

# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY®

## DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- The principles for using Social Media are outlined in other MoH and State Government policies. This document is to be read in conjunction with:
  - The [NSW MoH Code of Conduct](#)
  - [NSW Government's Social Media Policy](#)
  - [NSW Health Privacy Manual](#)
- Only authorised staff may use *official* social media channels.
- Families, patients and visitors must not photograph, film or record staff or other persons without written consent of the individual whose image/voice is captured. Where written consent is not possible, verbal consent must be obtained.
- Social media should be used in a manner consistent with public sector values, legal requirements and the NSW Ministry of Health Code of Conduct.
- No department, unit or service is entitled to open any social media channel without prior consent and presentation of business case and/or executive brief. This includes Facebook groups.
- Specific consent must be attained for all images posted on social media platforms. Refer to the Photography policy for details.
- The Directorate of Communications and Engagement (DCE) manages videos for YouTube and all videos will be uploaded to the Network's YouTube channel under an allocated playlist.
- Staff training, including clinical and internal videos should be uploaded to the SCHN Vimeo channel under the allocated folder. This is a shared service with Education.
- If participant recruitment materials for Clinical Trials are to be uploaded or advertised using social media, **prior Ethics approval is required.**
- **Contact DCE** for all Social Media enquiries.
- **Line Manager** and/or **Internal Audit Manager** must be notified if Social Media is misused at SCHN.

**Misuse of social media at SCHN is a breach of the NSW MoH Code of Conduct and disciplinary action may result.**

<b>Approved by:</b>	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
<b>Date Effective:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2024	<b>Review Period:</b> 3 Years
<b>Team Leader:</b>	Media Content Manager & Social Media Co-ordinator	<b>Area/Dept:</b> Public Relations

## CHANGE SUMMARY

- Added information about families, patients and visitors photographing or recording staff or other individuals, including during the administration of any treatment or intervention or during consultations or meetings.
- Updated link to NSW Government's Social Media Policy.

## READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- All SCHN staff are to read and acknowledge they understand the contents of this policy.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Social media

- In this policy, social media refers to internet services used for the generation, dissemination, and discussion of information in textual, pictorial, audio or video formats.
- SCHN social media channels allow people to interact online in a 'social' manner, for professional reasons.
- Involves a number of digital platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram or other internet forums and tools such as live chat, weblogs, social blogs, microblogs, wikis, podcasts and social bookmarking.
- Enables users to share information widely and very quickly.
- Enables users to come together to provide and share information relating to a common theme.
- Social media is an important part of the communication and engagement mix because:
  1. it provides a cost-effective means of engaging with an audience
  2. it is used by a growing number of people across different demographics
  3. various parties can contribute building co-creation of value
  4. content can be shared in networks, achieving greater reach
  5. it can be used to respond quickly to emerging issues.

## 1.2 This policy is intended to:

- Protect the privacy of patients, their families and staff.
- Ensure professional boundaries are maintained in the personal use of social media platforms.
- Ensure authorised staff only use social media platforms on behalf of SCHN entities.
- Ensure Network messages reach target audiences using authorised channels
- Ensure staff are protected in their delivery of clinical care

## 1.3 Related Social Media Policies

This document is to be read in conjunction with:

- The **NSW MoH Code of Conduct**:  
[http://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=PD2015\\_049](http://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=PD2015_049)
- **NSW Government's Social Media Policy**:  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/enterprise-investment-trade/policy/social-media>
- **NSW Health Privacy Act Manual**:  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/manuals/Pages/privacy-manual-for-health-information.aspx>
- [Photography and Video Recording of Paediatric Patients Policy](#)

## 2 Official Use of social media at SCHN

### 2.1 Risks

Social media channels have risks that include:

- Conflict between the philosophy of openness that characterises social media and organisational strategy and management processes.
- There are occasions where formal responses may not be possible and a spontaneous reply may be required.
- Information posted online is public and permanent, even after deletion.
- Limited control of discussion tone or content.
- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (comments may be posted outside of the organisation's capacity to moderate).
- Regular management and monitoring are essential.

## 3 Procedure for using social media at SCHN

### 3.1 For staff

- Staff are welcome to connect, share and engage with the official SCHN social media channels when and if they use their personal accounts for professional purposes.

### 3.2 For patients, families and visitors

- Patients and families have the right to share their experiences and express their views, unless defamatory, but must respect the privacy of others, including staff.
- It is expected that families, patients and visitors will respect patient and staff privacy when taking photographic images and other recordings on hand held mobile devices, including smartphones, and sharing photographs or recordings on social media.
- Patients and visitors should only take photographs, video and voice recordings with the agreement and/or appropriate written consent of any individual whose image/voice is captured by such devices. Where written consent is not possible, verbal consent must be obtained.
- This includes, but is not limited to, the administration of treatment, medical interventions, consultations or meetings, or the performance of any aspect of clinical duties regardless of whether the staff member can be identified or not. Refer to SCHN's [Photography, Film and Video Recording for Media, Promotional, Fundraising or Social Events policy](#).
- Patients and families should respect clinical advice and not photograph, film or record clinical procedures where it is identified it could interfere with care.

### 3.3 Use of official social media channels at SCHN

- **Only authorised staff** may use official social media channels and respond to social media on behalf of the organisation. The relevant Manager at SCHN sites authorises staff for this purpose.
- Social media should be used in a manner consistent with public sector values, legal requirements and the NSW Ministry of Health Code of Conduct.
- The official use of social media at SCHN is centralised and risk-managed for SCHN social media pages.
- Official accounts should be used proactively and responsibly including:
  - Respecting privacy and confidentiality at all times.
  - Publishing 'approved' information only in the public domain.
  - Acknowledge copyright and attribute the source of material shared.
- Specific **written consent must be attained for all images, video and recordings** posted on social media platforms. Refer to the SCHN [Photography, Film and Video Recording for Media, Promotional, Fundraising or Social Events policy](#) for details.
- If participant recruitment materials for Clinical Trials are to be uploaded or advertised using social media, **prior ethical approval** is required. (Information on progress of research does not require prior ethical approval.)
- Prior to uploading videos to the official SCHN or CHW YouTube channel, DCE must be advised.
- If staff breach the above conditions when using, sharing or commenting on SCHN content, or when using their own accounts for professional purposes, their accounts may be monitored and official caution issued.

### 3.4 Personal use of social media accounts at SCHN

- Personal social media accounts should only be accessed outside working hours, unless for the purpose of carrying out your approved duties.
- Do not connect with patients or their parents on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn or any other social media sites, or accept invitations to be 'friends' with patients or their families as this crosses professional boundaries, as outlined in the Code of Conduct.  
**Note:** This does not apply to private Facebook Groups managed by clinical staff as approved support for long term patients.
- Colleagues, patients and families should be treated with dignity and respect:
- Preferably, line managers should not become Facebook 'friends' with staff they manage.
- Consent must be attained before posting images, videos and/or recordings of colleagues on social media platforms.

- The Code of Conduct requires that staff avoid any conduct that can bring NSW Health or any of its staff, patients or clients into disrepute.
- When making public comment, you should **not** indicate or imply your personal views are those of NSW Health.
- It is not appropriate to identify your place of work or employer on social media.
- If you have identified your place of work and comment on your personal account, please be aware that you can be identified as a worker within NSW Health.
- Staff should not display their work e-mail or phone number on personal social media sites.
- **Patient details, images, videos, recordings or patient care must not be discussed on social media platforms.** Patient privacy should be protected, even if the information about the patient is unidentifiable.
- **Do not** discuss Network business and operations or other staff members on social media platforms.
- Avoid any material that may lead to criminal or civil liability; or could reasonably be found to be offensive, threatening, intimidating, abusive or defamatory.

## 4 Official Use of Social Media

### 4.1 SCHN social media channels

#### 4.1.1 Current use of official social media

- CHW has official accounts with Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter, *managed* by DCE. Bear Cottage has a Facebook account, *monitored* by DCE.
- SCH has official accounts with Facebook and Instagram, *managed* by DCE.
- Approved Facebook Groups are managed by clinicians with a DCE staff member as administrator.
- Kids Research manages a Twitter account.
- DCE manages the SCHN LinkedIn and YouTube accounts.
- The use of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter is aligned with media objectives and is focused on engaging audiences to convey important health messages for advocacy and awareness, to share hospital/Network stories as well as for fundraising purposes, and information regarding other activities.
- These channels promote research, clinical care, educational initiatives and advocate for the health, wellbeing and safety of children. Social media aims to promote the brand and enhance the reputation of CHW, SCH, Randwick, Bear Cottage, SCHN and other Network entities.

- The YouTube Hospital and Network channel is used as a library for the Hospital and Network's public videos.
- The SCHN LinkedIn page is used to engage professional audiences and networks, to position SCHN as an employer of choice in the industry, and to position SCHN, CHW and SCH experts as leaders in their field.

#### **4.1.2 Community engagement on official social media**

- The hospitals' social media channels are open to all and user comments and opinions are welcomed and encouraged. Users are free to post their thoughts or feedback and exchange with one another.
- To make sure this site is a safe place for all users, and for legal reasons, **the terms of use** are that *we reserve the right to remove user-generated content*. That is, any of the following shall be removed:
  - Offensive, divisive, aggressive, abusive, defamatory or intolerant
  - Fraudulent, deceptive, misleading or unlawful
  - Trolling, or deliberately derailing discussions
  - Off-topic or business-related
  - Violates the intellectual property right of another individual or entity
  - Spamming in nature
  - Commercial solicitation or solicitation of donations
  - Uses obscene or offensive language
  - The views, opinions, and information expressed in user-generated comments remain with the authors.

#### **4.1.3 Governance**

- DCE manages the Network's social media channels to protect the Network's reputation.
- Staff using official social media channels must be authorised to do so by the relevant DCE Manager.
- DCE should be advised before videos for YouTube are uploaded and all Hospital videos should be uploaded to the Network's YouTube channel.

## **4.2 Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation (SCHF)**

### **4.2.1 Current use of social media at SCHF**

Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation manage separate Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn accounts for the purposes of promoting fundraising for the Network.

## 4.2.2 Governance

- SCHF manages these social media channels. Content relating to the Network is reviewed and approved in close consultation with DCE.

# 5 Contacts

## 5.1 Using social media at SCHN

- Contact DCE for approval to use official social media accounts or other general enquiries.

## 5.2 Misuse of Social Media at SCHN

- **Misuse of social media at SCHN is a breach of the NSW MoH Code of Conduct and disciplinary action may result.**
- Contact your line Manager and/or the Internal Audit Manager for the (suspected) misuse of Social Media.

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