Hamilton Medical Centre

Social Media Policy

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Hamilton Medical Centre - Social Media Policy

Social Media Responsible Officer
Neil Redford – Practice Manager

Introduction
This policy provides guidance for general practice on using social media internally and externally. The policy helps identify and mitigate potential risks associated with social media use.

Definition
For the purposes of this policy, 'social media' is online social networks used to disseminate information through online interaction.

Purpose
Regardless of whether social media is used for business related activity or for personal reasons, the following standards apply to all GPs and practice staff of the practice. GPs (GPs registered with AHPRA are also required to comply with AHPRA's social media policy, as well as the Practice policy) and practice staff are legally responsible for their postings online. GPs and staff may be subject to liability and disciplinary action including termination of employment if their posts are found to be in breach of this policy.

Use of practice social media accounts
The practice will appoint a staff member as a social media officer responsible for managing and monitoring the practice's social media accounts. All posts on the practice's social media website must be approved by this staff member. The practice reserves the right to remove any content at its own discretion.

When using the practice's social media, practice staff will not:
a) post any material that:
   i) is unlawful, threatening, defamatory, pornographic, inflammatory, menacing, or offensive
   ii) infringes or breaches another person's rights (including intellectual property rights) or privacy, or misuses the practice's or another person's confidential information (e.g. do not submit confidential information relating to our patients, personal information of staff, or information concerning the practice's business operations that have not been made public)
   iii) is materially damaging or could be materially damaging to the practice's reputation or image, or another individual
   iv) is in breach of any of the practice's policies or procedures.
b) use social media to send unsolicited commercial electronic messages, or solicit other users to buy or sell products or services or donate money
c) impersonate another person or entity (for example, by pretending to be someone else or another practice employee or other participant when you submit a contribution to social media) or by using another's registration identifier without permission
d) tamper with, hinder the operation of, or make unauthorised changes to the social media sites
e) knowingly transmit any virus or other disabling feature to or via the practice's social media account, or use in any email to a third party, or the social media site
f) attempt to do or permit another person to do any of these things:
   i) claim or imply that you are speaking on the practice's behalf, unless you are authorised to do so
   ii) disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the practice, or to any third party that has disclosed information to the practice.
g) be defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any other applicable law
h) include confidential or copyrighted information (e.g. music, videos, text belonging to third parties)
i) violate any other applicable policy of the practice.

Monitoring social media sites
Any social media must be monitored in accordance with the practice's current polices on the use of internet, email and computers. Social media accounts are monitored during business hours only, outside of which, an after-hours message is set advising of the protocol to follow i.e. contact the practice via phone or email, call 000 if emergency etc. Any complaints received via social media accounts must be diverted to practice staff directly via admin@hamiltonmedical.com.au where it can be appropriately followed up.

Testimonials
The practice complies with AHPRA national law and takes reasonable steps to remove testimonials that advertise their health services (which may include comments about the practitioners themselves). The practice is not responsible for removing (or trying to have removed) unsolicited testimonials published on a website or in social media over which they do not have control.

Personal social media use
Staff are free to personally engage in social media outside of work hours, as long as their actions do not have the potential to bring the practice into disrepute. Employees may not represent personal views expressed as those of this practice.

Any social media posts by staff on their personal social media platforms must not reveal confidential information about the practice or a person who uses the practice (eg staff should not post information relating to patients or other staff, or information concerning the practice's business operations that have not been made public).
Staff should respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms.

If identifying themselves as an employee on a social media platform, staff could include the following disclaimer example in a reasonably prominent place on any post: 'The views expressed in this post are mine and do not reflect the views of the practice/business/committees/boards that I am a member of'.

Breach of policy
Social media activities internally and externally of the practice must be in line with this policy.