

MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

STANDARD PRACTICE

Date: June 2010

Date Reviewed: June 2010; July 2010; June 2013; March 2020, April 2024

Date Revised: June 2010; July 2010; April 2013; March 2020, April 2024

Title: Social Media Guidelines for Memorial Healthcare System Workforce

Through its consumer-facing social media channels, Memorial Healthcare System positions itself as an industry leader, features subject matter experts, highlights safety, technology and treatments, shares patient and staff stories, promotes community-focused work and posts engaging content around trends and observances.

Social media can be an extremely powerful tool for communicating general healthcare information, building brand awareness, creating professional connections, and sharing thought leadership experiences. However, sharing too much information on social media platforms can have devastating effects on healthcare organizations, employees, and physicians if patient-specific information is shared.

Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for Memorial Healthcare System employees and physicians when using social media. The goal is to ensure responsible and professional online representation of the organization while safeguarding patient privacy, confidentiality, and maintaining the integrity of the Memorial brand.

Professional Conduct

All social media interactions must align with Memorial Healthcare System's mission, values, and code of conduct. Treat all individuals with respect, empathy, and professionalism in online interactions. Healthcare professionals are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and integrity when using social media.

Key Guidelines

- Follow Memorial's Standard Practice of Behavior: Respectful, Professional, Team-Oriented, Good Communication.
- Avoid Offensive Content: Refrain from sharing derogatory, discriminatory, or offensive content online. We encourage you to maintain respect toward cultural, ethnic, and religious beliefs in all media interactions.
- Refrain from actions that could harm Memorial's reputation or standing in the community.

- Official Communications: Only Corporate Communications is authorized to make official statements on behalf of the organization. Memorial employees and physicians must notify Corporate Communications at newsmedia@mhs.net or 954-265-1136 before agreeing to be featured as subject matter experts on any social media channels. If you are wearing any garment that identifies you as a Memorial employee or physician, or are using any of Memorial's buildings, signage or logos in your photos or videos, assume that you will be identified as a Memorial employee, therefore follow the guidelines in this document.
- Patient Consent: Do not film or photograph patients without written consent from the patient or their legal representative. See proper steps to document and share patient information below. *
- Do not share protected health information (PHI).
- Medical Advice: While sharing general medical information is encouraged, clinicians should refrain from providing specific medical advice or diagnoses online; encourage individuals to consult professionals for personalized guidance.
- Memorial employees cannot be filmed or photographed at work without their consent.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- Never share protected health information (PHI) or identifiable patient details without obtaining written consent from the patient and approval from Corporate Communications. Respect for patient privacy is paramount, even when discussing general medical topics.
- Avoid disclosing proprietary or sensitive organizational information.
- When sharing medical content, do so in general terms, avoiding details that could identify a patient. Discussing specific cases even without using a patient's name may reveal enough information for a third party to recognize a patient. If discussing a specific case, obtain written consent and approval from Corporate Communications.

Properly Share Patient Information*

- If you have a patient story you wish to share:
 - ask the patient to sign the media consent form,
 - scan it into the patient's file,
 - contact Corporate Communications at newsmedia@mhs.net or 954-265-1136 for consideration, follow-up, and approval. Only Corporate Communications can approve for a patient to be featured on social media.

Transparency

Be aware that others will associate you with your employer when you identify yourself as such. Please ensure that your Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter)

and other social media profiles or related content are consistent with how you wish to present yourself should patients and colleagues see your feed.

- **Clarify Opinions:** If an employee or physician mentions (or shows) their affiliation with Memorial on any social media sites, they must clearly state that their opinions are their own and not representative of the healthcare system. However, this statement does not exonerate you from following the policies and guidelines as outlined in this document.
- **Professional vs. Personal Accounts:** Maintain a clear distinction between personal and professional accounts. Personal accounts should remain private. Do not interact with patients or their families in a medical or official capacity on personal social media accounts. Refrain from forming dual relationships with patients through social media.
- **Public Professional Pages:** When engaging with Memorial employees or patients, it is advised to do so from a professional page as a public figure. Your social media bios should state “All opinions expressed are my own and don’t reflect my employer.”

Cybersecurity and Data Protection

- Use secure passwords for social media accounts and enable two-factor authentication.
- Be cautious about sharing personal or organizational information that could compromise cybersecurity.

Crisis Management

- Refrain from sharing information related to sensitive incidents, accidents or crises unless authorized by Corporate Communications.

Monitoring and Accountability

- Memorial reserves the right to monitor employees and physicians’ social media activities related to their affiliation. Violations of this policy may lead to corrective actions, ranging from education and training to potential disciplinary measures including termination, depending on the severity of the violation.

Reporting Violations

- Report any instances of inappropriate or unprofessional behavior on social media platforms to your supervisor or department leader within Memorial. You may also report these violations to the MHS Privacy Director, and any Health Information Director, through the incident reporting system, through written or oral complaints through the grievance procedure, or through the compliance hotline.

Training and Education

- Regular training and education on social media best practices, patient privacy, and Memorial's policies will be provided to ensure employees and physicians remain well informed.

Review and Updates

- This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to align with evolving social media practices and regulations. By adhering to this social media policy, employees and physicians can contribute positively to the online community while upholding the values and reputation of the healthcare system.

Clearance and Approval for New Social Media Accounts

Corporate Communications, in collaboration with its partners, has conducted extensive research and determined that the best practice for a hospital system is to maintain a unified, consumer-facing social media program. This approach allows all departments, service lines, and subject matter experts to share their expertise within a single, highly monitored ecosystem.

Rather than creating individual social media pages from scratch, we encourage your team to collaborate with Corporate Communications to share information. This content will be distributed across Memorial Healthcare System and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital's existing social media platforms, reaching thousands of followers.

While exceptions to this approach are rare, if your department or program is interested in launching a separate social media channel to promote new business or aspects of Memorial Healthcare System, please contact Corporate Communications to discuss further.

Acknowledgment

I have read and understood Memorial Healthcare System's social media policy. I agree to adhere to the guidelines outlined and understand the consequences of policy violation.



Shane Strum
Interim President and CEO
Memorial Healthcare System