

Maroondah Health Care Medical Centre Email and Social Media Policy

Introduction

Email and Social Media are becoming increasingly popular tools for communication. We use these tools to provide health and practice information.

Patients must be aware of this when emailing the clinic and refrain from sending sensitive information via this messaging system. (Please note, clinical requests made by email/contact form may require an appointment with the relevant GP.)

This policy provides guidance for members of the practice on using social media internally and externally. The policy helps identify and mitigate risks associated with social media use. Social Media is defined as (but not limited to) online social networks used to disseminate information through online interaction. (E.g. Facebook, Instagram, Linked In, Twitter etc.)

Email Policy

Communication from our clinic to the patient via electronic means (e.g. email) is conducted with appropriate and high regard to the privacy and confidentiality of the patient's health information. However, it is not a guaranteed secure form of communication. Patients must be aware of this when emailing the clinic and refrain from sending sensitive information via this messaging system. (Please note, clinical requests made by email/contact form requires an appointment with the GP.) The receiver's email address must also be confirmed as correct, prior to sending correspondence.

Social Media Policy

Regardless of whether social media is used for business-related activity or for personal reasons, the following policy requirements apply to all GPs and practice staff of the practice. GPs and practice staff are legally responsible for their online activities, and if found to be in breach of this policy, a formal meeting with management will be conducted to discuss the breach. This could include employment termination for serious breaches. The practice reserves the right to remove any content at its own discretion.

Staff Conduct on social media

When using the practice's social media, practice staff will not post any material that;

- is unlawful, threatening, defamatory, inflammatory, menacing or offensive
- infringes or breaches another person's rights (including intellectual property rights) or privacy, or misuses the practice's or another person's confidential information (eg 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)
- is materially damaging or could be materially damaging to the practice's reputation or image, or another individual
- is in breach of any of the practice's policies or procedures

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When using the practice's social media, practice staff will not:

- use social media to send unsolicited commercial electronic messages, or solicit other users to buy or sell products or services or donate money
- impersonate another person or entity (e.g. 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
- tamper with, hinder the operation of, or make unauthorised changes to the social media sites
- 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
- attempt to do or permit another person to do any of these things
- claim or imply that you are speaking on the practice's behalf, unless you are authorised to do so
- disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the practice, or to any third party that has disclosed information to the practice
- be defamatory, harassing or in violation of any other applicable law
- include confidential or copyrighted information (eg music, videos, text belonging to third parties)
- violate any other applicable policy of the practice.

Monitoring social media sites

The practice's social media channels are part of our customer service and are monitored and dealt with regularly.

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 third-party website or in social media accounts 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 and are personally responsible for content published in their personal capacity on any form of

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social media platform. When in doubt, employees can seek guidance from the Practice Manager on how to comply with the following obligations.

Employees should be aware of and understand the potential risks and damage to Maroondah Health Care Medical Centre that can occur, either directly or indirectly from their personal use of social media and should comply with this policy to ensure that the risk is minimised.

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.

Breach of policy

All social media activities must be in line with this policy. GPs and practice staff are legally responsible for their online activities, and if found to be in breach of this policy, a formal meeting with management will be conducted to discuss the breach. This could include employment termination for serious breaches.

The practice reserves the right to remove any content at its own discretion.

Policy review statement

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date with changes in social media or relevant legislation.

Feedback

Should Patients wish to discuss any matters in relation to this policy, please contact our Practice Manager:

practicemanager@mhcmc.com.au

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