

Social Media Policy

Date: Last updated 10th October 2025

Social Media Manager: Melinda King

Practice Manager: Fay Blandford

1. Purpose

This policy outlines our practice's guidelines for safe, professional, and compliant use of social media.

Its purpose is to protect our patients, staff, and reputation, and to ensure compliance with the **AHPRA National Law**, the **Medical Board of Australia's Code of Conduct** and **Advertising Guidelines for Regulated Health Services**.

Social media can be a positive tool for education and community engagement — but it also carries risks if used inappropriately or unprofessionally.

2. Definition of Social Media

Social media refers to any online platform that allows information sharing, interaction, or public posting.

This includes, but is not limited to: **Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X (Twitter), YouTube, TikTok, Threads, Google reviews, blogs, and online forums.**

3. Background and Rationale

Our practice uses social media to:

- Share educational and health-related information.
- Promote awareness of services in line with AHPRA advertising rules.
- Engage with our community in a professional and respectful way.

All content shared online can reflect on our practice and the health profession. Therefore, staff must think carefully before posting anything that could impact the practice's reputation, patient privacy, or public trust. Our practice has the right to enforce disciplinary action including termination of employment if found in breach.

4. Policy Application

This policy applies to **all staff, contractors, and practitioners** working within or representing the practice — including any personal posts that reference the workplace or its staff. It does **not** apply to patients or members of the public.

5. Policy Guidelines

When Posting for the Practice

- Only the **Social Media Manager** (or delegated staff member) may post on official practice social media accounts.
 - All content must be **approved prior to posting**.
 - Posts must **not**:
 - Contain **false, misleading, or deceptive** information.
 - Include **testimonials or patient reviews** (AHPRA prohibits this).
 - Offer **gifts, discounts, or inducements** without clearly stating all terms.
 - Create an **unreasonable expectation of treatment success**.
 - Encourage **unnecessary or indiscriminate use** of health services.
 - Breach **copyright, confidentiality, or privacy** laws.
 - Contain content that is **unlawful, pornographic, threatening, discriminatory, or defamatory**.
-

When Posting Personally

Staff must:

- **Not mention patients, colleagues, or the practice** in a negative, critical, or revealing way.
 - **Never disclose** any patient details, clinical information, or internal practice matters.
 - Avoid using the practice's name or logo without written approval.
 - Maintain professional boundaries — avoid friending or following patients on personal accounts.
 - Not make unauthorised edits or comments on the practice's official social media pages.
-

6. Privacy and Security

- All posts must be checked for compliance before publication.
 - No identifying patient information or images may be shared without **written consent**.
 - The Social Media Manager must **regularly monitor comments** and remove anything that breaches AHPRA or privacy standards.
-

7. Brand Management

- All posts should reflect our practice's **values, tone, and professionalism**.
- Use plain, respectful, inclusive language.

- Educational posts are encouraged — avoid personal opinions or medical advice to individuals online.
-

8. Managing Issues

Negative Comments: Respond calmly and professionally or refer to the Social Media Manager. Never engage in arguments online.

Data/Security Breach: Report immediately to the Practice Manager.

When Social Media Manager is Away: Delegate approval to Practice Manager.

9. Breach of Policy

Any breach may result in **disciplinary action**, including termination of employment or referral to AHPRA if professional misconduct occurs.

Staff may also be **personally liable** for online content that breaches the National Law or privacy legislation.

10. Key Resources

- AHPRA – *Guidelines for Advertising a Regulated Health Service (2024)*
 - Medical Board of Australia – *Good Medical Practice: Code of Conduct*
 - AHPRA – *Social Media: How to Meet Your Obligations*
-