

## **THE PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND (THE SOCIETY)**

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

#### **1. ABOUT THIS POLICY**

- 1.1 We encourage members to use social media to promote the Society. This policy is in place to minimise the risks to our organisation through use of social media.
- 1.2 This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs. It applies to use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect our organisation in any way.
- 1.3 We may amend this policy at any time.

#### **2. GUIDELINES ON USING SOCIAL MEDIA-**

##### **Speak knowledgeably**

- 2.1 Make sure that your online postings and communications reflect your level of expertise and that you limit your comments to your area of knowledge.
- 2.2 Before posting content, take the time to review the context and what others have said, to be sure you are contributing in an appropriate way. Consider linking to members' postings to build on and maximise our overall online presence.

##### **Be engaging and interactive**

- 2.3 Write in the first person and to the extent you feel comfortable in doing so, share information about yourself that others would find interesting in order to increase the appeal of your postings.
- 2.4 Where you are blogging about the Society, identify your connection with the Society. Try to stimulate interest in the work that you are doing and invite a dialogue so that you can learn from others doing similar or related things.

##### **Add value**

- 2.5 Consider the value of your contribution before you post. If what you are posting helps others in the online community to solve a problem, including your peers or other members you are adding value. Equally, if your contribution enhances the sense of community surrounding the society, or improves the image of the Society, or services, it is adding value.

##### **Respond to your mistakes quickly**

- 2.6 If you post something in error, act quickly to correct it. Your credibility is judged by your accuracy and your willingness to recognise and fix your mistakes. If you modify an earlier post in a blog, be upfront about doing so.

### **Don't be argumentative**

- 2.7 Engaging in arguments and inflammatory debates can tarnish your credibility and reputation and by association that of the Society. If you choose to disagree with fellow bloggers, do so respectfully and objectively. Be respectful to all others in the online community.

### **Be respectful**

- 2.8 Never post anything that might be offensive to others, such as sexual comments or racial slurs. Remember that talk of religion, culture or politics can also easily offend others.

### **Protect our members and organisations**

- 2.9 Do not cite or refer to other members or organisations we work with, identify them by name or reveal any confidential information related to them without getting their explicit (written) permission in advance. Also, do not discuss or conduct business with a member or organisation in an online forum.

### **Do not comment on our business performance or plans**

- 2.10 Disclosing or commenting on the Society's confidential business information is absolutely prohibited, whether in relation to sales, customer lists, financials, business or marketing plans, performance or prospects. Do not comment in any way on rumours about these. If asked directly, simply say "no comment".

### **Respect and comply with the terms of the sites you visit**

- 2.11 Review the terms of use of all social media sites you visit and ensure your use complies with them. Pay particular attention to terms relating to:
- 2.11.1 Prohibitions or restrictions on the use of the site, such as those relating to advertising, marketing and promotions or other commercial purposes; for example, Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (its terms of use) prohibits businesses from administering promotions through Facebook without Facebook's prior written consent.
  - 2.11.2 Ownership of intellectual property used on the site, or information collected or generated through use of it (for example, any of the company's copyright material and trade marks that might be posted on the site, or client information that the company collects through the site).
  - 2.11.3 Requirements for licences allowing the site owner and other third parties to use the company's trade marks or other intellectual property.
  - 2.11.4 Rights and responsibilities of the site owner and users relating to privacy.

## **3. PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

- 3.1 Our Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.
- 3.2 Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks lies with the General Secretary who

will review this policy annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

- 3.3 Members are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Administrator\*. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Administrator\*.

#### **4. COMPLIANCE WITH RELATED POLICIES AND AGREEMENTS**

- 4.1 If your post would contravene any of the Society's policies in another forum, it will also do so in an online forum. Do not disclose confidential or proprietary Society information, harass or discriminate against fellow other members, trustees or employees of the Society, defame or disparage the Society, trustees, or fellow employees, or contravene any other Society policy by your blogging.
- 4.2 Do not use social media in a false or misleading way, for example, by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by creating an artificial "buzz" around our work.

#### **5. PROHIBITED USE**

- 5.1 You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage our business interests or reputation, even indirectly.
- 5.2 You must not use social media to defame or disparage us, our staff or any third party; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.
- 5.3 You must not express opinions on our behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so by us.
- 5.4 You must not post comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as our performance, or do anything to jeopardise our confidential information and intellectual property. You must not include our logos or other trademarks in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media.
- 5.5 Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Administrator\*.
- 5.6 If you are contacted for comments about the Society for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, direct the enquiry to the Administrator\* and do not respond without written approval.

#### **6. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 6.1 You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal e-mail address.
- 6.2 If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent our views (unless you are authorised to speak on our behalf). You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present.

- 6.3 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with the Administrator\*.
- 6.4 If you see social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on us, you should contact the Administrator\*.

## **7. MONITORING**

- 7.1 We reserve the right to monitor and review, without further notice, member activities including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems.

## **8. RECRUITMENT**

- 8.1 We may use internet searches to perform due diligence on candidates in the course of application for membership. Where we do this, we will act in accordance with our legal obligations.

## **9. BREACH OF THIS POLICY**

- 9.1 Members who breach any of the above policies will be reported to the Committee who will consider the breach and take action accordingly. Such action may include exercising their power to expel members where appropriate.
- 9.2 You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in appropriate action by the Committee.

\*The Administrator will report any questions/queries/issues to the General Secretary.

**October 2019**