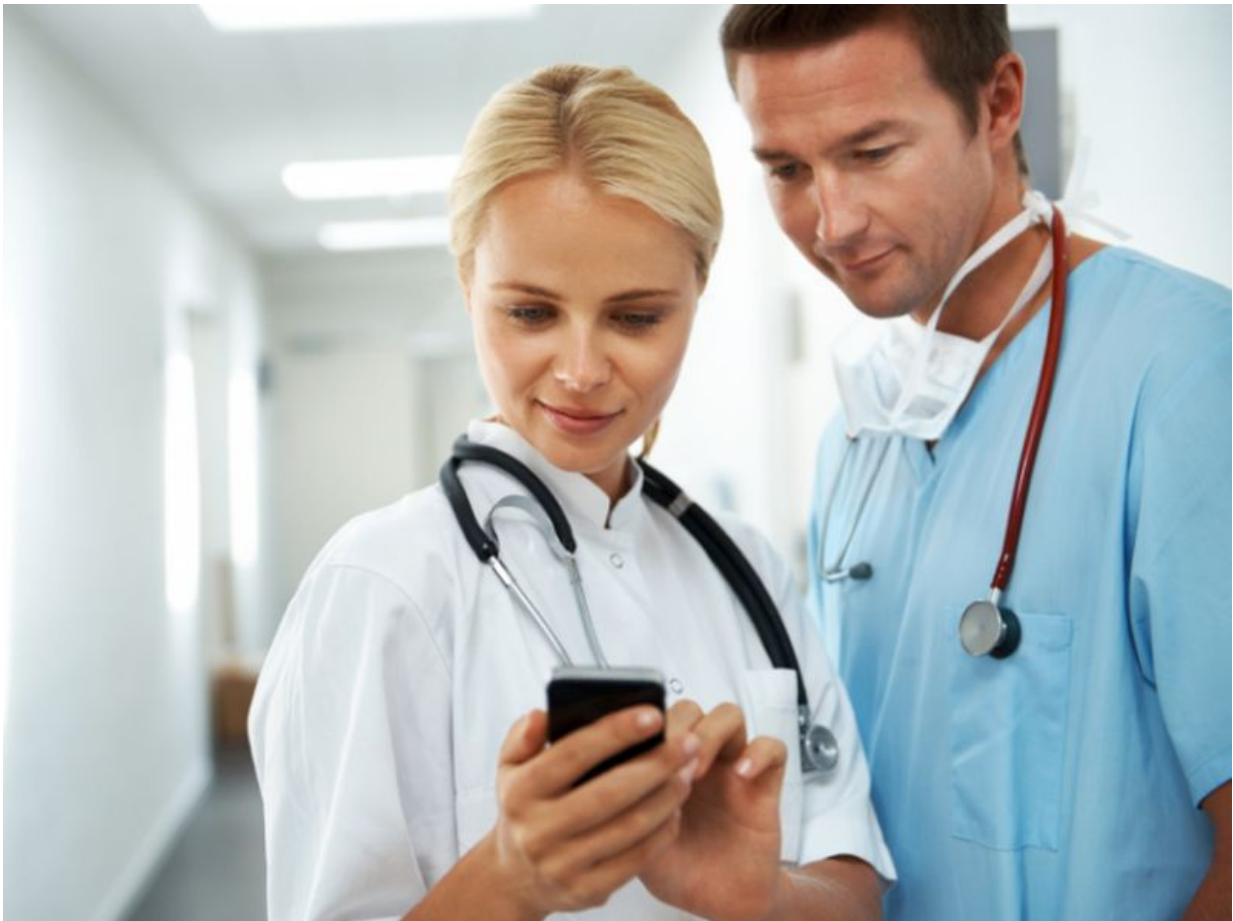


Physicians tweeting about drugs may have conflict of interest

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(HealthDay)—Most physicians on Twitter with a financial conflict of

interest (FCOI) and frequent tweets mention specific drugs for which they have a conflict, according to a study published in the September issue of *The Lancet Haematology*.

Victoria Kaestner, from the Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, and colleagues examined whether conflicted physicians [tweet](#) about specific products for which they have a FCOI. A total of 156 physicians who tweeted a median of 584 times were included, with a 2014 median general payment totaling \$13,600.

The researchers found that 81 percent of the physicians mentioned at least one drug from a company for which they had a FCOI and 88 percent mentioned at least one drug for which they did not have an FCOI. Fifty-two percent of the 4,358 total drug mentions regarded conflicted drugs. Only 1.3 percent of the physicians included a disclosure relating to their payment; these were in their twitter biography. Conflicted tweets were more likely to be positive, similarly likely to be neutral, and less likely to be negative, compared with tweets about non-conflicted drugs coded at random.

"Our results raise the concern that [financial conflict](#) of interest must be considered with the growing use of [social media](#) to discuss cancer products and practices, as well as policies regarding disclosure, divesture, audit, and recusal may be considered," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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