

## **Social Media**

This policy provides guidance for general practice on using social media internally and externally. The policy helps identify and mitigate potential risks associated with social media usage. 'Social media' is online social networks used to disseminate information through online interaction. Regardless of whether social media is used for business related activity or for personal reasons, the following standards apply to all GPs and practice staff of the practice.

GPs and practice staff are legally responsible for their postings online. GPs and staff may be subject to liability and disciplinary action including termination of employment if their posts are found to be in breach of this policy.

When using the practice's social media, practice staff will not:

1. post any material that:
  - is unlawful, threatening, defamatory, pornographic, inflammatory, menacing, or offensive
  - infringes or breaches another person's rights (including intellectual property rights) or privacy, or misuses the practice's or another person's confidential information (eg do not submit confidential information relating to our patients, personal information of staff, or information concerning the practice's business operations that have not been made public)
  - is materially damaging or could be materially damaging to the practice's reputation or image, or another individual
  - is in breach of any of the practice's policies or procedures.
2. use social media to send unsolicited commercial electronic messages, or solicit other users to buy or sell products or services or donate money
3. impersonate another person or entity (for example, by pretending to be someone else or another practice employee or other participant when you submit a contribution to social media) or by using another's registration identifier without permission
4. tamper with, hinder the operation of, or make unauthorised changes to the social media sites
5. knowingly transmit any virus or other disabling feature to or via the practice's social media account, or use in any email to a third party, or the social media site
6. attempt to do or permit another person to do any of these things:
  - claim or imply that you are speaking on the practice's behalf, unless you are authorised to do so
  - disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the practice, or to any third party that has disclosed information to the practice.
7. be defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any other applicable law
8. include confidential or copyrighted information (eg music, videos, text belonging to third parties)
9. violate any other applicable policy of the practice.

## **Privacy and security**

All practice staff must obtain the relevant approval from the social media responsible officer prior to posting any public representation of the practice on social media websites. The practice reserves the right to remove any content at its own discretion.

## **Monitoring social media sites**

Any social media must be monitored in accordance with the practice's current policies on the use of internet, email and computers.

## **Staff responsibility**

The practice will appoint a staff member as social media responsible officer to manage and monitor the practice's social media accounts. All posts on the practice's social media website must be approved by this staff member.

The practice complies with AHPRA national law and takes reasonable steps to remove testimonials

that advertise their health services (which may include comments about the practitioners themselves). The practice is not responsible for removing (or trying to have removed) unsolicited testimonials published on a website or in social media over which they do not have control.

**Any social media posts by staff on their personal social media platforms should:**

1. include the following disclaimer example in a reasonably prominent place if you identify yourself as a practice employee on any posting: 'The views expressed in this post are mine and do not reflect the views of the practice/business/committees/boards that I am a member of'.
2. respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms.
3. While not mandatory, it is recommended that staff and doctors refrain from 'friending' patients on social media platforms unless there is a link to the patient other than work.
4. Staff and doctors are also asked not to discuss non confidential work matters on social media.

Social media activities internally and externally of the practice must be in line with this policy.

**Practice's Facebook Account**

The practice has a Facebook account used only for the display of information to its patients and the public. The ability for feedback from followers has been disabled.

The account is to be controlled by senior staff only.

All posts must be Authorised by the Practice Manager before being posted.

Posts only relating to practice activities and medical education may be posted.

Only information from verified medical sites/ department / organisational sites may be used to prevent the spreading of misleading information.

Patient information and confidential information is not to be shared on the page.

Patient photos are not to be shared on the site.

Staff members and Doctors must give authority before their photo is shared.