



Social Media Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the standards and expectations for the appropriate use of social media at Algester Medical Centre and Acacia Ridge Family Practice. It applies to all staff, contractors, students, and any third parties engaged with the practice, whether posting on official accounts or personal platforms.

The purpose is to protect patient privacy, safeguard the reputation of the medical centre, and ensure that communications reflect our values of professionalism, respect, and integrity.

2. Scope

This policy covers all forms of social media, including but not limited to:

- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, LinkedIn
- Blogs, forums, and review sites (e.g. Google Reviews, HealthEngine)
- Messaging platforms (e.g. WhatsApp, Messenger, direct messaging on social platforms)

3. Official Use of Social Media

- Only designated staff are authorised to post content on behalf of the practice.
- All content must be approved by the practice manager or designated communications lead prior to posting.
- Posts must not contain any patient-identifiable information unless prior written consent is obtained.
- The centre's official social media pages must not be used to provide clinical advice, diagnose or treat medical conditions.

4. Personal Use of Social Media

- Staff must not post any content related to patients, the practice, or colleagues that could breach confidentiality or be considered unprofessional.
- Staff are reminded that their online behaviour can reflect on the reputation of the medical centre, even on personal accounts.

- Do not engage in discussions about patient care or provide medical opinions on personal social media.

- If referencing your employment at Algester Medical Centre and Acacia Ridge Family Practice, include a disclaimer (e.g., "The views expressed are my own and do not reflect those of my employer").

5. Privacy and Confidentiality

- Patient confidentiality must be respected at all times in line with the Australian Privacy Principles and AHPRA guidelines.

- Photos of patients, staff, or the workplace should never be shared without prior written consent.

- All communications should be free from discriminatory, offensive, or defamatory content.

6. Responding to Comments and Reviews

- Staff must not respond to negative reviews or comments on behalf of the practice unless authorised.

- All responses to online feedback must be approved and managed by the practice manager to ensure patient confidentiality and professional tone.

- Avoid engaging in arguments or disclosing any patient-specific details when replying to comments.

7. Breaches of Policy

Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment or referral to regulatory authorities such as AHPRA. Examples of breaches include:

- • Sharing confidential patient information
- • Posting offensive or defamatory content
- • Representing the practice without authorisation

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if required due to changes in legislation, social media platforms, or clinical governance requirements.