



## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

### INTRODUCTION

Social Media is a powerful tool for engaging key audiences within the Faculty of Medicine. It has the potential to inform and create a greater sense of community within the Faculty. However, it can also present challenges. Physicians creating personal accounts should also review the Canadian Medical Association's [Social Media Guide for Healthcare Professionals](#).

### Best Practices for Running Your Social Media Accounts

1. **Be respectful.** Anything you post in your role as a U of T Medicine employee reflects on the institution. Be professional and respectful at all times on your social media channels. Do not engage in arguments or extensive debates with naysayers on your channels.
2. **Be transparent.** Make it clear that you are posting in your role as a staff member for U of T Medicine. One of the great benefits of social media is that the individuals maintaining social media channel personalize large and complex institutions such as U of T. Use your own "voice." Do not ghostwrite posts for supervisors.
3. **Listen.** Being a consumer of social media is essential to your ability to be a successful producer of social media content. "Listen" to online conversations on your preferred tools – be they blogs, Twitter, Facebook or anything else – to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to your audience.
4. **Be active.** Social media presences require diligent care and feeding. If you do not have the time or resources to check in on these sites at least a few minutes each day, and to post fresh content several times a week, reconsider jumping in to social media at this time. Your channel is only as interesting as your last post – if that post is several months old, visitors will consider your feed out of date.
5. **Be timely.** One of the great benefits of social media is the ability to share information almost instantly with a vast audience. This timeliness is also one of the expectations of that audience. Be prepared to move quickly in response to new developments, announcements, or emergencies with relevant information on your site. A short amount of accurate information delivered at the time of need can sometimes be more valuable than a full report delivered well after the issue has passed.
6. **Remember, everything you do online can and will live forever.** Think before you post, remembering that anything you share within social media, even within a closed network, is not private. It can and will be shared, stored and spread globally. Don't post anything online you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing on the front page of a newspaper.
7. **Be alert to potential threats to U of T Medicine's reputation.** If you see a post or comment that you think requires or would benefit from an official U of T Medicine response, please notify MedComms.
8. **Separate personal from professional.** Balancing your professional and personal social media presences can be tricky, particularly if you are an avid user in both arenas. Content



that is appropriate and of interest to your personal friends is most likely not appropriate or of interest to your department's "friends." Keep these two presences as separate as possible by keeping content about your non-work life on your personal page.

9. **Be a valued community member.** Don't just talk about your program or department – share the best information you find from trusted sources outside of U of T Medicine. This will increase the value of your channel and also will ensure you are a valued member of the community and are not just tooting your own horn.