives: To deliver an international #ArthritisAtWork social media campaign on Twitter, in support of the #Time2Work campaign.

Methods: A one-hour Twitter Chat was held on World Arthritis Day (October 12, 2019) on arthritis in the workplace (#ArthritisAtWork) from 18:00 to 19:00 UTC. The chat was hosted by CAPA and co-hosted by Simon Stones, a patient advocate from the United Kingdom (UK) and CreakyJoints, patient-driven arthritis organization in the United States (US). The Twitter Chat questions were co-developed in advance by the hosts, and blog posts were shared from CAPA’s website. Each host also prompted the Twitter Chat through their websites, newsletters and online communities. A social media analytical tool, Sprymur, was used to measure audience engagement using the hashtag #ArthritisAtWork. In addition, pertinent Tweets before, during, and after the chat were obtained. The analysis of themes was undertaken to identify common issues and questions.

Results: One hundred and ten users participated in the Twitter chat between 17:20 and 19:20 UTC. Participants included people living with arthritis, researchers, patient organizations, health information outlets and academic institutions. During this period, 565 tweets were shared between participants in Australia, Canada, Ireland, Spain, UK and US. There were 3,352 million Twitter impressions. This represents the number of times a tweet appears to users in either their timeline or search results. Emergent themes of the analysis include:

- common workplace challenges such as employer attitudes and stigma;
- effective workplace supports such as prioritizing tasks and requesting workplace accommodations;
- areas of improvement such as instituting workplace policies, flexible workplace approaches and education for employees and managers.

Conclusion: The social media campaign was successful in reaching a diverse audience and supporting the #Time2Work campaign. Social media tools can provide an important social support for people living with arthritis as they navigate workplace challenges. It also offers a more contemporary platform to engage the international community on issues of common interest. Working together, internationally helps expand reach and reduce barriers in communication. Research can be conducted to measure potential behavior change that leverages digital social support for people living with arthritis.

References:

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