

Creighton University School of Medicine-Phoenix Policies

POLICY:	Social Media
GOVERNING BODY:	Graduate Medical Education Committee – Creighton University School of Medicine-Phoenix
GMEC APPROVAL DATE:	August 5, 2024; August 7, 2023; February 6, 2023
REVISED DATE:	August 5, 2024
ACGME ACCREDITATION STANDARD REFERENCE:	Institutional Requirement: Not Applicable

SCOPE

The policy applies to all Creighton University School of Medicine-Phoenix (CUSOM-PHX) House Staff Physicians (HSP) and their respective training programs.

DEFINITIONS

House Staff Physician (HSP): Any resident or fellow in a Creighton School of Medicine GME program.

Social media: A type of online platform that expedites conversation, delivers content, and allows readers/viewers/listeners to participate in the creation of the content.

POLICY

Each HSP is responsible for their conduct when using social media. HSP should follow these guidelines whether participating in social media personally or professionally, and regardless of whether they are using personal or employer-issued electronic devices.

To ensure the utmost professionalism when using social media, HSP must comply with the following guidelines when engaged in social media or other online activity:

1. When posting information on the internet and social media, consider the following:
 - a. The impact of the information you disseminate via social media sites prior to posting material. Respect for one's colleagues, co-workers, and institution is essential to maintaining a professional work environment.
 - b. The permanency of published material on the internet – once posted on the internet, things live forever.
 - c. The fact that patients regularly Google their physicians and that posts reflect CUSOM-PHX as an institution.
 - d. Disclosure of patient information on social media may violate state and federal laws and lead to enforcement actions by agencies such as the State Board of Medical Examiners and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
2. Patient experiences and information are prohibited from being digitally recorded and posted on social media. Use of the internet includes posting on blogs, instant messaging, social networking sites, and email, posting to public media sites, mailing lists, and video sites.
 - a. Such actions may be a direct violation of the patient's privacy and confidentiality per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
 - b. The HIPAA Privacy Rule protects all "individually identifiable health information" and requires that individuals involved in healthcare maintain the security of patient records in any form (i.e., electronic, paper, or oral).
 - c. HSP are expected to comply with all CUSOM-PHX clinical partners' HIPAA policies regarding use and disclosure of patient information, including any policies

regarding use of photography or other recording mechanisms, and particular care should be taken to CUSOM-PHX clinical partners' policies prohibiting accessing websites that are not directly related to education or patient care.

3. Patient information should never be saved on personal USB memory devices or recording devices.
4. Patient information may only be emailed within a hospital's secured network or within CUSOM-PHX's secured network. Patient information must not be emailed outside of these systems.
5. The patient-physician relationship relies on mutual respect and professionalism. Social networking with patients, including communicating with patients or giving medical advice via social networking sites should not be done.
6. HSP must not represent or imply that they are expressing the opinion of the organization by using hospital or institution proprietary information such as logos or mastheads. Trainees must comply with CUSOM, rotating hospital, and institutional policies with respect to such information.
7. If a HSP creates a blog, clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author in the blog are the author's alone and do not represent the views of the hospital or CUSOM-PHX must be posted. Such posts must:
 - a. Be clear and write in the first person;
 - b. Make the writing clear and that it is coming from an individual and not on behalf of either the respective hospital or school of medicine; and
 - c. Be compliant with policies including, but not limited to, provisions concerning discrimination, harassment, and professionalism.
8. Information (written or digital) about colleagues and co-workers should not be posted anywhere without their consent and if posted should be truthful and accurate.

Inappropriate use of the internet and social media may result in:

- a. Documentation in professionalism score/report card
- b. Professionalism academic remediation
- c. Discipline for breach of hospital or institutional policy
 - I. Potential suspension
 - II. Potential dismissal
- d. Other assignments and/or remediation plans based upon the infraction.

Any violation of HIPAA can result in potential dismissal from the program as well as possible criminal and/or civil penalties. A violation of HIPAA may also negatively impact your license to practice medicine.

AMENDMENTS OR TERMINATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy supersedes all program level policies regarding this area/topic. In the event of any discrepancies between program policies and this GME policy, this GME institutional policy shall govern.

Creighton University reserves the right to modify, amend or terminate this policy at any time.