

<b>Policy #:</b> 019.001
<b>Policy Title:</b> Social Media
<b>Sponsor:</b> David Brown, MD; DIO
<b>Approved by:</b> Graduate Medical Education Committee

### Purpose

Florida International University (FIU) has adopted the following policy to provide guidance as to the use of social media and/or social networking sites for communication.

### Definitions

**Social Media:** a means of mass communication, including but not limited to blogs, opinion pieces in newspapers and other public forums, online discussion boards, online communities, social networks (defined as application enabling user social communication), microblogs, podcasts, photo and video sharing sites. Examples include, but are not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Snapchat, YouTube and online comment sections.

### Background

FIU supports the proper use of social media and/or social networking sites, while recognizing the need to manage the use of social media to protect the reputation of the university, participating hospitals, and clinical affiliates. Additionally, the university endeavors to ensure the privacy of its faculty, staff, and patients.

This policy establishes the standards that enables the appropriate and consistent use of social media by all trainees, and personal use of social media does not interfere with work responsibilities.

### Policy

This policy addresses trainee usage of social media and/or social networking sites in all contexts, as representatives of Florida International University. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that graduate medical education activities of FIU's graduate medical education programs are not compromised through social media and/or social networking site usage, either by a group or individual trainees. The goal of this policy is to promote ethical behavior and professional accountability in FIU trainees.

Each member of the university community is expected to exhibit a high degree of professionalism and personal integrity consistent with the pursuit of excellence in the conduct of his or her responsibilities.

### General Information

Trainees represent or may be viewed as representing the university, and other participating sites, and the medical community when publishing content online, in print, or otherwise. If you identify yourself as employed or affiliated with FIU, or an affiliate, you must make it clear your views are personal and that you are not a spokesperson of or for these organizations. Trainees should be aware that:

1. All material published on the internet or in news sites should be considered public and permanent.
2. Any information posted on social networking sites may be disseminated (whether intended or not) to a larger audience, and a post may be taken out of context or remain available online in perpetuity.
3. There is no expectation of privacy when using institutional computers and electronic devices.

### **Professionalism**

The tone and content of all electronic conversations should remain professional and courteous.

While utilizing social media and/or social networking sites, trainees will:

1. Refrain from posting unprofessional images or behavior that may tarnish their professional image and impair their ability to practice medicine effectively, become licensed, and/or participate in positions of trust and responsibility within an institution or within the community.
2. Never post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, or embarrassing to another person or any other entity. Never use social media to discriminate or harass any individual based on race, color, gender, religion, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law.
3. Never use social media to impersonate another user or mislead a recipient about one's identity

### **Copyright Law, Proprietary Rights, Advertisements and Endorsements**

1. Trainees must avoid discussing sensitive, proprietary, confidential, or financial information about any institution. Any posts of the aforementioned nature must be done with prior written authorization by the appropriate official of the respective institution.
2. Trainee should not include FIU, participating hospitals, or clinical affiliates in their social media and/or social networking site "brand", i.e. handles, web addresses, or usernames. Unauthorized use of institutional information or logos is prohibited,
3. No institutional phone numbers, email address, or websites may be posted on a website without written permission from an authorized institutional official.
4. Never imply you are endorsing a person or product on behalf of FIU, or other participating sites or affiliates in print media, social media and/or social networking sites.
5. Do not post advertisements on behalf of FIU, its products or services, or that of its affiliates without official authorization.

### **Patient Privacy and Confidentiality**

Just as in the clinical setting, patient privacy and confidentiality must be protected at all times, including social media and/or social networking sites.

1. Physician and patient privacy and confidentiality are of utmost importance
2. All healthcare providers have an obligation to abide by the privacy of health information as dictated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
3. Identifiable Protected health information (PHI) should never be made available on the internet, even if no one other than the patient is able to identify him/herself.

4. Patient images must never be posted online. Patient images should be obtained with written consent, using institutional devices. Patient images must only be stored or transmitted using institutional devices and never posted online.
5. Personal phones, cameras, and other devices must never be used to photograph or record patients; they must also not be used to receive, store, or transmit identifiable information about patients.
6. Trainees should not relay patient room numbers or refer to them by any other names in any social media post.
7. Transitions of care and/or sign out must not be done by routine email or data sharing sites that have not been previously approved by the university.

### **HIPAA Compliance and Physician-Patient Interactions**

1. Trainees should not associate with patients on social media and/or social networking sites, nor should they review patients' profiles on these sites.
2. It is not appropriate to provide specific medical advice to a patient on social media.
3. Social media and/or social networking communication and interaction is subject to the same criteria of professionalism as in-person communication.
4. Trainee should consistently monitor their internet presence to ensure their personal and professional information is accurate and reflects their professional conduct.
5. Trainees should ensure they have implemented appropriate privacy settings to avoid inadvertent dissemination of personal information to others outside of their control.

### **Procedure**

The permissible and prohibited practices herein are not exhaustive. Any communication between trainees and/or faculty with social media and/or social networking sites that appears to be associated with FIU should be conducted in a professional manner, abide by copyright law and proprietary rights, and maintain patient privacy.

1. Trainees should practice the best practices for privacy in social media, including but not limited to, enhancing the privacy settings on all social media sites.
2. Limit Internet use for social networking to your personal time only. If using a device owned by FIU or participating sites, you must abide by FIU or the site's device policies as applicable.
3. Trainees, faculty, and GME staff are encouraged to report violations to FIU's Office of GME and program leadership. Violations involving PHI should be reported according to site policies and should include privacy and information security officers for both the site and FIU.
4. This policy governs all GME programs sponsored by FIU. However, other participating sites may have additional policies related to the use of social media that are more restrictive, trainees are subject to the policies of their respective teaching sites while performing clinical duties at the site.

Author	Maryam Shakir	11/17/2020
Revised		08/24/2024
DIO Review	David Brown, MD	08/26/2024
GMEC Approval	Reviewed and approved	08/29/2024