



# North East Family Medicine

## **Social Media Policy**

**Social Media Managers**

# North East Family Medicine's social media policy

Current as of: 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019

## Introduction

This policy provides guidance for members of the practice on using social media internally and externally. The policy helps identify and mitigate risks associated with social media use.

## Definition

For the purposes of this policy, 'social media' is online social networks used to disseminate information through online interaction.

Social media describes the online and mobile tools that people use to share opinions, information, experiences, images, and video or audio clips and includes websites and applications used for social networking. Common sources of social media include, but are not limited to, social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, blogs (personal, professional and those published anonymously), WOMO, True Local and microblogs such as Twitter, content-sharing websites such as YouTube and Instagram, and discussion forums and message boards.

At present, the only social media platform North East Family Medicine is engaging in internally is Facebook.

## Purpose

This policy outlines the recommended best practice guidelines for our practice when using social media platforms to help us recognise and mitigate the potential risk involved with the use of social media.

Regardless of whether social media is used for business-related activity or for personal reasons, the following policy requirements apply to all GPs and practice staff of the practice. GPs and practice staff are legally responsible for their online activities and may be held liable for any misconduct or breach of the policy. If found to be in breach of this policy the practice has the right to enforce disciplinary actions including termination of employment.

## Use of practice social media accounts

The Practice's Social Media Managers are responsible for the management and monitoring of social media platforms.

The role of the Social Media Manager is to manage the social media marketing campaigns and day-to-day activities including researching and creating relevant and high quality content to reach the practice's target customers/patients online. Communicate our practice's brand and reputation in a positive and innovative way. Respond to online engagement if required.

If one of the Social Media Managers are away the responsibility falls to the remaining manager.

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

- 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
- use social media to send unsolicited commercial electronic messages, or solicit other users to buy or sell products or services or donate money
- impersonate another person or entity (eg 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
- tamper with, hinder the operation of, or make unauthorised changes to the social media sites
- 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
- 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
- be defamatory, harassing or in violation of any other applicable law
- include confidential or copyrighted information (eg music, videos, text belonging to third parties)
- violate any other applicable policy of the practice.

## Creating Content

Content is to be created using factual information from reputable sources.

Any images used must be original or from sources/sites that have allowed sharing/use of the image.

All grammar and spelling requires checking before posting.

The tone and language of the post created must not shine a negative light on the practice. Accusatory, demanding or disrespectful language is not appropriate.

When using images or information from another source/website/brand, they are to be tagged or acknowledged in the post.

Posts are to be saved as drafts or scheduled in advance in order for the Director/s to approve before posting.

The practice must not make unsubstantiated claims in any social media post.

Employees must not make unauthorised changes to the practice's social media platforms.

Employees must not post any private or confidential patient information such as unauthorised photographs of patients in any medium.

## Monitoring social media sites

The practice's social media channels are part of our customer service and should be monitored and dealt with regularly. The practice's aim is to post original content 3 – 4 days a week.

If a comment is made on social media post, it must be viewed by the Social Media Manger within 24 hours. If it is a complimentary comment it is practice policy to "like" the post. If they are asking a question the Social Media Manager should respond.

If a comment is made that contains swearing or threatening or inappropriate behaviour it is practice policy to delete it as soon as possible.

If a negative review has been made about the practice on social media it is practice policy to bring it to the attention of the directors to decide on the best course of action. If a patient has left a negative review, a director will contact the patient privately to discuss and remedy if possible. Do not post anything online that may breach a patient's privacy.

If the review contains swearing, personal attacks or false content it can be reported to the administrators of the social media platform for possible removal.

## Testimonials

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 third-party website or in social media accounts over which they do not have control.

## Personal social media use

Staff are free to personally engage in social media outside of work hours, as long as their actions do not have the potential to bring the practice into disrepute. Employees may not represent personal views expressed as those of this practice.

Any social media posts by staff on their personal social media platforms must not reveal confidential information about the practice or a person who uses the practice (eg staff should not post information relating to patients or other staff, or information concerning the practice's business operations that have not been made public).

Staff should respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms.

## Breach of policy

All social media activities must be in line with this policy.

## Policy review statement

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is up to date with changes in social media or relevant legislation. All staff members will be notified of any and all changes made

### Disclaimer

The 'Social media policy template for general practices' is intended for use as a guide of a general nature only and may or may not be relevant to your particular practices or circumstances. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has used its best endeavours to ensure the template is adapted for general practice to address current and anticipated future social media requirements. Persons adopting or implementing its procedures or recommendations should exercise their own independent skill or judgement, or seek appropriate professional advice. While the template is directed to general practice, it does not ensure compliance with any privacy laws, and cannot of itself guarantee discharge of the duty of care owed to patients. Accordingly, the RACGP disclaims all liability (including negligence) to any users of the information contained in this template for any loss or damage (consequential or otherwise), cost or expense incurred or arising by reason of reliance on the template in any manner.

© The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners 2019

This resource is provided under licence by the RACGP. Full terms are available at [www.racgp.org.au/usage/licence](http://www.racgp.org.au/usage/licence)

*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and seas on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future.*

20712