Twitter is an online social networking service that enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called "tweets". Registered users can read and post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them

Tweets are publicly visible, but senders can restrict message delivery to just their followers. Tweets may contain links to other websites, pictures or videos.

Users can tweet via the Twitter website, compatible external applications (such as for smartphones) or Short Message Service (SMS). Retweeting is when a tweet is forwarded via Twitter by users.

While the service is free, accessing it through SMS may result in phone service provider fees.

Users may subscribe to other users' tweets– this is known as "following" and subscribers are known as followers, tweeps and peeps. Twitter allows users to update their profile via their mobile phone either by text messaging or by apps released for certain smartphones and tablets.

Users can group posts together by topic or type by use of hashtags - words or phrases prefixed with a "#" sign. Similarly, the "@"sign followed by a username is used for mentioning or replying to other users. To repost a message from another Twitter user and share it with one's own followers, a user can click the retweet button within the Tweet.

There is a search bar and a sidebar of trending topic – which are the most common phrases appearing in messages. All messages are instantly indexed.

Twitter messages are public but users can send private messages as well.

There are several ways to advertise for research studies using Twitter:

1. Tweets from the UVa Twitter Account
2. Tweets from your individual Twitter account
3. Establish a Departmental Twitter Account and post tweets to that account

**If you are considering the use of Twitter please consult with Marketing**

**to determine the best course of action.**

**Tweets from the UVa Twitter Account or an individual Twitter account:**

This would be the tweeting of IRB-approved study-related recruitment using the existing UVA Health System Twitter account or an individual Twitter account. Twitter does not have a way to disable comments. So you must have some way to manage unwanted comments.

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The UVA IRB provides a template for Tweet on our website. UVA IRB approval is required.

UVA Marketing approval of these ads is required.

**Individual Research Center Twitter Accounts:**

Sometimes individual research centers feel it is a good idea to have a Twitter account for their Research Center. These pages must be developed with the help and approval of UVA Marketing. Generally the use of individual research center Twitter accounts is discouraged and people are rather directed to consider using existing Twitter accounts such as the UVA Health System Twitter account or an existing UVA and non UVA Twitter account. Please explore the information related to Twitter on the UVabrand.com website: <http://www.uvabrand.com/is-social-media-right-for-your-department.html>

If you intend to have a Twitter account for your research center, the IRB will require the following:

1. Submission of a Twitter Account Management Plan which should be submitted to the IRB and to UVA Marketing when considering a Twitter Account for your research center. The template for the Twitter Management Plan is on the IRB website
2. UVA Marketing approval for the management plan and for tweets
3. IRB approval for Twitter Account Management Plan and for tweets

**Make sure you have read and understand the UVA Social Media Guidelines:** [**http://www.uvabrand.com/social-media-guidelines.html**](http://www.uvabrand.com/social-media-guidelines.html)

For more information, contact Megan Rowe in Marketing.