

## Social Media Policy for Website

When using social media, Northcote Medical refers to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law), our National Board's code of ethics and professional conduct (the Code of conduct) and the *Guidelines for advertising regulated health services* (the Advertising guidelines). See our [Board's website](#) for relevant codes, guidelines and policies.

When using social media, we meet your obligations by:

- complying with confidentiality and privacy obligations
- complying with our professional obligations as defined in our Board's Code of conduct
- maintaining professional boundaries
- communicating professionally and respectfully with or about patients, colleagues and employers, and
- not presenting information that is false, misleading or deceptive, including advertising only claims that are supported by acceptable evidence.

### What is social media?

Social media is a term that is constantly evolving but generally refers to internet-based tools that allow individuals and groups to communicate, to advertise or share opinions, information, ideas, messages, experiences, images, and video or audio clips. They may include blogs, social networks, video and photo-sharing sites, wikis, or a myriad of other media, used for:

- social networking (Facebook, Twitter, WEChat, Weibo, WhatsApp)
- professional networking (LinkedIn)
- discussion forums (Reddit, Whirlpool)
- media sharing (YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, TikTok)
- content production (blogs [Tumblr, Blogger] and microblogs [Twitter])
- knowledge/information aggregation (Wikipedia)
- virtual reality and gaming environments (Second Life), and
- booking sites and apps (HealthEngine, Whitecoat, Podium).

### How is use of social media relevant to Northcote Medical

A primary objective of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) is to protect the public. Community trust in registered health practitioners is essential. Every practitioner has a responsibility to behave ethically to justify this trust.

Inappropriate use of social media can result in harm to patients and the profession, particularly given the changing nature of privacy and the capacity for material to be posted by others. Harm may include breaches of confidentiality, defamation of colleagues or employers, violation of practitioner-patient boundaries or an unintended exposure of personal information to the public, employers, consumers and others. Information stays on social media indefinitely. Information published on social media is often impossible to remove or change and can be circulated widely, easily and rapidly. Therefore, it's important that we are and remain very careful about what we like or post online-regardless of where in the world the site is based or the language used.