

Title:	Social Media		
Section:	Corporate	PRH:	Chief Executive Officer
			Policy & Procedure

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Social media is a part of Bass Coast Health's future as a public health care provider and is increasingly part of the work and private lives of staff, volunteers and consumers.

Bass Coast Health's social media sites exist to provide a platform where the community can hear about, and engage with, Bass Coast Health. This includes promoting health messages (including links to external sources), fundraising, services provided and recruitment.

Each platform offers instant global reach and therefore approval for any employee designated to publish and broadcast via these channels on behalf of the organisation is afforded great responsibility. Once published, it must be assumed that content is in the public domain forever.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to all Bass Coast Health employees and volunteers regarding their responsibilities and standard of conduct if they wish to comment and participate in any social media forum, including Bass Coast Health forums, using knowledge and information gained in their employment and/or voluntary service. To understand that when using social media, Bass Coast Health Code of Conduct applies.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Social media are computer mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Blogs
- Forums and discussion boards
- Video and photo sharing sites (e.g YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, etc)
- Social networking sites (e.g Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc)

Bass Coast Health workplace participants include all staff, auxiliaries, students, interns, contractors and volunteers.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

[Public Relations, Marketing & External Communication](#)
[Confidentiality & Privacy of Personal Information and Health Information](#)
[Code of Conduct](#)
[Bullying & Harassment Policy](#)
[Disciplinary Policy](#)
[Information Technology policy](#)

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[Volunteers Policy](#)

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide guidance on and approve social media content on sensitive issues To approve all media content (later posted to social media) To delegate authority to the Director of Community Engagement to approve daily social media content
Executive Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prepare, review and determine appropriate material in consultation with the Director of Community Engagement , for submission to the CEO
Community Engagement Director and team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prepare, review and determine appropriate material in consultation with all staff To develop and monitor BCH's social media platforms To advise all staff on public relations matters To approve content before being posted (Director)
Department Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure respective staff follow correct approval procedure when submitting material To ensure respective staff are familiar with social media policies and procedure
BCH staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To refer all media requests to the Community Engagement team or the relevant Executive Director To prepare appropriate material in consultation with respective Manager for submission to the Public Relations email
BCH volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To refer all media requests to the Director of Community Engagement or the relevant Executive Director To contribute to material in consultation with staff, as agreed
BCH Auxiliaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure all Auxiliary related media contact and submissions align with the BCH Code of Conduct and other relevant policies
BCH interns, students, contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To contribute to material in consultation with staff, as agreed

5.0 POLICY

5.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All Bass Coast Health workplace participants should make themselves aware of the risk and implications of using any social media sites, especially where comments may potentially or actually damage the reputation or breach the privacy or confidentiality of others, including:

- Persons in their care
- Persons formerly in their care
- Colleagues
- Managers or employers

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Personal and professional use of social media by Bass Coast Health workplace participants must not:

- Imply Bass Coast Health's endorsement of personal views, products or services
- Bring Bass Coast Health into disrepute or compromise the reputation of Bass Coast Health
- Compromise effectiveness at work
- Breach the confidentiality or privacy of consumers or workplace participants
- Bully, harass or humiliate other Bass Coast Health workplace participants

5.2 AFFILIATION WITH BASS COAST HEALTH ON PERSONAL PROFILES

As a staff member or volunteer of Bass Coast Health your social media activities must be consistent with Bass Coast Health's values and policies.

5.3 ENGAGING WITH OFFICIAL BASS COAST HEALTH SOCIAL MEDIA FORUMS

Bass Coast Health workplace participants are encouraged to engage with Bass Coast Health's social media platforms in accordance with Bass Coast Health's Social Media Policy and Procedure .

Clinical staff are welcome to share general clinical information with online communities (once approved), however must not give individual medical advice, even if asked directly.

Staff and volunteers are NOT permitted to use Bass Coast Health's social media channels to denigrate, criticise, demean or humiliate patients/clients/residents, another workplace participant, the organisation, the State Government of Victoria and its departments or agencies, political parties and other community members.

Before officially representing Bass Coast Health on social media platforms, Bass Coast Health workplace participants must seek approval from their relevant Executive Director and the Chief Executive Officer.

Audio-visual and Photographic Images

All people who feature in photographic image or video content for Bass Coast Health (BCH) publicity purposes are required to sign a photo consent form stating their agreement. Participation in photographs and / or videos for the purposes of publicity is the personal choice of consumers / clients / patients, staff and volunteers. BCH will make all reasonable efforts to respect those whose images are recorded in BCH photography and ensure that the images/s are managed and used appropriately. BCH Volunteers and staff are requested to sign a consent form at the commencement of their employment / association with BCH.

All consumers / patients / clients are required to sign a consent form on each occasion that images are taken. Staff must explain the purpose of the photo, the content of the consent form, where the images may be displayed and whether it may be used by a third party (eg. Media), and give participants the option to withdraw from the photo, paying particular attention if the topic may be deemed as sensitive or controversial.

Signed consent forms are stored by the Community Engagement team (consumers), Human Resources (staff) and the Manager, Volunteers (volunteers - On Volgistics data base).

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Withdrawal of permission for use of an image

Participants can withdraw permission to use image/s at any time by notifying BCH in writing. Upon notification of the withdrawal of permission BCH will cease to use the images in all future publications, recognising that despite effort, images may still be published or disseminated, and may still be used by a third party (eg. Media organisation).

For Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people

Images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may appear in the public sphere for many years. Upon notification of the death of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person appearing in images Bass Coast Health will cease to use those images. It is acknowledged that despite all efforts, images may still be published or disseminated.

Confidentiality and Privacy of Personal Information Policy

In accordance with Bass Coast Health's Confidentiality & Privacy of Personal Information Policy consumer information may only be used or disclosed for the primary purpose for which it was collected or a directly related secondary purpose that the person would reasonably expect. Otherwise, written consent is required. Use of Patient/Client/Resident information (and information which gives rise to the view by others that it is regarding a Patient/Client/Resident), must never occur without CEO approval.

Bass Coast Health and all workplace participants will maintain patient/client/resident privacy and confidentiality at all times and in all media (including online and print) and as such must refrain from commenting about clients/patients/colleagues they come in contact with or the health services they provide to people, on social media/networking websites.

5.4 ACCESS

Any personal use of social media is limited to designated meal breaks using personal devices and internet plans. Private use of social media during work hours may result in disciplinary action.

All access to file sharing sites, including music and video downloading, is not permitted. Where an employee or volunteer has been found to have accessed a file sharing site it will be dealt with in accordance with the BCH Disciplinary Policy or Volunteers Policy.

5.5 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

These guidelines help to support Bass Coast Health staff and volunteers to engage with Bass Coast Health's social media sites in a positive and appropriate way. Bass Coast Health's social media sites exist to provide a platform where the community can hear about, and engage with, Bass Coast Health. This includes promoting health messages (including links to external sources), fundraising, services provided and recruitment.

Social Media Do's:

- Always act in a professional manner in the use of any social media, be respectful and avoid unjust or untrue criticism of other health practitioners or organisations.

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- Social media is about having conversations. When commenting, always write in first person and use a friendly, informal tone
 - **Example:** Sue is a dietitian who sees a post about healthy eating. Sue comments *"As a dietitian at Bass Coast Health, I have seen how improving your diet – even in small ways – helps your heart in a big way! Keep up the healthy eating posts!"*
- Always be accurate and honest in your communications. Errors, omissions or unprofessional language reflects poorly on yourself and Bass Coast Health. If a mistake is made correct yourself immediately
 - **Example:** Pharmacist Paul reads a comment that says taking drug X will result in osteoporosis. Paul thinks this is incorrect and says so, identifying himself as a professional in the field. Paul then finds out that they were referring to drug Y which *does* result in osteoporosis. Paul then writes *"Apologies, I misunderstood the comment and believed you were referring to drug X. Overuse of drug Y is definitely linked to osteoporosis."*
- When discussing medical topics use easy-to-understand language as most social media followers do not have a clinical background. Be sure to use full words rather than acronyms, such as ED or MET
 - **Example:** Nurse Tom comments, *"I'm an ED nurse and I've seen lots of serious influenza virus cases this winter!"*
 - This could be easier to understand if Tom wrote: *"As an Emergency Department nurse, I've seen lots of people with really bad cases of the flu this winter!"*
- During debates or differences of opinion, remain civil and respectful. Be aware that some people use social media solely to provoke, insult and offend. If a member of the public speaks to you in an offensive or abusive manner **do not respond** and immediately report it to your manager and the Community Engagement team.
 - **Example:** Member of the public Kate writes below Tom's comment about the flu: *"Tom you and all the other emergency nurses are nasty, heartless people. My kid broke his arm and you were horrible to him."*
 - Tom alerts the Community Engagement team either through private message or email and does not respond.

Social Media Dont's:

- Personal medical advice should never be given on social media.
- Profanity or abusive language will not be tolerated. Comments that are off-topic, defaming, breaching Bass Coast Health's policies/procedures or promoting a commercial product will be removed and may result in disciplinary action.
- Don't use your affiliation with Bass Coast Health to promote or endorse third-party groups/services, unless otherwise approved by the relevant Executive Director
- When you establish your personal account (eg Facebook or Twitter), do not use Bass Coast Health or associated program titles in the title or handle. It is fundamentally important to the people who use social media to know when they are viewing an official account and when they are viewing a personal account.

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- Do not post material on Bass Coast Health sites that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Not engage in online communication or relationships with a patient/client/resident including, but not limited to inviting a patient/client/resident to become an online 'friend' or accepting an online invitation from a person they have met through their professional work.
- Understand that bullying behaviour used by an individual while communicating on social media to anyone else within their workplace will not be tolerated

For your own privacy, Bass Coast Health recommends you consider carefully what personal information you publish on the internet. Different social media platforms have different privacy settings. Some of them are more effective than others, but, as a general rule, it is usually sensible to assume that any information shared through social media could become public.

5.6 CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH

Breach of any aspect of this policy will be addressed with the individual in line with the defined process in the BCH Disciplinary Policy or Volunteers Policy.

Access to social media sites may be revoked if a Bass Coast Health workplace participant breaches this policy.

5.7 MANAGEMENT

The Chief Executive Officer is the effective Editor-In-Chief for all Bass Coast Health social media channels on all platforms and delegates operational responsibility to the Director of Community Engagement .

The Chief Executive Officer may grant employees with permission to broadcast or publish across social media channels. Permission afforded to these people may change from time to time.

The Director of Community Engagement is responsible for identifying appropriate social media platforms for Bass Coast Health to be active in. The Director of Community Engagement is the only person within the organisation authorised to open or start a social media account or page on behalf of Bass Coast Health. Recommendations are welcome and will be evaluated based on relevance and on the Director of Community Engagement capacity to provide service.

5.8 REVIEW

The Community Engagement team will keep a record of all platforms, login details and passwords, and will actively monitor, evaluate and report on all content and engagement on a monthly basis.

5.9 REMOVAL OF OFFENSIVE REMARKS OR INCORRECT STATEMENTS

Bass Coast Health reserves the right to restrict, discontinue or remove comments that breach Bass Coast Health's code of conduct.

Offensive language or images on Bass Coast Health social media sites will not be tolerated and will be removed as soon as possible.

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Where an employee is concerned that they are the subject of any defamatory or damaging comments made on social media, they should notify their manager immediately so that appropriate action can be taken.

5.10 CORRECTIONS

Bass Coast Health will update information as soon as practicable after being alerted to an error. Apologies may be provided if necessary.

If a Bass Coast Health workplace participant finds an error or incorrect statement, they have a responsibility to alert the Community Engagement team via email or private message on social media channels.

6.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

[ORG0-11 Publicity, Photo/Media Consent Form](#)

7.0 REFERENCES

Peninsula Health Social Media Policy (07/09/2015)

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch) *Position Statement Nurses and Midwives Professional Obligations in the use of Social Media* Adopted – June 2013 Review document January 2016 <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Position-Statements/vaccination.aspx>

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