

Social Media

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Introduction

Social media, as part of a comprehensive health promotion and communications strategy, can be a powerful tool that enables people to engage and share information with each other and the community. Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) uses a systematic communications and approval system to integrate social media into broader communication strategies designed to expand the reach of health promotion messages, share time sensitive public health information, encourage discussion, feedback and comment on health issues, and support the delivery of services.

Purpose

To inform health unit board of health, employees, students, and volunteers of the standards, parameters and procedures the agency has put in place for the proper and professional use of social media in their work and to promote consistency and coordination in health unit communications using social media.

Legislative Authority

- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1991
- Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004
- Copyright Act R.S., c. C-30, s.1
- Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991

Policy Definitions and Interpretation

Account is the administrative record of your profile or business page on a social media platform.

Comment is any form of content, personal opinion or comment posted by a visitor, follower or friend to an SMDHU social media platform. Depending on the platform, a comment can also be referred to as a post, reply or tweet.

Designated users are staff within the agency who have been specifically authorized to write, post, monitor or respond to social media platforms as part of their assigned work with the health unit.

Moderated means technical and monitoring measures that prevent or ensure the timely removal of any defamatory or objectionable submissions. It also includes measures to support the timely response to comments or queries from the public within the context of assigned working hours.

Profile is the identity of an individual or business that includes social and business characteristics for others to like or follow. **Social media** means the online tools, technologies and practices that are used to share information and opinions, connect with people and

organizations, and build relationships. It allows users to engage through various means, including text, picture, video, audio and real-time dialogue. Examples include, but are not limited to, social networks (e.g. Facebook and Linked In), blogs (e.g. WordPress), microblogs (e.g. Twitter), wikis (e.g. Wikipedia), video sharing (e.g. YouTube), photo sharing (e.g. Pinterest), discussion forums and podcasts.

Social media platform is a web-based network that allows businesses and individuals to share information, ideas, messages and create an online community.

Policy

Use of Social Media

Social media tools deployed in the course of agency business will be used within the context of a broader health promotion/communications strategy and in accordance with agency and program policies, procedures and professional standards of practice.

Social media should not be used in any way that may identify an individual client or that may infringe on an individual's privacy. Social media will not be used in the course of agency business to discuss, share or release individual personal health information of any client or member of the public or to discuss personal health issues with individual clients unless approved as an exception to policy by the medical officer of health.

All SMDHU social media accounts will clearly indicate that they are maintained by the SMDHU and will reference the agency standard Disclaimer and Terms of Use.

The Program Manager/Supervisor is responsible for approving the use of social media by their staff in the course of agency business, for identifying designated users and for ensuring approved users are familiar with this policy and procedures, user guidelines and the culture of the social media tool they are using.

Health Promotion and Communications will utilize secure interfaces on social media platforms, where applicable, to securely manage SMDHU accounts and maintain privacy to those administrating those accounts.(e.g. Business Manager on Facebook)

Use of social media accounts will comply with all terms and conditions, terms of use, terms of service and other material contracts applicable to such social media platforms. In accordance with those terms and conditions Health Promotions and Communications will provide appropriate permissions for staff to manage SMDHU social media accounts.

Staff will not view personal profile information of clients or members of the general public social media account unless there is a specific and/or approved purpose for doing so.

Designated users will use social media tools in accordance with agency and program policies, procedures and professional standards of practice and will follow the review and approval processes established by the Program Manager for content posted to social media.

Program Managers will ensure SMDHU social media accounts are monitored and moderated in a regular and timely manner during regular business hours.

Staff require manager approval to use and/or contribute to social media accounts operated by outside organizations or individuals (e.g. to contribute to an SMDHU campaign-specific Facebook page, or to help administer a community partner's social media platform) in the course of their work and/or as a representative of the health unit.

Social media interactions will be documented in accordance with standards for professional practice and agency policy and retained in accordance with the records retention schedule.

SMDHU will take reasonable steps to protect staff against harassment in the workplace which includes social media accounts operated by the SMDHU.

Procedures

A. Establishment of Agency-level Social Media Accounts

1. Requests to establish an agency-level SMDHU account on a social media platform are submitted by a Program Manager, reviewed by the Manager of Health Promotion & Communications and approved by the Director of Program Foundations and Finance. Requests will confirm:
 - a. Staff training and resource allocation for ongoing content creation, posting, monitoring and moderating is in place.
 - b. A communications plan to support awareness and promotion of the account is in place to launch and maintain the initiative.
 - c. Approval processes, documentation, evaluation and reporting plans are in place.
2. The process for posting, monitoring and responding to agency-level social media accounts will be established between the Health Promotion & Communications team and Health Connection team.
3. The Manager of Health Promotion & Communications will designate the user(s) for the site.
4. Agency-level social media accounts are planned, designed, implemented and monitored by the Health Promotion & Communications team in collaboration with other agency teams as required (e.g. Health Connection – Core team, IT, etc.) with contributions from appropriate executive, management or program team members.
5. Content for social media (text, photos, video, etc.) will be created by program teams, and should be written in a format suitable for each specific social media account and approved by the manager.
6. If an agency-level SMDHU social media account is deemed to be no longer useful or required, the Manager Health Promotion & Communications will assess the impact and implications of de-activation of the account and make a recommendation to the Director of Program Foundations and Finance. Documentation of the rationale for this decision should be created and should include:
 - a. Assessment of the use of the account and evaluation of use for accomplishing the agency's goals
 - b. Reasons for deactivation
 - c. Considerations for any record retention over and above process described above
 - d. Recommendations for how and when deactivation to take place
 - e. Communications plan for notice to users/audiences of de-activation

B. Establishment of Program or Department-level Social Media Account

1. Requests to establish a department or program-level SMDHU account on a social media platform (i.e. a campaign-specific Facebook page or program-specific Twitter

account) or to contribute to an SMDHU or a community partner social media account are made by a Program Manager and/or Department Director to the Manager, Health Promotion & Communications.

2. The Health Promotion and Communications Manager reviews and considers the request and responds to the Program Manager and/or Department Director with a recommendation for how to proceed based on the following considerations:
 - a. Fit with a comprehensive health promotion/communications strategy, appropriateness related to subject matter, audience.
 - b. Staff training and resource allocation for ongoing content creation, posting, monitoring and moderating is in place.
 - c. A communications plan to support awareness and promotion of the account is in place to launch and maintain the initiative.
 - d. Approval processes, documentation, evaluation and reporting plans are in place.
3. The recommendation is reviewed and approved by the Department Director.
4. The process for posting, monitoring and responding on SMDHU social media accounts will be established by the Program Manager and/or Director in consultation with the Health Promotion and Communications team.
5. Content for social media (text, photos, video, etc.) will be created by program teams, and should be written in a format suitable for each specific social media platform and approved by the Program Manager.
6. If a SMDHU social media account is deemed to be no longer useful or required, the Program Team/Manager responsible for that account should consult with the Health Promotion and Communications team for impact and implications of de-activation of the account and make a recommendation to the Department Director. Documentation of the rationale for this decision should be created and should include:
 - a. Assessment of the use of the account and evaluation of use for accomplishing the program/initiative goals
 - b. Reasons for deactivation
 - c. Considerations for any record retention over and above process described above
 - d. Recommendations for how and when deactivation to take place
 - e. Communications plan for notice to users/audiences of de-activation

C. Documentation and Records Management

1. General

The responsible Program Manager will ensure that records of the social media initiative are kept a minimum of seven years, or as per professional standards requirements.

- a. The social media platform will be considered the electronic file, where the information remains intact and in context for the duration of records retention
- b. Other official records of a social media initiative (e.g. communications strategy, log of social media posts etc.) will be retained for the duration of

records retention on the health unit network in a location specified by the Program Manager.

2. Sensitive postings

The responsible Program Manager will ensure screen captures of original sensitive postings and exchanges (e.g. comments that require removal per social media disclaimer, content of a politically sensitive nature, material that could be part of a future legal proceeding, etc.) are filed in a secure network location in context with other official records of the social media initiative and kept a minimum of seven years, or as per professional standards or legal requirements.

Related Policies

- TQ0101 Acceptable Use
- TQ0105 Internet Policy & Guidelines
- PR0101 Media Relations and Communications
- PR0102 Copyright
- HR0101 Employee Conduct
- HR0102 Conflict of Interest
- IM0101 Information Privacy – Principles
- IM0109 Documentation
- Social Media Guidelines

Related Forms

Final Approval Signature: _____

Review/Revision History:

2018-08-29 Revised