



INTERNATIONAL ORTHOPAEDIC DIVERSITY ALLIANCE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Dated Developed: 02.06.2021

Author/s: Dr Simon Fleming and Ms Talysa Trevallion

Approved by the Executive Committee: 12.06.2021

Review Date: Annually

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Social Media Policy is to describe how IODA will use their social media platforms and help protect members from legal issues arising from copyright infringement, defamation, patient confidentiality breaches and misleading advertising. This policy also sets out guidelines on how IODA should interact on social media.

POLICY

1. Defamation

Defamation is the publication of any false imputation concerning a person, or a member of the person's family – whether living or dead – which causes injury to a person's reputation, their profession or trade. Care should be taken to ensure that IODA does not post defamatory content. If a defamatory comment is made on one of IODA's social media channels, it is important that it is removed. This is in line with legislation that says that we would otherwise be liable if the defamed wanted to sue, as IODA would be considered the publisher.

2. Professionalism

When engaging through IODA's social media channels, communication should be respectful, courteous and professional. Grievances with work colleagues, patients or healthcare institutions are best resolved privately.

3. Copyright

Copyright is a type of intellectual property that gives a person the exclusive right to make copies of a creative work, for a fixed number of years. To avoid breaching copyright, it's always best to link to an organisation's news article/journal article/website etc, rather than copying and pasting the information.

4. Patient confidentiality

Patient confidentiality is of utmost importance to all health practitioners, and this is respected by IODA. When sharing to social media, it is important that patient information isn't inadvertently disclosed. Content developers are encouraged to check what is in the background of a photo or video before sharing it and to make sure that the information shared does not unintentionally disclose personal information. Although individual pieces of information may not breach confidentiality, multiple pieces of information published online could be enough to identify someone. Any potential confidentiality breaches should always be avoided.

5. Public health messages

Any health messages made through IODA should be consistent with international codes, standards and guidelines, and should not contradict or counter public health campaigns or messaging. This includes engaging with advice through post likes and or shares. Any health messages IODA shares should also be supported by scientific evidence.

6. Advertising

Practitioner testimonials and misleading claims about the effectiveness of a treatment must not be shared through IODA. Separately, paid social media advertorials are to be considered by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis, but cannot contradict this policy.

7. Criticisms

If someone criticises IODA on a social media platform, we should consider leaving their post on our channel. In this situation, we should then consider providing a reasoned, rational response. Organisations who remove comments from their platforms usually make the situation worse, as the complaint is not only exacerbated when it's brought to light further on other people's channels, but the organisation also loses control of the discussion.

8. Disclaimer

When it comes to social media, a disclaimer offers little legal protection. However, it does provide IODA the option to explain our policy to social media users. As such, IODA should have a disclaimer, wherever possible, advising that we will take down defamatory comments.

9. Executive roles

The IODA Executive Committee members should consider how they engage with social media in their professional and private life. While members may think they are engaging in social media in a personal capacity, it is relatively easy for others to associate Executive Committee members with IODA. For this reason, it is important that such members ensure that they do not reflect poorly on IODA. These members should ensure that they do not inadvertently communicate publicly, in a space they thought was private by ensuring that they understand the relevant security and privacy settings of the platforms they use.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Any queries regarding this Social Media Policy should be made to the IODA Social Media Committee Chair Simon Fleming via email to simonsfleming@doctors.org.uk