

**McGaw Social Media Policy**

Effective 01/11/2019

Reaffirmed by GMEC 01/23/2023

McGaw trainees must demonstrate the highest standard of conduct, through sound judgment, personal perception, integrity, and accountability when using all forms of social media, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Reddit, blogging, etc. Posting items that represent unprofessional behavior, disparage colleagues, rotations or other members of the health care team, release patient health information, violate HIPAA standards or Northwestern University or base hospital policies on social networking sites is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Photography of patients and cadavers is never allowed.

McGaw trainees should always represent themselves professionally. Trainees are entrusted with a wealth of confidential patient information. Sharing patient information verbally or electronically is illegal and unethical. As a medical professional in training, it is your responsibility to uphold a professional, discreet demeanor in all your correspondences and posts. Photographs of patients are not to be posted at any time. Even posting de-identified information such as date of service and age along with a patient history may be a HIPAA violation.

**Protect your online profile and identity.** It is important to scrutinize all materials you post on personal pages. It is equally important to speak to family and friends and request that unprofessional materials are not posted and / or “tagged” to you. Be selective about who you accept as a friend on a social network.

**Assume that everything posted is permanent.** Even if you remove unprofessional or inappropriate materials from a site, or delete your account altogether, those materials will remain in cyberspace forever. Anyone on the internet can easily print photos or save text, images, and videos to a computer. Once material is posted, it is out of your control forever.

**Take the time to establish privacy settings on all social networking sites you use.** These settings will help to protect your identity and personal information. Even privately posted content could be shared, saved, or printed. Therefore, privacy settings do not obviate the need to comply with this policy.

**Search yourself.** On a regular basis, search yourself online to audit what is posted about you.

**If you are contacted on social media by a patient, you should not respond.** If that patient expresses any issues of concern regarding recent care that was provided by your team, you should inform your attending and your Program Director.