

## **Gardens Medical Group**

### **Social Media Policy**

**Review Date:** September 2026

**Approved By:** Jenny Edwards CEO/ Practice Manager

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#### **1. Purpose**

This policy outlines the appropriate and professional use of social media by staff, contractors, and representatives of Gardens Medical Group. It ensures compliance with RACGP Standards (5th edition), AHPRA guidelines, and privacy legislation, while maintaining the trust and confidentiality of our patients.

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#### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all staff members, including:

- General practitioners
  - Nurses and allied health professionals
  - Administrative staff
  - Students and contractors
  - Any individual posting, commenting, or engaging online in a way that could identify them as representing Gardens Medical Group.
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#### **3. Definition**

Social media includes, but is not limited to:

- Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube
  - Online forums, blogs, and review websites (e.g., Google Reviews, HealthEngine, HotDoc)
  - Any other digital communication platform accessible to the public.
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#### **4. Professional Conduct**

- Compliance with the AHPRA Code of Conduct and the RACGP Standards is required.
  - Staff must not disclose any patient information, even if anonymised.
  - Posts must not bring the practice, staff, or profession into disrepute.
  - Official practice social media content requires management approval before posting.
  - Staff must not provide medical advice via social media.
  - If identifying as staff of Gardens Medical Group online, personal opinions must not be represented as those of the practice.
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## 5. Practice-Managed Accounts

- Posts should be informative, professional, and health-promoting.
  - Appropriate content includes:
    - Health promotion and community education
    - Practice updates (services, staff changes, opening hours)
    - Public health announcements
  - Content must be evidence-based and fact-checked.
  - Patient images or testimonials require explicit written consent before posting.
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## 6. Privacy and Confidentiality

- Protect patient confidentiality at all times.
  - Do not post any content that could identify a patient, directly or indirectly.
  - Adhere to the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).
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## 7. Managing Feedback and Complaints

- Do not engage publicly with patient complaints.
- Forward all negative comments or reviews to the Practice Manager.
- Approved response example:

“Thank you for your feedback. We take concerns seriously and encourage you to contact the practice directly to discuss this matter further.”

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## 8. Personal Use of Social Media

- Personal use must not interfere with work duties.
  - Avoid tagging or identifying [Practice Name] in posts that may reflect poorly on the practice.
  - Personal opinions must not be represented as those of the practice.
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## 9. Breach of Policy

- Breaches may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.
  - Serious breaches may be referred to AHPRA or other regulatory bodies.
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## 10. Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by legislation, guidance, or RACGP Standard updates.

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## 11. Approval and Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Review Date	Approved By
1.0	January 2025	January 2026	Jenny Edwards CEO/Practice Manager