Social Media Guidelines

1. **BACKGROUND**
   Social media plays an important role in communication with, and among, learners, faculty, staff, patients, community stakeholders and others. Inappropriate or offensive behaviors, use or interactions on social media can impact employment, training, or learner status.

2. **PURPOSE**
   2.1 To provide guidance to learners, faculty members and staff of the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences (“RFHS”), University of Manitoba, respecting existing resources and requirements relating to social media; and
   2.2 To provide guidance in understanding their roles and responsibilities as a member of the RFHS when using social media.

3. **DEFINITIONS**
   3.1 RFHS-Hosted Social Media: a social media account that is created, branded and utilized by a program, Department or unit of the RFHS or a College(s) of the RFHS, and represents the RFHS.
   3.2 Personal Social Media: social media used for personal purposes, such as communicating with family, friends, other learners, faculty, staff. This includes learner or student groups.
   3.3 Social Media: a term used to describe websites and/or applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking including without limitation popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, LinkedIn and YouTube.

4. **GUIDELINES**
   **RFHS-Hosted Social Media**
   4.1 RFHS-Hosted Social Media shall follow the Guidelines and best practices at the University of Manitoba including:
       - Social Media Guidelines and Best Practices – Marketing Communications Office;
       - Social Media at the University of Manitoba – Access and Privacy Office.

   **Personal Social Media**
   4.2 Academic freedom and freedom of expression are fundamental values supported by the University of Manitoba and the RFHS.

   4.3 While use of Personal Social Media for educational, personal or professional development is permitted and the principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression are supported, individuals assume personal responsibility for information they post online or send electronically. Personal Social Media must comply with professional standards, University policy, and legislation.

   4.4 It is important to be aware that, even with Personal Social Media use, the person’s RFHS affiliation may still be identified, known or presumed. A “University Matter” is broadly defined, as provided in the RWLE and Sexual Assault Policy and Procedure.

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4.5 For Personal Social Media, if a person identifies their affiliation with RFHS or the University of Manitoba, then they should visibly include a disclaimer such as: “The views expressed here are my own and do not reflect the views of the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba” or “these views are my own”. Even with this disclaimer, the matter may be considered a University Matter and, in either case, must comply with professional standards, University policy, and legislation.

4.6 Although any item posted on Social Media will continue to exist in some form, here are select articles that may be helpful to “clean up” one’s Personal Social Media:

- How to Clean Up Your Social Media for Work [https://www.randstad.ca/job-seeker/career-resources/job-search-tips/how-to-clean-up-your-social-media-for-work/](https://www.randstad.ca/job-seeker/career-resources/job-search-tips/how-to-clean-up-your-social-media-for-work/)

Legislation

4.7 The Personal Health Information Act (Manitoba) (“PHIA”) outlines responsibilities that anyone who collects personal health information must abide by. All health care providers, including learners, take a PHIA pledge and are considered trustees under PHIA. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (Manitoba) (“FIPPA”) contains privacy responsibilities that are applicable. There are many forms of online or electronic communications that may undermine these obligations, for example, blogging about specific patient encounters, or posting patient information on a social networking site.

4.8 In Manitoba, the Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination and harassment of any individual or group based on any of the personal characteristics as set out in the Human Rights Code (Manitoba). The Criminal Code of Canada contains provisions respecting hate speech. Any Social Media shall be free of harassment, discrimination, as well as public incitement, and wilful promotion, of hatred.

Professional Standards

4.9 Professional Standards: Each profession has its own governing body that may have statements or guidelines relevant to Social Media that provide responsibilities for its members. The following list is provided for reference and may not be exhaustive:

- [Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses](#)
- [Code of Ethics and Standards of Psychiatric Nursing Practice](#)
- [College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba: Code of Ethics](#)
- [College of Pharmacists of Manitoba: Code of Ethics](#)
- [College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba – adoption of Canadian Medical Association Code of Ethics and Professionalism](#)
- [College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba: Standards of Practice of Medicine](#)
- [College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba: Use of Social Media](#)
- [College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba and College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba: Social Media and Social Networking](#)
- [Manitoba Association of Registered Respiratory Therapists: Code of Ethics](#)
- [Manitoba Association of Registered Respiratory Therapists: Standards of Practice](#)
- [Manitoba Dental Association: Code of Ethics](#)
- [Practice Expectations for RNs](#)
University of Manitoba Policies and Values

4.10 A number of University of Manitoba policies and values are relevant and applicable to online communication, electronic activities and work/learning environments. They include:

- **Access and Privacy Policy and Procedures**: University members are required to comply with PHIA, FIPPA, and this policy to ensure the University meets its obligations under access and privacy legislation.
- **Use of Computer Facilities Policy and Procedures**: University members, including learners, agree to abide by this policy when they claim a user ID. The policy outlines clear user responsibilities.
- **Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy and Procedure** (currently under review): This policy, in part provides: “Members of the University Community, including every student and employee, are entitled to a respectful work and learning environment that is: (a) Free from Discrimination and provides for Reasonable Accommodation; (b) Free from Harassment; and (c) Collegial and conducive to early resolution of conflict between members of the University Community.” It provides a process for complaint and resolution should there be a concern respecting a respectful work or learning environment.
- **Prevention of Learner Mistreatment Policy, Max Rady College of Medicine**: This policy provides a commitment “to assuring safe, respectful and supportive working and learning environments in which all of its members are enabled and encouraged to excel. This is an environment free of discrimination, harassment and mistreatment and one in which feedback regarding performance can be shared openly without concern for ridicule or reprisal.” It provides a process for complaint and resolution should there be a concern respecting learner mistreatment. It is currently under review to be applicable across all of the RFHS.
- **Discipline avenues for unprofessional conduct.** For learners, unprofessional conduct can result in discipline pursuant to the **Student Discipline Bylaw**; a program’s Professional Unsuitability Bylaw or a program’s essential/requisite skills and abilities document. For faculty members or staff, unprofessional conduct can result in discipline pursuant to an applicable collective agreement, human resources policy or employment standards law.
- **The University’s commitment to six fundamental values**: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage, defining **Academic Integrity**, should be kept in mind at all times, as well as the University’s values set out in its **Strategic Plan**: academic freedom, accountability, collegiality, equity and inclusion, excellence, innovation, integrity, respect, and sustainability.

Social Media Orientation/Training

4.11 It is recommended that each College/Program consider the following to be provided for review or orientation (or other similar orientations/modules) for learners, faculty members and staff:

- The Social Media Module of the Access and Privacy Office, University of Manitoba *(in development – information can be found at [https://umanitoba.ca/access_and_privacy/](https://umanitoba.ca/access_and_privacy/))*
- Review of this Guideline;
- Review of “**When Private Becomes Public: The Ethical Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media**”, Canadian Nurses Association;
4.12 It is recommended that learners receive social media orientation/training at admissions/orientation, as well as refresher training prior to commencement of clinical field work/clinical practice/clerkship/clinical learning, as determined to be appropriate by the program.

4.13 It is recommended that staff and faculty members receive social media orientation such as review of the above Social Media Module and this Guideline as part of their new staff on-boarding or College/RFHS-level new faculty orientation process.

4.14 This Guideline is not intended to replace University-level policies or procedures, or more detailed College or Program-specific policies or guidelines. Please reference any applicable College or Program-specific policies or guidelines.

4.15 Should a concern arise respecting Social Media use as it relates to the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences community, learners can report concerns to any of their teachers, preceptors, course/rotation directors, administrative staff members, Department Heads, Associate Deans within their program, Student Affairs or Student Services at Bannatyne Campus representatives, including Student Advocacy, according to personal comfort and preference. The “Speak Up” button can be utilized by Medical learners (currently under review for expansion to all Rady Faculty learners). Faculty members and staff may contact Human Resources or their union representatives. The University’s Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management is a resource available to all University members. If the matter involves a potential privacy breach, the Access and Privacy Office shall be notified in accordance with the Access and Privacy Policy.

4.16 The consequences of posting concerning Social Media is dependent upon the applicable University policy, bylaw, collective agreement, professional standard or legislation that may have been breached, as well as on the circumstances, on the seriousness of the breach, and any mitigating factors. The applicable policy or other governing document should be referenced, however the following list provides examples of measures and is not meant to be exhaustive nor necessarily represents a progression of measures:

a) A letter of apology;
b) Attendance at educational session(s);
c) Attendance at coaching session(s);
d) Academic consequences such as remediation, probation, notation on the performance record, dismissal/expulsion from the Program/College/RFHS;
e) Termination of employment or academic appointment.

5. GUIDELINE CONTACT
Please contact the Director, Planning & Priorities or the Director, External Relations, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, with questions regarding this document.

6. APPROVAL
These guidelines were approved by the RFHS Dean’s Council on September 1, 2020.