Social Media Policy

TRAVEL EXPENSES POLICY

Document Type	Corporate Policy
Unique Identifier	
Document Purpose	This policy relates to the use of social media by all permanent and temporary employees of the Trust including those engaged through an agency or on work placements/experience. This policy allows for the use of Social Media for Trust related business and the appropriate/responsible personal use out of working hours (e.g. during lunch breaks).
Document Author	Elizabeth Bond, Marketing and Communications Officer John Bagnall, Associate Director of Workforce
Target Audience	All Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust Staff
Responsible Group	Quality and Safety Committee
Date Ratified	29 June 2016
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If you would like this document in other languages or formats (i.e. large print), please contact the Communications Team on 01905 760020 or email WHCNHS.Communications@nhs.net

Version History

	Circulation Date	Job Title of Person/Name of Group circulated to	Brief Summary of Change
1.	November 2015	Human Resources Team	Suggested changes for inappropriate use and broadening out of the policy.
2.	November 2015	SDU SMTs	No comments
3.	June 2016	JNCC Policy Group	A number of changes to reduce repetition.
4.	June 2016	Local Security Management Specialist	Clarity re confidentiality and use of photographs
5.	June 2016	JNCC	Approval
6.	29 June 2016	Quality and Safety Committee	Ratified

Accessibility

Interpreting and Translation services are provided for Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, including:
- Face to face interpreting;
- Instant telephone interpreting;
- Document translation; and
- British Sign Language interpreting

Please refer to intranet page: http://nww.hacw.nhs.uk/a-z/services/translation-services/ for

full details of the service, how to book and associated costs.

Training and Development

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust recognise the importance of ensuring that its workforce has every opportunity to access relevant training. The Trust is committed to the provision of training and development opportunities that are in support of service needs and meet responsibilities for the provision of mandatory and statutory training.

All employees are required to attend the mandatory and statutory training that is relevant to their role and to ensure they meet their own continuous professional development.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (the Trust) is using social networks to engage with its patients, service users and other stakeholders, and to deliver key messages for good healthcare and services generally.

This policy is provided so that employees of the Trust are aware of their personal responsibilities for appropriate use of social media facilities they may access.

This policy is necessary as many employees enjoy sharing their knowledge and experience with others of similar roles and interests. The Trust encourages these online activities and acknowledges that employees can improve their personal skills and experience through relevant interactions with others outside the organisation.

However, the Trust has a responsibility to ensure the operational effectiveness of its business, including its public image, reputation and for the protection of its information assets of all kinds. This involves ensuring confidentiality and maintaining security in accordance with NHS Information Governance policy and good practice.

2 SCOPE

The policy applies to all employees and temporary workers, students on placement and volunteers.

The policy sets out employee's responsibilities when using social media and the legal implications involved. It is not intended to stop employees from using social media sites in their own time, but to outline some areas of best practice and illustrate where problems can arise for individual employees and the Trust.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to enable employees:

• to understand their responsibilities when using social media and what should, and should not, be electronically written or posted,

• to highlight the potential risks involved when posting on a social networking site and understand the implications of using social media inappropriately,

• to document the Trust's intentions for the use of social media.

4.   KEY PRINCIPLES

The Trust embraces social media and welcomes its use by employees, patients and other key audiences. Benefits include:

• Ability to get feedback and good ideas from employees patients or other organisations, fuelling innovation and improvement

• Sharing news and keeping people in the loop

• Continuing professional development – employees can access educational material/learn from others

• Networking and connecting with key influencers

Access to some social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube across the Trust is now available on the understanding that employees will only use them for professional purposes while at work, in accordance with the Trust's Email & Internet Policy. Abuse of this access will be subject to the same management/disciplinary action as abuse of the Email & Internet Policy.

The Trust has a number of accounts, in addition to our main corporate accounts. Examples may include Facebook pages or Twitter accounts for particular areas of the Trust. Accounts can only be created with prior approval from the Head of Marketing & Communications and the relevant service lead. They also need to feature the Trust branding so it is clear to audiences that they are official Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust accounts.

Social media has blurred the boundaries between private and professional lives. Employees who use social media at work and within their personal life should therefore be mindful that inappropriate use could damage their own reputation and that of the Trust.

When an employee identifies their association with the Trust - for example, by stating they work for the Trust or posting pictures of themselves in uniform or at work - and/or discusses their work, they are expected to behave professionally, and in a way that is consistent with the organisation's values and policies.

Even if an employee does not directly associate themselves with the Trust, their link with the organisation can become known through images on the Trust website, by searching for names via internet search engines or by putting information from different postings or social media platforms together.

For that reason, employees should never post anything that may reflect badly on their professionalism or the Trust. Posting comments about dissatisfaction with the Trust or colleagues will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action.

The key principle is to presume that anything posted can be read by anyone, anywhere in the world. Even if the privacy settings are set to the maximum, that will not always prevent someone from reusing or posting the content. Content may never totally be deleted from the internet – once posted, it is potentially out there forever.

5. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Private use of social media

When using any social media channel, employees should follow the principles outlined below.

Only use social media in your own time

Employees must not normally use personal social media sites during their working hours. Use of personal devices, including personal mobile phones to access social media sites should be limited to allocated break times.

Make clear opinions are your own

Where an employee discloses that they work for the Trust or can be identified as an employee through association with other people they must ensure they state their content is their own and does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of others. If an employee is identifiable as working for the Trust, they should ensure their profile and related content is consistent with how the Trust would expect them to present themselves to colleagues and business contacts. The use of a disclaimer, however, does not override the need to follow other principles in this policy.

Setting up official service sites

Employees should not communicate on behalf of the Trust unless this is an accepted normal part of your job, or through special arrangement that has been approved in advance by the Marketing and Communications Team. No social media sites or pages relating to the Trust should be set up by employees without prior approval from the Marketing and Communications Team.

Openness and Honesty

If an employee associates themselves with the Trust on their social media site, they are expected to post under their real name. This demonstrates openness and honesty, and accountability.

If an employee posts under a pseudonym and at a later stage these posts are associated with their real name, all previous posts may be admissible in a disciplinary investigation or hearing.

Respect others

Employees are ultimately responsible for their online behaviour, and must not say anything online that they would not say personally or wish others to hear.

Posts must not contain anything contrary to the Trust's Equality and Inclusion policy. It is possible for employees to become subject to civil proceedings or criminal prosecution.

Employees should seek permission from colleagues before posting personal details or images that may link them with the Trust and should not post anything about someone if they have been asked not to. Employees must always remove information about a colleague if they have been asked to do so. Inappropriate use or abuse of colleagues will be investigated under the Acceptable Standards of Behaviour Policy.

Content should not breach the Equality Act 2010 and The Human Rights Act 1998, which gives a 'right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence'. The provision is directly enforceable against public sector employers.

Be aware of how online posts are, or can become, public

When employees publish something on social media, they should assume it is in the public domain.

Employees should be aware of privacy limitations when posting material. Even if something is initially shared with a limited group of followers or friends, it could still be copied and shared or published elsewhere.

Employees should carefully consider what they want to say before they publish anything, and work on the basis that anything they write or post could be shared more widely without their knowledge or permission.

Employees should configure their privacy settings and review them regularly because:

- social media sites cannot guarantee confidentiality, and do change settings

- the public, employers or any organisation employee have a relationship with may be able to access their personal information

- once information is online, it can be difficult to remove it.

Employees should be careful when sharing posts, as they could be seen to be endorsing someone else's point of view.

An employee's ignorance of the workings or boundaries of a social media tool may not be considered as justifying a breach of this policy.

Similarly, whilst all relevant factors will be taken into consideration, reliance on any underlying medical condition to explain or justify inappropriate use of social media will not, of itself, absolve the employee from responsibility.

Get your facts right

When posting information, employees must ensure it is factually correct. If they discover they have reported something incorrectly, they should amend it and make it clear they have done so.

Understand the implications of defamation

Employees could face legal proceedings for comments posted in either a personal or professional capacity and aimed at named individuals or an organisation that are considered to harm reputation.

Employees must not disclose information of the Trust that is or may be sensitive or confidential, or that is subject to a non-disclosure contract or agreement. Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information would constitute misconduct / gross misconduct in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Employees should only share information about the Trust that is in the public domain, and should not add derogatory comments on these issues.

The use of photos

Employees should think carefully before posting photos that relate to their work. If employees post any photos of themselves or colleagues in uniform, or in an identifiable work setting, they must ensure that these represent a professional image of the Trust. Employees should not use a photo of themselves in uniform as their profile picture; this could give the impression that their site is an official site.

Employees must not post images containing patients on personal social media accounts. They should also not post images of a patient's injuries or clinical records, X rays or pictures of any incidents they have attended. This does not prevent employees sharing, re-tweeting or linking to images that have been published on official Trust sites.

Advice can be sought from the Head of Marketing and Communications on the appropriateness of posting photographs.

Protect patient confidentiality

Employees have exactly the same ethical and legal duty to protect patient confidentiality on the internet and social media as with any other media. Under no circumstances should anything be posted that identifies a patient.

Employees should ensure they know the Trust's Code of Conduct for Employees in Respect of Confidentiality and follow it at all times.

Adhere to other Trust policies and procedures

Employees using social networking sites should always adhere to the Trust's vision and values, as well as codes of conduct and policies which are part of their professional and employment requirements.

Trust use of social media

The Trust has a corporate presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube and if employees want to convey news stories, events or messages through these channels or want to create a specific Trust account, then this must be done via the Marketing and Communications Team.

6. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – ACCESS TO SOCIAL MEDIA FOR WORK PURPOSES**

Access to social media sites such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook for work purposes must:

• have a disclaimer which says the account is not regularly monitored, is not a suitable means of contact for those in need of support and where to go if someone needs help.

• only use these sites in an ethical and lawful manner – subject to the same principles as above, such as patient confidentiality, not bringing the Trust into disrepute and not posting sensitive information

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• not access their personal accounts – such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs, in normal working hours

• make total separation between their personal accounts and any accounts monitored or updated on behalf of the Trust.

Employees might be made aware of concerning posts – for example service users expressing feelings of low mood or self-harm. In such circumstances where employees are concerned about the welfare of service or social media users, making contact should be at the discretion of the employee.

7.   REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR ON SOCIAL MEDIA

If an employee comes across information contained in social media sites that contravenes this policy, they should report the issue through the Trust Incident Reporting process and ensure their manager is aware.

All incidents will be investigated as an allegation in the normal way to establish the facts and establish how it will be managed by the Trust.

8.   ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Code of Conduct for Employees in Respect of Confidentiality

Equality and Inclusion Policy

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Acceptable Standards of Behaviour Policy

Equality Act 2010

The Human Rights Act 1998

Internet and Email Policy

Appendix A - Definitions and terms used

Blog	Site where online articles/discussions are published
Content	Anything posted on a social media site e.g. a photo published on Twitter
Follower	Someone who subscribes to your Twitter account so they receive your postings
Friend	Someone you are linked with on Facebook
Social Media	Online sites/forums that enable you to connect with other people or groups, sharing ideas, content and information
Social Networking	The term commonly given to websites and online tools which allow users to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. It involves building communities or networks, encouraging participation and engagement. Popular examples include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.