

COCKHEDGE MEDICAL CENTRE

Social Media Policy

Introduction and Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide a standard framework for the use of social media. It ensures that the Practice's staff and patients are not brought into disrepute, because of the inappropriate use of social media.

There are many social media platforms that are widely used by both staff and patients at Cockhedge Medical Centre; these include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others.

At Cockhedge Medical Centre we have a Facebook page and a practice website, which provide a range of useful information for our patient population.

Cockhedge Medical Centre has a duty to maintain patient confidentiality and to safeguard vulnerable patients. You can help us to achieve this by adhering to the code of conduct outlined in this policy.

Patients are not permitted to take photographs or any media recordings in the waiting room or areas where other patients are present, nor are photographs or media recordings of any staff permitted without their explicit consent.

The Practice requires all users of portable devices to use them in a courteous and considerate manner, respecting their fellow patient.

Patients should not use any social media platform to communicate medical information with the Practice as this is not secure.

Patients must not post comments on social media that identify staff who work at the Practice.

Patients are to use the nhs.uk website should they wish to leave a review about Cockhedge Medical Centre. This will enable the Practice to respond appropriately.

Defamatory comments about our team are not to be shared on any social media platform. Legal advice will be sought, and the appropriate action taken against any patient who posts defamatory comments.

The legal definition of defamation is:

“any intentionally false communication, either written or spoken, that harms a persons reputation; decreases the respect, or confidence in which a person is held; or induces disparaging, hostile or disagreeable opinions or feelings against a person”.

Expectation of Staff

To not bring Cockhedge Medical Centre into disrepute.

Refrain from online behaviour towards colleagues that could be construed as bullying.

Maintain confidentiality as you would within the workplace.

Be mindful of your colleagues when posting, if you have colleagues as ‘friends’.

Be thoughtful of what you post which could be reported to management.

Staff should not identify themselves as an employee of the Practice on social media. Not only does this reduce the risk of you bringing the Practice into disrepute, but it also reduces the chances of you being inappropriately contacted by patients.

Think carefully about what kind of information you want to share and with whom and adjust your privacy settings accordingly.

Staff must not register for personal social media accounts with their nhs net email address.

The Practice understands that employees may wish to use their own mobile devices while they are at work. Employees must limit their use of social media on their own equipment to lunch times.

The internet is constantly changing so it is not possible to cover all circumstances that may occur. Practice staff who use social media are required

to exercise judgement, act professionally and consider the appropriateness for any information or image they post in advance of posting it.

When posting on social media sites, there should be no expectation of privacy, regardless of your privacy settings applied to individual accounts. Content posted to, and opinions expressed via social media must be considered to be in the public domain.

Ensure that your privacy settings are set so that personal information you may not want to share is not available to your colleagues or members of the public.

Do not use your work contact details (email or telephone) as part of your personal contact details.