

	<b>Policy and Procedure</b>
<b>DOCUMENT TITLE:</b>	<b>Social Media Policy</b>
<b>DOCUMENT NUMBER:</b>	<b>HR75 Version 1</b>
<b>LEAD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DGM</b>	<b>Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>Human Resources Department</b>

<b>TARGET AUDIENCE:</b>	All Trust Personnel
<b>DOCUMENT PURPOSE:</b>	This policy sets out the standard that should be met by all East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust staff when using social media, either through individual social media accounts or through a trust-operated account.
<b>To be read in conjunction with</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR09 Disciplinary Policy</li> <li>• HR07 Bullying and Harassment Policy</li> <li>• CO79 Information Governance Policy</li> <li>• Code of Conduct for Professional Registrations</li> </ul>
<b>SUPPORTING REFERENCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Protection Act 1998</li> </ul>

<b>CONSULTATION</b>		
	<b>Committee/Group</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	Policy, Terms and Conditions Group	6 July 2016
<b>Approval Committee</b>	JNCC	
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<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE:</b>	<b>27/9/2019</b>	
<b>AMENDMENTS:</b>	New Policy	

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust's communications and engagement team are now making increased use of Social networks to engage with their staff, patient and service users by delivering key messages around healthcare and services. These digital interactions are encouraged and their use is likely to be further extended as new communication channels become available.
- 1.2** This policy is provided so that staff and contractors of the Trust are aware of their personal responsibilities for appropriate use of social media.
- 1.3** This policy is necessary as many employees and contractors enjoy sharing their knowledge and experience with others of similar roles and interests. The Trust encourages these online activities and acknowledges that staff and contractors can improve their personal skills and experience through relevant interactions with others outside the organisation
- 1.4** The Trust has a responsibility to ensure the operational effectiveness of its business, including its public image, reputation and for the protection of its information assets of all kinds. This involves ensuring confidentiality and maintaining security in accordance with NHS information Governance and good practice.

## **2. Scope**

**2.1** This policy applies to all employees employed on Agenda for Change terms and conditions, temporary workers, students on placement, volunteers, staff not on Agenda for Change terms and conditions and anybody undertaking duties on behalf of East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust.

## **3. What is Social Media?**

**3.1** 'Social media' is the term given to internet and mobile-based channels and tools which allow users to interact with one another sharing information, opinions and content. As the name implies, social media involves the building of communities or networks encouraging participation and engagement.

Examples of social medial platforms:

- Microblogging, e.g. Twitter
- Blogging, e.g. WordPress and Tumblr
- Video and Picture sharing, e.g. Flickr, YouTube and Instagram
- Social sharing, e.g. Facebook
- Professional sharing, e.g. LinkedIn

## 4. ELHT Social Media Channels

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust's social media channels include;

- Twitter [www.twitter.com/EastLancsHosp](http://www.twitter.com/EastLancsHosp)
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/east-lancashire-hospitals-nhs-trust>
- Facebook [www.facebook.com/EastLancashireHospitals](http://www.facebook.com/EastLancashireHospitals)
- YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCU6o3gKHp4ZrmS\\_PYtOqi2g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCU6o3gKHp4ZrmS_PYtOqi2g)

The above sites are ELHT's official corporate social media channels, if you are made aware of any unofficial sites operating under our name, please alert the IT Department.

## 5. Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Duties

### 5.1 Managers

It is every manager's responsibility to ensure employees are aware of this policy and the parameters outlined within it. It is every manager's responsibility to react in an appropriate manner when informed of instances in which behaviour has not been acceptable.

For social networking sites such as LinkedIn where personal and professional references are the focus: If you are representing yourself as an East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust employee, you may not provide professional references about any current or former employee. If you provide a personal reference or recommendation, include this disclaimer - "This reference is being made by me in a personal capacity. It is not intended and should not be construed as a reference from East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust"

Any individual departments wishing to set up social media sites (Including closed Facebook groups) for their department and services **must seek permission** from the communications department before doing so.

### 5.2 Employees

All employees are expected to protect the Trust's reputation and that of their professions. Employees must behave online in a similar way to that which would be expected of them in any other situation at work. Personal Identifiable information may include (though not limited to) text, images, photos and videos.

Trust employees must not disclose any of the following via social media channels;

- Personal identifiable information of Trust patients and/or their relatives.
- Personal identifiable information of other Trust employees in relation to their employment, including judgements of their performance and character
- Statements that bring the Trust, its services, its staff or contractors into disrepute - this includes any statements, pictures or comments which could be construed or interpreted as abusive or derogatory

### 5.3 In addition:

- Individuals are ultimately responsible for their own online behaviour. Staff must take care to avoid online content or actions that are inaccurate, insulting, harassing, threatening or may otherwise be illegal
- When registering with a website from a Trust Device, employees must read the site's terms and conditions; NB, social media sites may not be accessible on a Trust device's due to security IT blocks.
- Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information would constitute misconduct /gross misconduct in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy
- Trust confidential or business information must not be loaded onto a personal social networking site
- Employees must examine carefully any email or message coming from social networking sites or contacts, as these may be unreliable, contain malicious codes, be spoofed to look authentic, or may be a phishing email
- Employees should not conduct themselves in ways that are detrimental to the employer (see section 4.2 for further clarify)
- Employees should take care not to allow their interaction on these websites to damage working relationships between members of staff and patients at our hospitals
- All employees who have their own personal social media account must be aware that personal views expressed may be jeopardising to Trust.
- For those employees with a professional registration must also consider their professional code of conduct whilst using social media
- Unless authorised otherwise, employees' use of social media websites **must** be limited to allocated break times only.
- Social media must never be used in a way that breaches any of ELHT's policies and procedures

## 6. Communicating with journalists

Any enquiries from journalists/media should be directed to the communications and engagement team for action. If you read something online that you feel is factually incorrect, inaccurate or otherwise needs an official response from the Trust, then you must refer the matter to the communications and engagement team in the first instance.

## 7. Blogs

Blogs or websites which do not identify the blogger as a NHS employee, do not discuss ELHT, and are purely about personal matters would normally fall outside this policy.

ELHT employees who have personal blogs or websites which indicate in any way that they work for ELHT should discuss any potential conflicts of interest or confidentiality issues with their line manager.

## 8. Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour on Social Media

- If a member of staff or contractor comes across information contained in Social Media sites that contravenes this policy, they should report the issue to a line manager or the Human Resources Department.
- Inappropriate use of Social Media will lead to appropriate action being taken in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.

## 9. Monitoring, Auditing and Reviewing

- The Trust understands that employees may wish to use their own devices, such as mobile phones, to access social media websites while they are at work. The use of personal devices **must** be limited to allocated break times only.
- The Trust reserves the right to use legitimate means to scan the web, including Social Media sites for content that it finds inappropriate.
- The Trust reserves the right to actively monitor the usage of Social Media sites during working hours.