



# Social Media Policy

1.2

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy should be read in line with other staffing policies in place including but not limited to disciplinary and grievance policy, IT and policies covering discrimination, bullying and harassment. This policy will set out rules in relation to the use of all forms of social media. Failure to comply could result in disciplinary action leading to dismissal depending on circumstances.

## **2. DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other and allows the sharing of data in a public forum. Social media covers, but is not limited to Twitter, Instagram, Whatsapp, Snapchat, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Flickr.

## **3. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL NETWORK AT WORK**

You are permitted to access social media websites from SHPCA's computers or other electronic devices for personal use but only at certain times. You must limit such usage to official rest breaks, before you commence work, or after work. Remember in the course of your normal computer work regular breaks from work should be taken, but must be away from your computer.

## **4. BUSINESS USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

There may be times when you may need as part of your job to use social media and in these circumstances, it will be made clear as to what is or is not allowed.

You will be advised by your line manager if you are expected to make use of social media for SHPCA purposes (e.g. SHPCA's Website or any Social Media pages/feeds dedicated to SHPCA business or marketing purposes) and in what forums such use is allowed or not allowed.

If you are unsure about the suitability of a "post" you should discuss with your manager.

You may be asked to contribute to the use SHPCA's social media activities by possibly providing blogs or articles. These should be approved by your manager.

If you are contacted for comments about SHPCA for publication anywhere you should discuss your response with your line manager to ensure that it is appropriate and represents the values of SHPCA.

## 5. RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

You should remember that you are representing SHPCA at all times and must therefore ensure the communication has a purpose and is intended for public benefit.

In both business and personal use you should ensure the following:

- Use your common sense before you post anything and think about what you are saying to the public
- Ensure that you do not post any disparaging or defamatory statements about SHPCA, Staff (current and Past), Patients (current and past) other GP surgeries and organisations within the NHS or connected areas such as social care.
- You should not post images or links to inappropriate content. Many images available online are copyright protected and should not be used without permission.
- You must not breach confidentiality in any way.
- You must not use social media to bully, harass or to discriminate against any party.
- You must not express any strong religious or political points.
- You must not enter into any contractual agreements without the express consent of your manager.
- You must refrain from any illegal activity.
- You should not enter into any online fights, personal attacks or hostile postings.

**The golden rule is to ask yourself whether what you are about to post could cause offence to anyone. If the answer is yes then do not make the posting.**

## 6. DATA PROTECTION & MONITORING

### Data Protection

The data controller is Dr, Janet Naylor and the SHPCA Data protection officer is Jo Sheil.

If you are allowed to use the SHPCA's computers or other electronic devices for personal use, then SHPCA has the right to monitor such use, including the use of the internet and social media, during working hours. Inappropriate use could result in disciplinary action.

In the event of misuse being found, SHPCA may limit your access rights in addition to any other action deemed necessary.

### Monitoring

SHPCA does not routinely monitor employees use of social media, however if concerns are raised regarding an employee/staff member's activities on social media which may impact the practice, either by colleagues, patients or third parties, the practice reserves the right to obtain further information and/or monitor employees social media activity.

Workers have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in SHPCAs Data Protection Policy. If workers believe that the practice has not complied with their data protection rights, they can complain to the Information Commissioner.

## **7. SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE**

SHPCA recognises that many employees use social media in a personal capacity and again in that capacity you must not post anything that damages the reputation of SHPCA. You are allowed to state that you work for SHPCA or in SHPCA services, however you must not speak on behalf of SHPCA.

You must not use your working Email address in any communication in a personal capacity.

You should not discuss your working life via social media.

Examples of social media misuse may include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Posting offensive or critical messages on Alliance, competitor or supplier/third party organisation sites
- Posting content that could breach patient, colleague or Alliance confidentiality
- Posting derogatory or inappropriate pictures or comments about colleagues, patients or third parties
- Reposting or sharing material of an offensive, sexual, political or religious nature and linking such content to SHPCA

## **8. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

SHPCA accepts that employees have the right to a private life, however where social media or online activities which can be linked to, or your employment with, SHPCA could cause reputational or internal/external relationship damage, disciplinary action will be considered up to summary dismissal.

Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against you. Serious breaches of this policy could constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal.

SHPCA may request you to remove any posting that is deemed to be offensive or not appropriate and failure to comply may constitute an act of gross misconduct for failing to follow a reasonable management request.

Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the current protocol in place.