

## **Duke University School of Medicine Social Media Guidelines**

**February 2017**

### **Guidelines**

The Duke University School of Medicine (SoM) understands the significance, and supports the use of social media to promote the school and its educational, clinical and research activities. The SoM recognizes and supports professional use of social media, and recognizes that SoM faculty, staff, and health professions students may participate in social media for their personal use.

These guidelines cover the use of social media and internet activities that associate SoM entities, faculty, staff, and health professions students with Duke through the use of a Duke title, email address or other identifying information.

“Social media” refers to any online networks which connect and engage people, and where user-generated content is publicly shared. This includes technology tools, online sharing sites and networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Doximity, photo and video sharing sites such as Instagram, Figure 1, Snap Chat, and YouTube, blogs, listservs, message boards, and similar online sharing sites that feature user-generated content, which may arise in the future.

### **Purpose**

1. Provide guidance to SoM faculty, staff, and health professions students regarding the appropriate use of websites and social media channels created and used by SoM entities, faculty, staff, and health professions students, and the professional and personal use of social media and other online activity when users represent themselves as Duke faculty, staff, and health professions students.
2. Minimize business, legal, ethical and personal risks that may arise when SoM faculty, staff, and health professions students use social media during working and non-working hours.
3. Protect the privacy and safety of Duke Health patients, as well as SoM faculty, staff, and health professions students.
4. Protect the SoM, Duke University and Duke Health brands and reputations.

### **Guidelines and Adherence**

School of Medicine entities, faculty, staff, and health professions students who have a Duke-branded social media account or who plan to create one should inform the [School of Medicine Office of Communications](#).

The SoM Office of Communications can offer guidance and assistance to individuals and units who are using or considering using social media as a professional communications tool.

The School of Medicine Office of Communications strongly recommends the following steps be taken prior to creation of a Duke-branded social media account:

1. Obtain approval from a supervisor, entity-executive leadership (i.e. department chair, division chief, manager, etc.).
2. Designate a content owner and back-up moderator who are responsible for monitoring and maintaining accurate content.
  - a. Content owners are responsible for maintaining compliance with Duke Health policies concerning patient privacy, HIPAA, and conflict of interest, Duke Health and [SoM branding](#), and Duke HR standards of conduct.
  - b. Content owners must obtain signed, HIPAA authorization forms before posting or sharing any protected health information (PHI). Content owners are prohibited from posting or sharing any PHI regardless of where it was first posted (i.e. external media site), without proper written authorization.
  - c. Content owners are responsible for ensuring content is current, accurate, and respects copyrights and disclosures. Proprietary financial, intellectual property, patient care, or similar sensitive or private content should not be published.
  - d. Content owners are responsible for gaining the express consent of all involved parties for the right to distribute or publicize recordings, photos, images, video, text, slideshow presentations or artwork.
  - e. Content owners must actively monitor postings.

### **Guidelines for professional social media and online activity**

These guidelines apply to faculty, staff, and health professions students who represent themselves as part of Duke or the School of Medicine in social media venues including professional societies and provider review sites, for professional engagement or casual conversation.

1. Follow the above content guidelines for prohibited use of PHI, respecting copyright, and not publishing/sharing proprietary financial, intellectual property, patient care, or similar sensitive or private content.
2. Use content that is not profane, abusive, offensive, or contains foul language.
3. Be aware that retweeting, linking, and “liking” on various social media platforms implies endorsement, so use good judgment when interacting with organizations and individuals online using your Duke-branded account.

4. When linking to other content, be sure to check the links, not only to ensure that they are working, but also to ensure the appropriateness of the content.
5. Avoid using, liking or linking to partisan political content or campaign messages from a Duke-branded account.
6. Clearly state that thoughts and views are personal and not representative of the School of Medicine. When a Duke connection is apparent, social media profiles should include a disclaimer statement, e.g., “The views expressed here are my own and not those of Duke University or Duke Health.”
7. Do not discuss patient information on social media websites:
  - a) Do not participate in online conversations with patients, patients’ families, and others regarding patient information. If a patient or family sends a message through an online forum or you are contacted online to discuss a patient or prospective patient’s diagnosis, the conversation must be moved offline by suggesting they contact your office.
  - b) Written online communication with or concerning a patient may only take place through a secure, encrypted email messaging system i.e. Duke email or DukeMyChart.
  - c) You may respond to requests for communication with: Thank you for contacting me. Please contact my office at (provide office phone number). You may also send me an email through our secure electronic medical system, DukeMyChart.
8. Do not “friend” patients on social media websites. Do not initiate or accept patients’ friend requests except in situations where an in-person friendship pre-dates the treatment relationship.
9. Do not post pictures of patients or patient’s body parts, wounds, etc., to any non-Duke site including your personal social media sites even if the family and/or patient agrees to the picture or the patient cannot be identified. Photos may be posted to School of Medicine social media accounts when properly executed written authorization is obtained (HIPAA form).
10. If a patient tags you in a photo that appears on social media, it is your responsibility to untag yourself in that photo.
11. Do not include faculty, staff or health professions students/learners in photos unless they have given their permission.
12. If a patient or family member posts complaints about service or other issues, contact Duke University Hospital Guest Services.
13. If someone from the media contacts faculty, staff, or health professions students about posts made in online forums that relate to Duke in any way, workforce members should alert their manager/leadership and contact the Duke Health or Duke University [media relations liaisons](#) before responding.

14. Social media for research must be approved through the IRB and documented in their research data security plan.

### **Personal social media and online activities**

In addition to the policies set forth above, the following stipulations should be adhered to when engaging in social media for **personal** use:

1. Use your personal email address as your primary means of identification.
2. Do not discuss job responsibilities or specific activities that happened on the unit/department during your work day when it includes clinical care or PHI.
3. Personal social media and online activity (such as blogging) should not interfere with work commitments. These activities should be restricted to official breaks.
4. If personal social media and online activity is not consistent with Duke's reputation or brand, the workforce members should not refer to Duke or identify a connection to Duke.

### **Accessing social media via Duke equipment**

As stated in Duke's "Computing and Networking: Acceptable Use" policy, university computers and work time are to be used for university-related business. It is appropriate to post at work if your comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, but maintain your personal site on your own time using non-Duke computers.