Project Title:
Social Media 360°: Scanning the Landscape of Literature to Research and Provide Recommendations for How the National Library of Medicine (NLM) Can Most Effectively Use Social Media to Provide Health Information to the Public

Background:
New technologies are constantly changing the way libraries work. Librarians are now responsible for implementing online trainings using diverse platforms, for communicating with staff and consumers using social media, for making information available in various online and social media formats, and for having concrete knowledge of specific apps, platforms, and trends. Staying on top of all the changes can be a daunting task.

Project:
Investigate social media platforms and innovative uses of these. Project goals will include:

• Evaluating the pluses and minuses of NLM conducting Twitter chats — logistics and person-power required, what would be engaging topics, who would be good NLM experts to advertise, etc.
• Exploring some of the most popular and successful Facebook pages and Twitter feeds and what they’re doing to communicate their messages and share their information. Video, info graphics, more interaction with followers, etc. may be examined. How might NLM implement these ideas?
• Developing a "how to" guide for NLM staff wishing to start up new social media outlets. It would include notes on the NLM approval process (NLM/OCPL staff will provide background documents on this) and suggestions.
• Evaluating significant metrics, to measure success of a new media outlet? Is there a software or other evaluation tool NLM should consider using?
• Time permitting, collaborating with NLM/OCPL Social Media Strategist to update NLM Social Media Guidelines and laying the groundwork for a mandatory social media training module for NLM staff working in that area.

Primary Learning Objectives for Intern:
• Understand the use of social media to communicate reliable health information to the public
• Researching success stories in public and private social media outlets
• Helping update and also create NLM training materials relating to social media

Expected Outcomes/Products:
• Report (no more than 3 pages) with suggestions and finding also in a brief PowerPoint (presentation) format
• List of articles and other materials consulted
• Suggested mandatory training (even if only a mock-up of information to impart)
• Time permitting, in collaboration with Social Media Strategist, an updated version of the NLM Social Media Guidelines

Methodologies/Tasks:

1. Research social media platforms being used today by public and private sectors and assess their benefit to NLM
2. Review literature on social media metrics and their merits, as well as technologies used in measurement and their respective merits
3. Assess NLM current social media outlets and how these might be strengthened/enhanced
4. Expected Time: 120 hours

Project Sponsor: Melanie Modlin, NLM Deputy Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison, and NLM Officer of Public Liaison