



## Guidance on Use of Social Networking by UMMS Learners July 2013

Recognizing that many of our students and house officers participate in on-line social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., we recommend the following professional guidelines for social network use at the University of Michigan Medical School (UMMS):

1. In compliance with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), posting of patient information of any kind (even de-identified) on social networking sites is strictly prohibited without the patient's expressed informed consent (signed informed consent document stating the patient's willingness to have their personal health information documented on the named social networking site). This includes patients of the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) as well as patients encountered in other settings including global health experiences. We expect the responsible use and self-policing of personal profiles on such sites. Students and house officers should have a working familiarity with the following documents:
  - a. UMHS Policy on Confidentiality of Patient Information  
<http://www.med.umich.edu/i/policies/umh/01-04-002.html>
  - b. UMHS Policy on Use of Social Media for Business Purposes  
<http://www.med.umich.edu/i/policies/umh/01-01-040.html>
  - c. UMHS Public Relations & Marketing Communications Social Media Policy & Toolkit  
<http://www.med.umich.edu/prmc/services/socialmedia/>
2. Students and house officers are reminded of their professional role and associated responsibilities as a UMMS student and/or UMHS employee when managing the content of their social networking profiles. In general, the publishing of any open content material that they would otherwise not feel comfortable sharing freely with coworkers, patients, superiors, and members of the media should not be included on social networking sites with public access.
3. We recommend that strict privacy settings be used to protect all personal information on social networking sites.
4. Students and house officers should refrain from the public posting of any references to, or pictures of, unprofessional behavior such as, but not limited to, being intoxicated, on social networking sites. In addition, we recommend that individuals do not participate in such unprofessional behavior while wearing clothing or gear that identifies them as UMMS students and/or UMHS employees.
5. Students and house officers should be aware of their potential liability both in terms of their future careers and professional standing within the Medical School and Health System as a result of the use of on-line photos and information that may be readily available to the public. Students and house officers should be aware that unprofessional behavior on-line can be treated with the same gravity and by the same processes in place for unprofessional behavior off-line.
6. This document on on-line professionalism is to be included for distribution in admissions and orientation materials for students and house officers. Breaches in professionalism in social media are to be adjudicated by UMMS academic committees.
7. As outlined in the UMHS Policy on Use of Social Media for Business Purposes (<http://www.med.umich.edu/i/policies/umh/01-01-040.html>), in the event that any student or house officer is contacted by someone from the media or press about posts made in online social media forums that relate to UMHS in any way, the faculty/staff/student must not respond, and instead, must immediately contact Public Relations & Marketing Communications (PRMC) (*by calling 734-764-2220 Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. or by paging the PR person on call from 5 – 11 p.m. on weekdays and from 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. on weekends*) and his/her manager/leadership.