



Social Media

1. Overview/procedure description

The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) aims to use social media to share information about the RCH, promote RCH stories, support the delivery of high standards of clinical care, promote consumer engagement with the hospital and foster and strengthen our ties to the community. This procedure has been designed to support that aim, through providing direction to all staff within the RCH around the use of both RCH hosted and non-RCH hosted social media, where the RCH is known, identified or presumed within the content. The procedure also sets out the obligations and requirements that are intended to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory restrictions and privacy and confidentiality agreements.

2. Related Policy & Procedures

- RCH [Human Resources Policy](#)
- RCH [Code of Conduct](#)
- RCH [Communications & Marketing Policy](#)
- RCH [Professional Boundaries Procedure](#)
- RCH [Internet Usage Procedure](#)
- RCH [Email Usage Procedure](#)
- RCH [Disciplinary Procedure](#)
- RCH [Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedure](#)
- RCH [Harassment, Bullying and Occupational Violence Procedure](#)
- RCH [Sexual Harassment Procedure](#)
- RCH [Pornography Procedure](#)
- RCH [Privacy Procedure](#)

3. Definition of Terms

- Communications: includes all internal and external communications.
- Staff: includes employees, contractors, agents, accredited medical practitioners and their staff, campus partners, interns, students and volunteers.
- Social Media may include (although is not limited to):
 - social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Instagram, Bebo, Yammer)
 - video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Keek)
 - blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs

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Please remember to read the disclaimer.

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- blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' or 'your say' feature on theage.com.au)
- micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter)
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia, Clouds)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
- vod and podcasting
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life)
- instant messaging (including SMS)
- geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare)

4. Procedure details

- Access to social media sites is provided by the RCH but they cannot be used by employees for work purposes without prior approval by RCH Corporate Communications .
- RCH staff who use social media for personal purposes, must not disclose any information received or otherwise obtained through their role as an employee of RCH, including personal information relating to patients, parents, visitors or other staff members or do anything else that may constitute a breach of privacy legislation or disclose information that may adversely affect the RCH public image or reputation.
- RCH staff must who use social media for personal purposes must not disclose any information that infringes privacy legislation or regulation.
- When using social media, users must not post or display their RCH contact or email details.
- Use of any RCH branding on social media must be approved by Corporate Communications.
- Personal opinions expressed on social media must not in any way be associated with the RCH name.
- Photographs, images or videos of patients, families, visitors or staff in their professional capacity are not to be used on personal social media or personal internet sites and cannot be used on RCH hosted social media or internet sites without prior approval and appropriate consent.
- With prior approval from RCH Corporate Communications, only nominated RCH spokespersons and RCH experts can speak on behalf of the RCH on matters of public interest; employees should neither claim nor imply that they are speaking on the hospital's behalf unless authorised to do so.
- RCH will comply with legislation relating to privacy, disclosure and freedom of information.
- RCH will respect at all times the communications protocols laid down by the Commonwealth and Victorian State Governments.
- Any breach of this procedure may result in the RCH taking disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment.
- All RCH Internet users should be aware that Internet usage is monitored and filtered by the RCH Information and Communication Technology Department and activity logs are recorded.

Professional use of social media

The Corporate Communications department manages the use of social media on behalf of the RCH, including monitoring social media conversation, posting information and comments. RCH staff shall not use the RCH brand or engage on social media as a representative of the RCH or their department, unless authorised to do so prior by RCH Corporate Communications .

Rules of Engagement

Once authorised to comment as an RCH or individual department representative, you must:

- Disclose you are a member of staff and use only your own identity or an approved official account or online identity.
- Disclose and comment only on information classified as public domain information.
- Ensure that any medical information disclosed is marked as 'for information purposes only' and therefore is not intended to be medical advice, should not be considered medical advice, nor is it intended to replace consultation with a qualified medical practitioner.
- Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant RCH

policies.

- Ensure you are not the first to make an announcement (unless specifically given permission to do so).
- Comment only on your area of expertise and authority.
- Ensure comments are respectful of the community in which you are interacting online.
- Adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws, and the RCH Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement.

Once authorised to comment as an RCH or individual department representative, you must not:

- Post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a court suppression order or is otherwise unlawful.
- Use or disclose any information that is confidential or secure.
- Make any comment or post material that might otherwise cause damage to the RCH's reputation or bring it into disrepute.

Moderation of RCH produced social media

- The site owner must ensure a moderation policy is clear when inviting comments from the public on an RCH website or social media platform.
- All RCH website activity (including any social media) must be approved by the Corporate Communications and Educational Resource Centre departments.

Personal use of social media

- RCH recognises that staff may use social media in their personal life. This policy does not intend to discourage nor unduly limit personal expression or online activities.
- However, staff should recognise the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to the RCH in certain circumstances via personal use of social media when a staff member can be identified as an RCH or a Campus Partner employee. Accordingly, staff should comply with this policy to ensure that the risk of such damage is minimised.
- You are personally responsible for the content you publish in a personal capacity on any form of social media platform. When in doubt, you should seek guidance from your RCH manager or HR partner on how to comply with the following obligations.
- Where your comments or profile can identify you as an employee of the RCH or one of our Campus Partners:

You must :

- only disclose and discuss publicly available information
- ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant RCH policies
- expressly state on all postings which identify you as an employee that the stated views are your own and are not those of the RCH or a Campus Partner
- adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws, and the RCH Personal Information - Confidentiality procedure and the RCH Personal Information- Security Procedure.
- be polite and respectful to all people you interact with

You must not:

- post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful

- imply that you are authorised to speak as a representative of the RCH or our Campus Partners, nor give the impression that the views you express are those of the RCH or our Campus Partners
- use the identity or likeness of another employee, contractor or other member of the RCH or a Campus Partner
- use or disclose any confidential information obtained in your capacity as an employee/contractor/volunteer of the RCH or our Campus Partners
- use your RCH email address or any RCH or Campus Partners logos or insignia that may give the impression of official support or endorsement of your personal comment
- post material that is, or might be construed as, threatening, harassing, bullying or discriminatory towards another employee/contractor of the RCH or our Campus Partners
- make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the RCH's or a Campus Partners' reputation or bring it into disrepute

Interaction with patients and/or family members

- We also acknowledge that patients and/or their families may wish to connect to a staff member via social media. As set out in the 'Professional Boundaries' procedure, staff of the RCH or our Campus Partners should not form social relationships with patients or their family members in the workplace or outside of the hospital.
- It is unacceptable for personal relationships or social contact to develop between staff of the RCH or our Campus Partners with patients and their family members via electronic communication such as email or social media sites.
- Should an employee feel threatened by a family or patient through social media, they should inform their manager and contact their relevant HR Partner.

5. Contacts

- [Executive Director, People and Culture](#)
- [Executive Director, Communications](#)

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