

Employee Policy HR Consult/Social Media Team

1. Policy Statement

This NHSBT Social Media Acceptable Use Policy with supporting Frequently Asked Questions document provides a framework for social media use, enabling interactions to exchange information, opinions and experiences to learn, develop and access services. We recognise that there is huge potential in this space and that our employees (engaged in any capacity) and contract/agency workers engaged on NHSBT business or at our premises are our best ambassadors and advocates for promoting our work.

However, we also recognise the reputational risks of social media, and this policy with supporting Frequently Asked Questions document seeks to give direction for appropriate use of social media on both a personal basis and when identifiable as an employee or contract/agency worker of NHSBT in a professional capacity.

Social media includes but is not limited to public platforms such as; Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, LinkedIn, work-based platforms such as Viva Engage, messaging services such as WhatsApp, emails, blogs, and forums such as Threads.

Our commitment to inclusion across sexual orientation; gender; age; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; disability; religion or belief; race; marriage and civil partnership, identity, all abilities and experience drives us forward every day.

2. Using Social Media

Separate Work and Personal Accounts

If your social media account includes your connection to the organisation it is advisable the account is not also used to post about your personal life. Separate work and personal accounts should be used in this instance.

Social Media Profile:

Behaviour and conduct on social media whether that be from a work account or a personal account where the connection/affiliation to the organisation is known, is detailed further Social Media Policy FAQs.

Participating in discussions on social media

Any work related social media activity should be consistent with our high standards of professional conduct and in line with our organisational values as specified in the [NHSBT Code of Conduct](#). 'Your social media use should not bring the organisation into disrepute.

Avoid using your NHSBT identity online however if, in the course of your employment you can be identified you should ensure:

1. Always strive for excellence – make posts of quality and make a good impression;
2. Be courteous and respectful
3. Be honest, open and transparent
4. Be ethical and post with integrity
5. Set a good example

Before posting testimonials, check the credentials of the individual or organisation you are supporting and whether there is a conflict with NHSBT's values.

This includes posts related to an official work account or a personal one where your connection/ affiliation with the organisation is shared.

- Anything posted on social media is permanent and issues can escalate very quickly. Ask for help and guidance from the social media team if you're not sure.
- When using social media as an individual you should not make statements on behalf of the organisation unless pre-agreed. If approached to comment on an issue on behalf of the organisation you should contact the press office (pressoffice@nhsbt.nhs.uk).
- Do not offer medical advice or guidance through social media. Donor queries and concerns should be directed through the normal channels.
- Be careful of what you retweet or share, it can appear that you are supporting something even if that's not your intention.

Access to social channels

Ensure that your social media activity for work or research purposes does not interfere with your current work commitments.

Making connections / 'Friending'

- We discourage 'friending' of patients and NHSBT social account followers. Employees in front line patient care roles should not initiate or accept friend

requests except in unusual circumstances such as where in-person friendship pre-dates the patient relationship.

- Managers and employees should use their judgement and common sense and be mindful of professional boundaries and working relationships when connecting with or 'friending' colleagues on social media. Whilst this may be appropriate and is encouraged in a professional capacity on some channels, for example, LinkedIn, managers should not initiate friend requests with line reports on channels used more for personal updates such as Facebook.

Receiving payment for social activity/endorsements:

Receiving payment in exchange for producing or posting social content could be considered a conflict of interest and you should speak to your manager first. You should not use any work social media accounts for advertising or promoting specific products or services.

(see the AntiFraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy)

3. Privacy, Confidentiality and Security

Keeping your accounts secure

- You are responsible for keeping your accounts secure, this includes using strong passwords, not sharing login details with others and logging out of accounts on shared devices.
- You should take care when sharing your personal contact details or information, including work email addresses, phone numbers or personal address publicly on social media.
- You should not use a work email address to register for personal social media accounts

Maintaining Confidentiality and Privacy

- You must not share confidential or sensitive information about NHS Blood and Transplant, patients, donors or colleagues.
- Whilst some groups and chats may appear private it's important to remember that other users in these spaces may share your posts and comments more widely.

Photography

- Don't share photos or videos of colleagues, donors or patients without permission. You should complete model release forms when taking photos of donors and check the backgrounds of photos carefully in workplaces and donor centres to ensure nothing confidential is visible.
- Always respect copyright, fair use, data protection and defamation laws.

4. Reporting issues

- Any donor, public and staff complaints should be directed through the normal routes via. Blood.co.uk website (external) or HR Direct (internal), you should not respond to complaints from your personal accounts. If you see anything concerning, you should alert the relevant teams.
- Do not use social media to “whistleblow” without raising issues through the proper channels first (see [Whistleblowing Policy](#)). Staff complaints or issues cannot be managed on social media. (see [Grievance Policy](#)). Should the Social Media Team come across inappropriate posts, these will be raised with line managers and People Directorate.

In the event an internal or external social media account breaches NHSBT’s social media house rules (as detailed above) the social media team have the right to block/report the relevant account/s.

5. Compliance

Ensure you comply with social media channel regulations. Breaches of this policy could be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, as per the [NHSBT Disciplinary Policy](#). At its sole discretion, NHSBT may request the removal of content and/or accounts of employees who are found to have violated the Social Media Policy. In serious cases it may be necessary to report an incident to the police.

6. Policy Approval and Review

Policy version	UCD/People/Social Media/052v1.0
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