

## Social Media Policy.

The use of Social Media is a common and growing phenomenon in the Medical Profession. Social Media allows an opportunity for organisations and individuals to engage with each other in online communities of shared interest and create, consume and share content for personal and professional benefit. Inappropriate conduct in your online presence can negatively impact your professional integrity, as well as student-patient, student-staff, and peer relationships. Poor online behaviour can adversely affect future employment opportunities, public trust and finally, damage the reputation of medical profession. **During your training, you are an ambassador for the UnitingCare Clinical School and your online conduct will be on show to preceptors, their clinical and scientific colleagues, patients and members of the general public.** To assist you to display the highest possible professional online conduct throughout your clinical training, please refer to the information below.

As a Medical Student your professional standards remain the same whether you are engaging with traditional media or social media.

While on placement you are bound by this policy to conform to the following:

*\*Please note Continuation of Clinical Placement may be denied to students who do not meet these requirements.*

- (i) Exercise sound judgement when posting material online, ensure that gratuitous or unsubstantiated comments regarding the medical profession, UC, its staff, patients, or volunteers are not shared online in any social media forum.
- (ii) Do not share Confidential Information, Clinical Images, Clinical Processes, Images of the Clinical Environment or Health Information in any online space for any reason.
- (iii) Do not initiate or seek out or accept online friends or followers who are patients, former patients, or close relatives of patients.
- (iv) Do not distribute, copy or take photographs of any Confidential Information for any reason, including with the intention of sharing online.
  - (A) In this clause Confidential information is defined to include: information concerning clinical processes and policies, rules, manuals, commercial operations, financial arrangements or affairs of UC.
  - (B) Information about patients, their family members or friends, and staff of UC from which the identity of that person is apparent or can reasonably be attained.
  - (C) Patient treatment records;
  - (D) Books, documents, computer software and data disclosed or made available in connection with clinical placement.

Document Name: Social Media Policy	Created: June 2021	Version: 5
Author: Senior Medical Education Coordinator	Effective Date: June 2021	Next Review: Dec 2025
Authorised by: Dr Stephen Cook	Reviewed: August 2024	

- (v) Do not share Confidential Information outside of the UC Facility where Placement is based without permission from UC;
- (vi) Do not communicate online any information obtained during the Placement which could identify an individual who is receiving or has received a health service at UC.
- (vii) Material posted online that has been deemed to be false, untrue, misleading, deceptive, inappropriate, offensive, or undermines the professional integrity of UnitingCare Clinical School, UnitingCare Queensland, or the medical and health profession in its entirety will lead to the **termination of clinical placement** within UnitingCare Clinical School, as well as potential legal and financial consequences for the individual involved.

***These rules are there to acknowledge the rights of patients, their families, staff, and volunteers of UnitingCare Health and UnitingCare QLD to feel secure within the online environment. These rules also acknowledge that you as a Medical Student hold a position of privilege, as such all online behaviour must uphold patient safety principles, and UnitingCare Policies.***

## **Definitions:**

**Social Media:** Social media is a term that is constantly evolving but generally refers to internet-based tools that allow individuals and groups to communicate, to advertise or share opinions, information, ideas, messages, experiences, images, and video or audio clips. They may include blogs, social networks, video and photo-sharing sites, wikis, or a myriad of other media, used for:

- Social networking (Facebook, X, WEChat, Weibo, WhatsApp)
- Professional networking (LinkedIn)
- Discussion forums (Reddit, Whirlpool)
- Media sharing (YouTube, Flickr, Instagram)
- Content production (blogs [Tumblr, Blogger] and microblogs [Twitter])
- Knowledge/information aggregation (Wikipedia)
- Virtual reality and gaming environments (Second Life), and
- Booking sites and apps (HealthEngine, Whitecoat, Podium).

*\*Please be aware this is not an exhaustive list, and has been quoted directly from AHPRA, (2019)*

**Information:** Anything spoken, overheard, written, stored electronically, copies, transmitted, or health intellectually concerning UCQ general business, information systems, staff, business partner, or clients, including data and entity types.

**Highly Confidential Information:** Any medical record or patient data

**Clinical Processes** a set of interrelated or interacting healthcare activities, which are performed for a subject of care with one or more health issues.

**Confidential Information:** Any information that contains privacy, financial, or credit card data for UCQ or any of its clients.

## **Context and References:**

Document Name: Social Media Policy	Created: June 2021	Version: 5
Author: Senior Medical Education Coordinator	Effective Date: June 2021	Next Review: Dec 2025
Authorised by: Dr Stephen Cook	Reviewed: August 2024	

**Relevant legislation:**

1. Health records and Information Privacy Act 2002
2. Health records and Information Privacy Regulation 2012
3. Privacy act 1988
4. Privacy and Personal Information Act 1990
5. Freedom of Information Act 1982

**Relevant Documents:**

1. UCQ Data (Privacy) Breach Response Procedure
2. UCH, UCC, BlueCare and UCQ Group Office Codes of Conduct (2019)
3. UnitingCare Schedule 3- Deed Poll
4. UCQ Social Medical Policy (2014)
5. UCQ Acceptable use of ICT Policy
6. Data Breach Notification: A guide to handling personal information security breaches. Australian Government, Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (2014)
7. Guide to information security: 'reasonable steps' to protect personal information. Australian Government, Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (2013)
8. 'A guide to Social Media & Medical Professionalism', Australian Medical Association (2019).
9. Social media: How to meet your obligations under the National Law, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (2019)
10. Code of Ethics – 2004, Australian Medical Association (Revised 2016)

Document Name: Social Media Policy	Created: June 2021	Version: 5
Author: Senior Medical Education Coordinator	Effective Date: June 2021	Next Review: Dec 2025
Authorised by: Dr Stephen Cook	Reviewed: August 2024	