



audiology australia ltd

Audiology Australia Social Media Position Statement

The purpose of this position statement is to provide Audiology Australia members guidance on appropriate social media conduct. Social media refers to the use of internet-based platforms for the purpose of creating, sharing or exchanging information with others. Social media may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Social networking websites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Photo and video-sharing (e.g., YouTube, Flickr, Instagram)
- Blogs, Microblogs or online journals (e.g., Wordpress, Twitter)
- Online discussion groups and forums (e.g., Whirlpool)
- Podcasting
- Email
- Online chat / instant messaging

Audiology Australia recognises that many members use social media on a personal or professional level, and does not discourage its use. However, members should be mindful of the potential consequences of sharing information via social media, given that this information is publically accessible. Separation of work-related and personal social media may be a consideration depending on members' individual circumstances. Members should also keep in mind the principles of the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct when using social media. Members have an obligation to uphold professional standards of behaviour that preserve the integrity of the profession.

Therefore, in accordance with the principles of these Codes, members should consider the following when using social media:

1. All applicable laws should be followed (e.g., Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights; National Employment Standards; National Privacy Principles; Workplace Bullying; Copyright Law/Fair Use).
2. Specific policies at your workplace applicable to social media should be adhered to (e.g., policies on computer, email and internet use; respect in the workplace; client

confidentiality; release of client information; communication of workplace intellectual property)

3. Ensure work commitments are not compromised by social media activity (e.g., do not use social media to promote outside or potentially conflicting interests while at work; avoid using personal social media during work time if this interferes with workplace duties).
4. Avoid engaging in online discussion or making comment about your workplace, unless you are using a workplace-related website or page (e.g., company website, company Facebook page) for official purposes.
5. Avoid using workplace accounts for personal commentary or discussion (e.g., official workplace Twitter account for expressing personal opinion).
6. Be mindful of your personal and professional reputation when posting information and images, or links to information or images (e.g., sharing personal images on Facebook that could be considered offensive to others; posting hateful, defamatory or threatening material).
7. Be honest, respectful and polite to others when engaging in online discussion (e.g., do not misrepresent your 'online identity'; do not engage in heated debate or argument with others; do not send spam; do not intimidate or bully others).
8. Respect client privacy and do not share any information that could identify a client (e.g., do not publish client images without permission; do not post information that could reveal client identity).
9. Respect privacy of other members (e.g., do not publish or share information or images of other members without permission).
10. Do not publish information that risks the reputation of the profession (e.g., do not endorse services or products that are not scientifically validated; do not forward information based on rumour or not determined to be factual).
11. Avoid publishing material that infringes copyright (e.g., do not appropriate images, sounds, videos or other digitally recorded information without permission of the copyright owner; do not plagiarise written work).
12. Members may share, link to or embed copyrighted work when publishing material online, as long as the link to the copyright owner has been included, and the material does not otherwise breach specific legal or regulatory requirements (e.g., consider terms of service of websites when linking information; include url in emails that attach online news or commentary).
13. Be mindful of the client-practitioner relationship, duty of care and potential conflicts of interest when communicating with clients by electronic means (e.g., ensure communication by email remains factual and professional; avoid initiating or accepting friend requests with clients).
14. When expressing opinions online, make sure others are aware they are your personal views and not those of your employer or others (e.g., consider including a statement such as 'opinions expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of my employer' in an 'about me' section on your personal blog).