Medical journals serve multiple important roles that include facilitating peer review of research to ensure quality, building a knowledge base for our profession, and effectively disseminating research findings. At Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes, we are continually seeking strategies to improve our ability to carry out these roles. To help improve how we disseminate research findings, we have recently started to publish visual abstracts.

In its simplest terms, a visual abstract is a visual representation of a manuscript’s key findings. A visual abstract is a clear, concise format to quickly communicate the key findings of a study so that the busy readers of our journal can more efficiently find the articles most relevant to them. It is not meant to be a substitute for reading the article, but more so akin to a movie trailer that helps you decide if you want to read the full manuscript. With an increasing volume of available literature, we feel this is an important service to direct readers to relevant and important publications.

Visual abstracts were first implemented by the Annals of Surgery in July 2016 as a means of sharing important research on social media platforms. In addition to creating >50 visual abstracts to date, Annals of Surgery has also invited authors to co-create visual abstracts with them. Although there are research studies underway to specifically quantify how well visual abstracts help in the dissemination of research, the use of visual abstracts is increasing. To date, more than a dozen journals have adopted the format into their social media platform and many of these can be found on Twitter by searching the hashtag #VisualAbstract.

We are in the early phase of integrating visual abstracts into processes at Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes. In our first phase, the editorial board will be creating visual abstracts for 1 to 2 articles that are particularly compelling. Once the manuscripts are published, we will share the accompanying visual abstract on social media platforms with a link to the article itself. If we find the use of visual abstract leads to greater dissemination of associated research publication, we will look to expand its use across the journal.

Like all new techniques in medicine and research, the adoption of the visual abstract will inevitably have a learning curve. We look forward to hearing from our readership about the value of visual abstracts and how we can further improve the dissemination of research published in Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes.

Disclosures

None.

References


Key Words: knowledge bases • publications • research • social media • visual abstract
Adoption of Visual Abstracts at *Circulation CQO*: Why and How We're Doing It

Andrew M. Ibrahim and Steven M. Bradley

*Circ Cardiovasc Qual Outcomes*. 2017;10:
doi: 10.1161/CIRCOUTCOMES.117.003684

*Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231

Copyright © 2017 American Heart Association, Inc. All rights reserved.

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:

http://circoutcomes.ahajournals.org/content/10/3/e003684

Permissions: Requests for permissions to reproduce figures, tables, or portions of articles originally published in *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* can be obtained via RightsLink, a service of the Copyright Clearance Center, not the Editorial Office. Once the online version of the published article for which permission is being requested is located, click Request Permissions in the middle column of the Web page under Services. Further information about this process is available in the Permissions and Rights Question and Answer document.

Reprints: Information about reprints can be found online at:
http://www.lww.com/reprints

Subscriptions: Information about subscribing to *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* is online at:
http://circoutcomes.ahajournals.org//subscriptions/