



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Current as of : 1st May 2026

Name of Social Media officer : Mamatha Harish

Introduction

This policy provides guidance for members of the Garfield Medical Centre on using social media internally and externally. The policy helps identify and mitigate risks associated with social media use.

Purpose

Regardless of whether social media is used for business-related activity or for personal reasons, the following policy requirements apply to all employees of Garfield Medical Centre. All staff are legally responsible for their online activities, and if found to be in breach of this policy disciplinary action may include employment termination for serious breaches.

Definition

SOCIAL MEDIA

For the purposes of this policy, 'social media' is online social networks used to disseminate information through online interaction.

It includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet to share information and resources. People use social media to talk, participate, share, network and bookmark online. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts and other multimedia communications, and is also known as Social Networking.

Social media includes, but is not limited to:

- Email
- Social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google Plus)
- Video and photo sharing (Flickr, YouTube)
- Blogs, including personal and corporate blogs
- Micro-blogging
- Online forums and discussion boards
- Wikis (Wikipedia)
- Podcasting

EMPLOYEES

In this policy, employees include permanent staff and executives, contractors, temporary staff, trainees and students on placements.

PRACTICE

In this policy, 'the practice' may be used interchangeably with the employers trading name:

Garfield Medical Centre.

Policy

Garfield Medical Centre has a staff member appointed as a social media officer responsible for managing and monitoring the practice's social media accounts. All posts on the practice's social media website must be approved by this staff member. The practice reserves the right to remove any content at its own discretion.

No images, content or confidential information from within Garfield Medical Centre or management is to be posted on any social media platform without explicit permission of Garfield management Team. Staff should not respond to comments and reviews left by patients and clients without prior authorization from the management team. Where a staff's comments or profile can identify them as a Garfield Medical Centre's staff, that staff:

- Must ensure any online communication is consistent with Garfield Medical centre's Code of Conduct, values, policies and applicable laws.
- Write on all postings that the stated views are your own and are not those of Garfield Medical Centre.
- Must not imply you are authorised to speak as a representative of Garfield Medical Centre.
- Must not make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to Garfield Medical Centre's reputation or bring it into disrepute.
- Must not post material that includes confidential/proprietary information or trade secrets, or information that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, libellous, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, or sexist.
- Must not use a Garfield Medical Centre's logos or insignia without written permission from the management team.
- Can only disclose and discuss publicly available information.

Staff conduct on social media

When using the practice's social media, practice staff will not:

- post any material that
 - is unlawful, threatening, defamatory, pornographic, inflammatory, menacing or offensive
 - infringes or breaches another person's rights (including intellectual property rights) or privacy, or misuses the practice's or another person's confidential information (e.g. do not submit confidential information relating to our patients, personal information of staff, or information concerning the practice's business operations that have not been made public)
 - is materially damaging or could be materially damaging to the practice's reputation or image, or another individual
 - is in breach of any of the practice's policies or procedures
- use social media to send unsolicited commercial electronic messages, or solicit other users to buy or sell products or services or donate money
- impersonate another person or entity (eg by pretending to be someone else or another practice employee or other participant when you submit a contribution to social media) or by using another's registration identifier without permission

- tamper with, hinder the operation of, or make unauthorized changes to the social media sites
- knowingly transmit any virus or other disabling feature to or via the practice's social media account, or use in any email to a third party, or the social media site
- attempt to do or permit another person to do any of these things
 - claim or imply that you are speaking on the practice's behalf, unless you are authorised to do so
 - disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the practice, or to any third party that has disclosed information to the practice
- be defamatory, harassing or in violation of any other applicable law
- include confidential or copyrighted information (eg music, videos, text belonging to third parties)
- Imply that they are authorized to speak as a representative of the company, nor give the impression that the views expressed are those of the company
- Use the identity or likeness of another employee, contractor or other member of the company
- Use or disclose any confidential information or personal information obtained in their capacity as an employee or contractor of the company
- Post material that is, or might be construed as, threatening, harassing, bullying or discriminatory towards another employee or contractor of the Practice
- Comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the practice's reputation or bring it into disrepute.
- When accessing social media while at work, you must do so in accordance with Garfield Medical Centre's Internet and Email Usage policy, which requires you to use these resources reasonably, in a manner that does not interfere with your work, and is not inappropriate or excessively accessed.

Personal social media use

Staff are free to personally engage in social media outside of work hours, as long as their actions do not have the potential to bring the practice into disrepute. Staff may not represent personal views expressed as those of this practice.

Garfield Medical Centre recognizes that employees use social media and that the lines between work and home are becoming increasingly difficult to identify with the use of mobile devices. This policy does not apply to staff members' personal use of social media platforms where they make **no real or perceived** reference to Garfield Medical Centre or Garfield Management Group, it's staff, it's clients/patients, services, business partners, government, suppliers or other stakeholders.

Any social media posts by staff on their personal social media platforms must not reveal confidential information about the practice or a person who uses the practice (e.g. staff should not post information relating to patients or other staff, or information concerning the practice's business operations that have not been made public).

Staff should respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms. Staff should be aware of and understand the potential risks and damage to Garfield Medical centre that can occur, either directly or indirectly from their personal use of social media and should comply with this policy to ensure that the risk is minimised.

Staff are personally responsible for content published in their personal capacity on any form of social media platform. When in doubt, staff can seek guidance from the Practice Manager on how to comply with the following obligations. To avoid breaching this policy, staff must:

- Only disclose and discuss publicly available information
- Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant practice policies and other legal and professional requirements
- Expressly state that stated views are personal and are not representative of the practice
- Behave politely and respectfully
- Must adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination and other applicable laws, and Garfield Medical centre's Privacy of Health Records and Personal Information policies.

Monitoring social media sites

Garfield Medical Centre social media channel/s are part of our customer service and will be monitored and dealt with regularly.

Testimonials

The practice complies with AHPRA national law and takes reasonable steps to remove testimonials that advertise their health services (which may include comments about the practitioners themselves). The practice is not responsible for removing (or trying to have removed) unsolicited testimonials published on a third-party website or in social media accounts over which they do not have control.

Disclosure of Inappropriate Use

Where an employee becomes aware of inappropriate or unlawful online content that relates to Garfield Medical Centre, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy the situation and circumstances should be reported immediately to the Practice Manager or Management team.

Breach of Policy

- Garfield Medical Centre reserves the right to initiate action against any staff member, in accordance with the organisation's Disciplinary Procedure, who uses social media in a manner that could be considered inappropriate or not consistent with this policy or any other Garfield Medical Centre policy.
- Management will consider the nature and severity of the post, the source of the post, whether a Garfield Medical Centre or management team was named, if the post is public, if other workers have seen the post, if the Garfield Medical Centre's name has been damaged or the Health Industry has been damaged, and or if the comment was impulsive or deliberate when considering any disciplinary action.
- All staff are legally responsible for their online activities, and if found to be in breach of this policy disciplinary action may include termination of employment or disengagement of external contractors.

References and Associated Documents

- Privacy Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy

- Data and Security Breach Protocol
- Confidentiality Agreement
- Internet and Email Usage Policy
- Use of Computers Policy

Legislation

- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Commonwealth)

Standards / Codes of Practice / Industry Guidelines

- Social Media and the Medical Profession: guidelines for medical staff and medical students, Australian Medical Association
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) Social Media Policy.

Garfield Medical Centre has taken all reasonable steps in the development of this policy, to make its content consistent with the proper discharge of its obligations under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and all related state and federal laws.

Feedback

Garfield Medical Centre is committed to listening and responding to feedback from our patients. This enables us to further improve the quality of services we deliver. If you have any feedback you would like to share with us, please email us at info@garfieldmedicalcentre.com.au

Please note that this process can take up to 30 working days depending on the subject matter of your feedback.

Alternatively, you can phone us on:
02-9128 3465

or

Write to us at:
Patient Feedback
2 / 19-25 Garfield Street
Wentworthville NSW 2145

Policy review statement

- The date the policy is due for review no greater than two years from the date of endorsement.
- The Garfield Management team is responsible for reviewing this policy regularly and the practice staff will be notified of any update or changes during team meetings or via work emails.