



Self Care Forum

Helping people take care of themselves

Self Care Week

Instructions for holding a *Self Care Week* Twitter Chat

Promoting Self Care Week on Twitter

Increasingly, people are turning to social media to promote their Self Care Week messages and one way to engage your target audience is by hosting a [Twitter chat](#). This resource provides some tips on how to plan your Self Care Week Twitter chat.

Twitter chats can either be a general self care discussion or about a more specific self care topic. You might also want to use it to launch a service or produce during Self Care Week. You will need to have an idea in advance of what you want to talk about along with some prepared content.

Before holding your Twitter chat, it's good to identify your target audience, for example, is it health care professionals, service users or local voluntary groups for example. This will help you to define the type of questions to ask.



Getting started

Twitter chats usually follow a Q&A format. The host asks questions or posts discussion topics (indicated by Q1, Q2, etc.) and participants post answers (A1, A2, etc.).

By numbering the questions in your Twitter chat, and encouraging participants to respond using corresponding numbers makes the discussion easy to follow. This will also allow you or the participant to refer to a specific question using the question number.

Create a Twitter chat hashtag can also be a good idea to help follow (particularly if using tools such as Tweetdeck) – remember to involve us using **@SelfCareForum** to ensure a retweet and ***#selfcareweek #selfcareforlife.***



Suggested topics: **Self Treatable Conditions**

Self treatable conditions are conditions which people can usually treat themselves without the aid of a healthcare professional. They include symptoms such as low back pain, coughs, colds and sore throats, eczema, fever in children, earache and sinusitis.

Whether your target audience is service users, carers or health professionals getting to the bottom of why people don't self treat and finding solutions so that they can, may be helpful to inform future activities.

Material on our website such as our [factsheets](#) might help with questions for the chat.

Suggested questions: Self Treatable Conditions

Q1. How can we help people become more knowledgeable about their health and therefore more empowered? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q2. What are the barriers to people doing more to look after their own health? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q3. How can we encourage people to visit their local pharmacist for advice about self-treatable conditions, rather than their GP or A&E? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q4. How can we ensure people are better informed as to which OTC medicines they should keep in their medicine cabinet for conditions they regularly experience? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat



Suggested topics: **Role of Pharmacists**

Community pharmacists are key in preventing illness. Local pharmacies provide NHS services in the same way as GP practices – pharmacists train for five years in the use of medicines before they qualify as health professionals

It is important to encourage people where possible to utilise pharmacists' wealth of knowledge to treat minor ailments. Pharmacists are an excellent source of advice for many minor ailments and unlike GP practices, they provide a walk-in service open all day.



Suggested questions: **Role of Pharmacists**

Q1. What needs to happen for pharmacists to be recognised as the health professionals they are? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q2. What are the barriers to people viewing the pharmacist as a convenient and valuable source of health information? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q3. What can pharmacists do to be more visible as health professionals on the High Street? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q4. Should community pharmacies and surgeries collaborate more to support the local population and help people to self care? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Suggested topics: Long Term Conditions

Helping people with long term conditions to self-manage their condition(s) is a good idea given 27.2 per cent of people in England live with two or more long-term conditions, account for more than half of all GP appointments and almost four in five prescriptions.

It's also true that people with long term conditions spend on average just 4 hours a year with a health professional, which means the remaining 8756 hours are spent self-managing.

A Self Care Week Twitter chat on long term conditions could be beneficial, for instance to help people understand what services are available locally for support and to find out what gaps are in the Service.

Suggested questions: **Long Term Conditions**

Q1. How can we encourage people living with long term health conditions to consider using self management courses? (e.g. Expert Patient Programme)
#selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q2. How can we better integrate self care advice for self limited or long term conditions into health promotion consultations? #selfcareweek
@SelfCareForum #tchat

Q3. How can we support people living with long term conditions to be more confident about managing their condition? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum
#tchat

Q4. What support do people living with long term conditions want/need from health services and how can we make that happen? #selfcareweek
@SelfCareForum #tchat

Suggested topics: **Prevention**

Prevention is another crucial area and worthy of a Self Care Week Twitter chat.

Whether it's about maintaining or improving our physical health or mental wellbeing there is so much that we can do to ensure our minds and bodies are healthy. If we only concentrate on people that are already ill and don't do more to support and encourage people to choose healthy options then the cases of preventable long term conditions is only going to go up.

Suggested questions: **prevention**

Q1. How can we motivate people to get off the sofa and move more?
#selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q2. Can we use technology to support people's health choices rather than add to their sedentary lifestyle? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q3. What support can we provide to older people to ensure their mental state does not decline? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Q4. How can we help children to choose fruit and veg rather than chocolate and crisps? #selfcareweek @SelfCareForum #tchat

Preparing for a Twitter chat

Make your tweets stand out by presenting your questions as images. [Canva](#) is a good tool to use for this as it allows you to create multiple image cards which can be downloaded to your computer and already has a twitter banner template .

The question number should be clearly labelled on each image card to ensure that the Twitter chat is easy to follow for your audience, you could also add “please respond using A1 ...” on the image.

In addition to encouraging your audience to use the corresponding number, also make use of your hashtag (this will be particularly helpful if you want to follow on Tweetdeck).



Exemplar Tweets using Canva

SELF CARE WEEK TWITTER CHAT

Q1. How can we help people become more knowledgeable about their health and therefore more empowered?
(please respond using A1)



SELF CARE WEEK TWITTER CHAT

Q2. What are the barriers to people doing more to look after their own health?
(please respond using A2)



**Q3. What support can we provide to older people to ensure their mental state does not decline?
(please respond using A3)**

SELF CARE WEEK
TWITTER CHAT

Q4 - What support can we provide to older people to ensure their mental state does not decline?
(please respond using A4)

self care week twitter chat



Inviting guest tweeters

You might want to feature a guest tweeter or two on your Twitter chat to help broaden your audience and add expert views to the conversation. Guest tweeters could include:

- The Local mayor or MP
- Public health directors
- Local health professionals such as GPs, pharmacists, nurses, dentists etc
- Self care bloggers
- Local businesses encouraging self care

Promoting your chat

In order to maximise your viewing audience, promote your Twitter chat in advance. You might want to advertise the chat on social media, newsletters or through direct emails.

You should also email the Self Care Forum, selfcare@selfcareforum.org, with details of the Twitter chat as someone may be available to join the chat and help promote it through Self Care Forum channels.

Free Twitter Chat Tools

TChat is made specifically for Twitter chats, although there doesn't appear to be a function for images.

- Log in with your Twitter handle, enter the hashtag of the event, and TChat will pull up all the related messages so you can follow the conversation
- It will automatically add the hashtag to your tweets, so you don't have to remember to do it yourself.
- **You will have to ensure your audience includes your hashtag or you won't see their tweets.**

TweetDeck is helpful for scheduling tweets but since it allows you to view multiple windows, it can also be used to keep track of your chat through your chosen Twitter chat hashtag (again, make sure everyone uses the hashtag or you won't see their tweets).



After the chat

After the conversation has ended, you should take the time to reflect on the chat and its impact. Social measurement and analytics tools, such as [Twitter Analytics](#) can help you evaluate and examine the success of the chat.

You might want to use these insights to help you tweak the delivery of your next chat. If the conversation was particularly interesting, you could consider bringing some of the best content together into a blog post for Self Care Week.

GOOD LUCK!

Don't forget to involve us...

@SelfCareForum and #selfcareweek