PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance and parameters for social media usage by students enrolled in the Center for Allied Health educational programs. While social media tools are a very popular mode of engagement and communication and facilitate education, collaboration, research, business, and remote work, its usage by CAHP students present unique risks to clients/patients. Because of the risks associated with inappropriate use of social media, misuse must be addressed through professionalism training, usage guidelines, and appropriate corrective and disciplinary action when warranted. The use of social media requires a conscious recognition of the profoundly public and long-lasting nature of on-line communication which provides a permanent record of postings. Each student, resident and fellow is responsible for appropriate online behavior just as they are with communications in other areas of their professional life.

POLICY

All CAHP students must adhere to the following:

1. Follow all relevant University policies. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining client/patient privacy, professionalism, conduct, ethics, sexual harassment, eCommunication standards, social networking site guidelines, copyright, intellectual property, computer, e-mail and Internet use.
2. Understand that unprofessional behavior within social media is treated the same manner as unprofessional behavioral in other settings. Any individuals posting depictions of intoxication, drug use, sexually explicit materials, bullying, violent or discriminatory language or behavior are subject to the same disciplinary review and processes.
3. Do not discuss secure exam content unless clearly authorized do so by an instructor.
4. Confidentiality:
   • Client/patient privacy measures taken on social media must be the same as those taken in any public forum.
   • Social media discussions regarding specific clients/patients, research subjects, volunteers or cadavers are prohibited, even if all identifying information is excluded as it is always possible that someone could recognize the individual to which you are referring based upon the context, time stamp or location data.
   • Under no circumstances may photos or videos of clients/patients, research subjects, volunteers or cadavers, including those depicting any body parts (including microscopic) of these individuals, be displayed unless specific written permission to do so has been obtained. Failure to obtain permission is a HIPAA violation.
• Maintain the confidentiality of students, residents, fellows, faculty and staff by not disclosing one’s professional relationship unless they have given explicit permission to do so. 

5. Client/patient contact
• Do not provide medical or health care advice about individual cases using social media. Individuals with health inquiries must be directed to an appropriate hospital or clinic patient line.

6. Clinical settings
• Understand and adhere to existing policies or guidelines in each of the clinical settings in which you participate.

7. Uphold the reputation of the University of Minnesota and the Academic Health Center and each of its programs by being respectful and professional to fellow students, residents, fellows, employees, faculty, competitors and clients. This includes refraining from:
   • Engaging in any form of harassment, including derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual’s race, age, disability, relation, national origin, physical attributes, sexual preference, or health condition.
   • Violating intellectual property, copyrighted or trademarked information.

8. Do not promote personal projects or endorse other products or brands on behalf of the University of Minnesota. University brand standards must be followed: [http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Operations/OPMisc/BRANDING.html](http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Operations/OPMisc/BRANDING.html)

Violations will be handled through the Student Conduct Code, Section V, Subdivision 16 and disciplinary measures outlined by the student’s, resident’s or fellow’s program and school.

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**PROCEDURE**

1. All CAHP students must adhere to the social media policy to ensure client/patient privacy and foster a respectful, professional learning and healing environment for all.
2. Students will be informed of this policy and its implications by their school/program including the guidelines and procedures.
3. Breeches of the policy standards are to be reported to the school/program per the established processes within the school or training program.
4. The school/program will investigate the complaint and then proceed with corrective and/or disciplinary action processes.
5. Students, residents and fellows have the duty to report inappropriate uses of social media and privacy violations by peers/colleagues and anyone in their learning and/or work environment to their school/program per the established process within the school or training program.

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**GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS, RESIDENTS AND FELLOWS**

1. Assume that anything posted to social media websites can be seen by anyone, including current and future employers. Never assume that posts are private. Remember that if you would not want your manager, fellow colleagues, classmates or others to see your comments, pictures or videos, it is unwise to post them to the Internet. Also be aware that these postings can be used in court or disciplinary settings.
2. Others may identify you in photos (“tagging”). It is your responsibility to ensure these photos do not violate this policy. It is recommended that your privacy settings be set to not allow this behavior and that strict privacy settings be used on all social media sites.
3. Interactions with clients/patients using social media are strongly discouraged unless authorized to do so by your supervisor or program.
4. Client/patient information obtained on a social media should not be entered in the client/patient’s medical record without the client/patient’s knowledge and consent.
5. Refrain from accessing personal social media while in clinical work areas.
6. It is strongly recommended that students, residents and fellows and faculty limit social media interactions except for purposes of official course work and do not interact using social media except for work.

7. Use University affiliation appropriately.
   • Where your connection to the University of Minnesota, the Academic Health Center, or your individual College, School or Center is apparent, make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of these entities.
   • If you communicate publicly on the Internet about University of Minnesota-related matters, disclose your connection and role. Use good judgment and strive for accuracy in your communications; errors and omissions reflect poorly on both you and the University of Minnesota and may result in liability for either/both parties.
   • For any personal online activity, use a personal e-mail address (not your umn.edu e-mail address) as your primary means of identification. Just as you would not use University stationery for a letter to the editor with your personal views, do not use your University e-mail address for personal views.

DEFINITIONS

Social Media: Social media are internet-based tools used to interact with other people through text, images or sound. Some common social media are Digggs, Facebook, Flickr, Linkedin, Instagram, MySpace, Snapchat, Twitter, UMWiki, and YouTube. This does not include University of Minnesota email.

RESOURCES/RELATED POLICIES

University of Minnesota Physicians’ Social Media Policy:
http://www.umphysicians.org/terms-of-use/social-media/

University of Minnesota Student Conduct Code:

University of Minnesota Social Networking Guidelines:
https://ur.umn.edu/brand/requirements-and-guidelines/social-networking/index.php#confidential

University Relations collects links to all official social networking profiles from University of Minnesota schools, centers, institutes and other groups. To be added to the list, e-mail webdepot@umn.edu.

REFERENCES
3. Adapted from “Social Media Guidelines for Indiana University.” Indiana University. Revised May 2, 2013.
4. Adapted from unpublished and draft AHC Social Media Policy of 2015.