

School of Nursing
Usage of Electronic/Social Media Guidelines Policy

1. Standards of Conduct for the Use of Electronic/Social Media
 - A. The School of Nursing recognizes that social networks and other electronic media can be beneficial to the delivery of quality healthcare. However, inappropriate use of electronic media such as social networks, chat rooms, forums, etc. , violate a patient’s right to confidentiality and privacy. It may also cross the professional boundary between a nurse and his/her patient. Therefore the School of Nursing has adopted the following guidelines to minimize the risks associated with use of social networks and all other electronic media.
 1. Students must recognize they have an ethical and legal obligation to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times.
 2. Students are strictly forbidden from transmitting any patient-related image via electronic media.
 3. Students must not share, post or otherwise transmit any patient information, including images, unless there is a patient care related need to disclose information or other legal obligation to do so.
 4. Patients should not be identified by name or any other method (such as nickname, room number or diagnosis) that could lead to the identification of the patient. Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to protect the patient’s privacy.
 5. It is not acceptable to post any information about a patient even if their name is not identified.
 6. Students should never refer to a patient in a derogatory or disparaging manner, even if the patient is not identified.
 7. No photos or videos of patients may be taken on a personal device, including cell phones.
 8. Students must always maintain appropriate professional boundaries with patients. On-line contact with patients or former patients blurs the distinction between a professional and personal relationship. Inappropriate communication via electronic media is discouraged. This includes instances where the patient contacts the student first. If this should happen, the student should notify their instructor as soon as possible.
 9. Students should understand patients, colleagues, institutions and prospective employers may view postings on social media websites. Students should not make disparaging remarks about patients, instructors, other students or facilities, even if they are not expressly identified. Students must not make threatening, harassing, profane, obscene, sexually explicit, racially derogatory, homophobic or other offensive comments.
 10. Students should bring content that could harm a patient’s privacy, rights, or welfare to the attention of faculty.
 - B. If the student has any doubt about the appropriate use of electronic/ social media they should contact their instructor for further guidance.
2. Inappropriate use of Electronic/Social Media can lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to formal reprimand, suspension or dismissal from the program. Students can also be

held personally liable. Such violations may result in civil and criminal penalties including fines or possible jail time in accordance with state and federal laws.

References

Anderson, J., & Puckrin, K. (2011). Social network use: A test of self-regulation. *Journal of Nursing Regulation, 2*(1), 36-41.

National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2011). *White paper: A Nurse's Guide to the use of social media*. Chicago, IL. Retrieved from www.ncsbn.org/

Approved SON 4.24. 2012