



Redmoor  
Health



# Primary Care Social Media Toolkit





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Health

# Social Media Toolkit For GP Practices



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## Redmoor Health

### Digital Engagement Toolkit



#### Background

This toolkit explains what social media is, sets out the context and background to its use for GP practices and provides helpful advice and guidance for its future development.

Social media is an online channel that allows people to communicate with each other. There are hundreds of sites and they will all allow two way discussions to take place between people or organisations.

This toolkit is designed to empower practice teams to use social media safely and effectively. Using social media is not a replacement for the work you are doing but instead recognises that for many people the ability to interact with their GP surgery online is their first choice.

This toolkit will help practices adopt a simple approach to using social media that will help you integrate its use into your normal day today business. The practices that are using social media most effectively will have at least two members of staff whose role is to keep an eye on the page and submit posts. They will generally access their sites at the start and end of the week for up to 30 minutes.

As a result of using social media there are now exciting developments such as closed PPG Facebook groups, closed weight management groups and diabetes groups. These allow patients who are all experiencing similar conditions to interact with each other in a safe environment.

## Context of Social Media for practice staff

*i* 01

Figures show there is widespread use of social media and a great deal of conversations taking place on these channels will be health related. This presents a risk to those organisations who resist using social media as there is a potentially damaging narrative out there that they will be oblivious to.

In addition, many patients will 'check in' using Facebook when they are waiting for their appointment. This can create a presence for your practice on Facebook as a 'place'. People can review your practice and make comments via this 'place' profile. The risk for practices who choose not to manage this is that they have little influence over what is being said on this page. By creating an official page which they can manage, they will relegate these community created profiles down the pecking order.

By using this toolkit practice teams can begin to operate within the modern mobile 24/7 world safely and securely.



Where these barriers have been overcome, engagement can be extremely effective.

Patients can have the ability to communicate with their practice via Facebook, YouTube and Twitter and in some cases are able to be part of private Facebook patient groups. This not only gives them access to better information but can also encourage them to look after themselves better and reduce demand on their GPs.

Many CCGs recognise the importance of engaging with patients using the latest technology and media channels which is why it has been supporting practices to develop their online offer to patients.

**NHS Employers' guidance on using social media for staff encourages staff to use social media strategically as part of their role. It supports this with three key points:**

*i* 01



**1**

Social media offers great opportunities for organisations and individuals to listen and have conversations with the people they wish to influence or communicate with.

**2**

The next generation of NHS staff will never have known a world without the internet or mobile phones. How the NHS embraces their use of social media for the benefits of staff and patients will be crucial in creating a sustainable NHS.

**3**

We trust our staff with patients' lives, so why don't we trust them with social media

# 10 simple tips to improve your engagement through **Facebook**



## **Facebook is a truly incredible phenomenon.**

.....

It has more than 1 billion users worldwide. It has launched products and created trends. It is also an incredible tool for engaging with people on health issues – but it requires planning.

## **Put simply, it requires much more than setting up a page.**

.....

As with any other form of marketing or engagement it requires a strategy otherwise you will not achieve your goals. Don't make the mistake of thinking you will get your share of those billion Facebook users if you haven't thought it through.

**To help, we have put together some simple advice to help you get the most from Facebook:**

1

## Know your goals

Don't make the mistake of creating a Facebook page just because everyone else is. Make sure you have clear goals at the start and stick to them. Depending on what you are trying to achieve, your goals may differ. Are you trying to engage directly with patients about practice issues or do you simply want to send out useful health information? Are you trying to direct people towards a website? Whichever it is, you need to outline this before you create your page.



3

## Know your audience

There is a common misconception that Facebook has a predominantly young audience. This isn't the case. On most GP Facebook sites the more engaged audiences are in the 25-64 year age range. Facebook's fastest growing demographic is women over 55.

Use the Facebook insights tool to find out when your patients are accessing Facebook and then schedule your posts using the clock symbol in the bottom corner so that they appear in the evening when patients are online rather than during the day.

2

## Do some research

Have a look at really engaging Facebook pages from practices such as Goldenhill Medical Centre, Haymarket Health Centre, Belgrave Practice and Furlong Medical Centre. Look what works well. How often do they respond? How do they respond? This will help you picture in your mind what you want from your site.

4

### Sort your admins

.....

You will not be able to create your Facebook presence as a person but instead a page contained within an existing Facebook account. You can use Facebook as your page no problem but you will need to log in first to an account. You can create a new account with a name such as 'staff furlong' and then produce a page off this account. This prevents the need for you to login to your personal Facebook account to access the page. You should have at least two people managing your account and they should be trained.

5

### Bag your URL

.....

There is nothing worse than to create a name for your practice only to find all the social media URLs have been taken. Before you launch your social media presence on Facebook, you need to make sure that your URL is available — and that it's simple and easy to remember. When you set up your page you will be given the option to change the name from the generic one you would have been given. You should do this but you are limited on how many times you can change the name so make sure it is correct. This will then allow you to use a Facebook URL that best fits your practice eg [www.facebook.com/furlongmedicalcentre](http://www.facebook.com/furlongmedicalcentre)

6

### Encourage people to share

.....

The real power of Facebook is its ability to share information so effectively that one post can reach out to several thousand people. There's a Facebook phenomenon called the "power of 130." The average Facebook member has 130 friends and the fastest way to spread a message is through social sharing. Facebook automatically offers members the opportunity to share a Like, but the real creativity comes when you can convince people to share some kind of unique content.

This could simply be a great photograph that people will want to share; a topical question to spark a debate or some helpful information.





**7**

### Keep it simple

Put yourself into the mind of one of your patients. What would they most likely want to share with their friends? Photos and links to useful video clips from the NHS Choices website are always good. Steer away from posting lots of text as people will not want to share that. If the majority of your likes are mums under 35 then perhaps child health related posts might get shared a lot. Keep it simple.

**8**

### Invest in your appearance

As with any branding your page needs attention. Anyone who lands onto your page will get their first impression of you straight away. Make sure you explain clearly who you are and why you are using Facebook. Use a nice photo as your cover.

**9**

### Promote everywhere

Now that you have set up your page don't ruin that work by sitting waiting for people to arrive. Share it across all your social networks and e- mails. Use every channel you have.

**10**

### Evaluate your site

Facebook insights will give you a pretty good idea of what's sparking conversations on your page. Take the 10-minute tour and learn what they mean. You will need to have achieved over 30 'likes' before you can actually use the insights tool but once you are there make sure you regularly look at it. This valuable resource tells you how engaging your page is.

### And finally.....

If people visit the page but don't comment, it isn't compelling enough. A great campaign gets people to connect, comment and share it with their friends. Getting people to Like you is just the beginning. A really effective Facebook presence is an ongoing conversation with lots of questions.



03

## Step by step guide to using **Twitter** for Health

Twitter is a great site for learning and sharing information. It is also ideal for talking directly with residents and other health professionals. It is a micro-blogging site which limits your posts to 140 characters.

This allows people to share a lot of information in a short space of time. This can be in the form of comments on issues or sharing of links to news stories, and blogs etc.



Image credit: AHMAD FAIZAL YAHYA / Shutterstock.com

Twitter is very popular socially with people in their late teens/early 20s. It is not as popular as Facebook and takes more time and effort to develop but such is the rapid change in online behaviour it is a channel that you should be aware of. To make things a little easier, you can always link the account to your Facebook page so it posts automatically to both.

1

## Setting up your account

Go to Twitter to get started. Enter your name, email, and a password. Click [Sign up](#).

You will now be taken to a second screen where you can select a username. This is the name by which you will be known on Twitter.

We advise to use a name which can help people find you. The more obscure the name the more difficult it will be for someone to find your account. Remember to click the authorization link that you would have been sent to the email address you provided.

Now click on the Create my account button. That's all there is to it. Twitter will suggest people for you to follow but you should do your own searches. When you find someone you would like to follow see who they are following and follow them – it makes the job of finding people easier!



03



2

## Building up your profile

You will need to add an image (max 700k) to help people identify you and then complete the other bits of information such as the area you are based.

You will also need to complete a short bio – this is what people will read to decide whether to follow you so try and keep it short and snappy (no more than 160 characters). You can also include a url to your employer's website or a blog if you have one.

## Twitter explained

There are some basic commands associated with Twitter which don't take long to learn. These are as follows:



### Tweets

These are the messages you post. They are limited to 140 characters and might be something original or someone else's tweet that you have chosen to repost [retweet]

### Retweets

When you retweet someone else's message the letters RT appear before the message with the id of the person who posted the original tweet.

### Replies

These are other people's tweets that have mentioned you. They tell you that a person has either replied to something you have tweeted or retweeted something you have posted.

### Direct messages

These are private messages you have with another person. They are not public but you need to exercise caution on what you post. Do not include anything you would be unhappy being made public as the message could easily be copied through the print screen option on your keyboard. We tend to use these for conversations we might be having with someone that we think our followers would not be interested in.

### Hashtags

These are the # symbol attached to a phrase or letters etc. The hashtag is simply a book mark which allows people interested in the hashtag term to access tweets from likeminded people who they might not be following. For example if you save the term #nhssm you will be able to keep abreast of useful discussions people are having about digital innovation in health. You could also follow #telehealth which is a hashtag where people discuss and share links about topical telehealth issues.

Hashtags offer an interesting way of watching live commentary for programmes such as #panorama. If enough people use the same hashtag it will begin to trend and Twitter will show you which hashtags are trending worldwide, in the UK or by city. If there is a disaster somewhere you will see it on Twitter first because it will trend very quickly.





4

## Mobile devices and third party applications

If you have a smart phone or tablet then Twitter comes into its own as you are not tied to a laptop and can dip into it at your own leisure.

If you wish to use a mobile version of Twitter for your phone or tablet then we advise you download the Echofon app or Hootsuite app but this is a personal decision and you may find one of the many alternatives more suitable.

If you are using a laptop then we advise that you download Tweetdeck [www.tweetdeck.com](http://www.tweetdeck.com) or [www.hootsuite.com](http://www.hootsuite.com) as this sorts your twitter into visually friendly columns making it easier to monitor your twitter feeds as well as searching. 'If you want to gather multiple Twitter feeds then try [www.twitterfall.com](http://www.twitterfall.com).

03



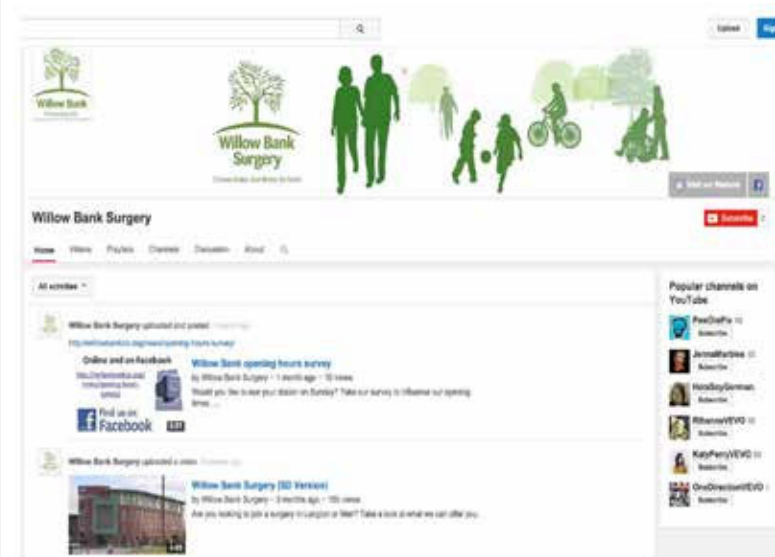
## 5 Simple tips to improve your engagement through YouTube

Whilst many people see YouTube as a fun site where you can see videos of dancing dogs and singing babies, there is a seriously useful side to it.

Facebook bridges both literacy and language barriers and for many people is the 'go to' channel for any information they need. People will use YouTube to search for health information so having it readily available on a site that they can trust is a real asset.

When you view YouTube in this context you can see the potential YouTube has for promoting important health messages.

Willow Bank Surgery (pictured opposite) is using YouTube to show videos on important health messages such as the correct use of asthma inhalers or to promote their practice.



**To help you with this we've put together 5 simple tips for improving your engagement 04 by using YouTube**

**1**

**Get your branding right**

You need to ensure that your YouTube page is branded according to your practice. It is very easy to set up a YouTube account – just create a goooglemail email address and away you go. You need to link your YouTube account with other social media accounts you have such as Facebook and Twitter as well as your website. Your brand will show viewers that the page is genuine.



**2**

**Give viewers something they want**

Don't make the mistake of thinking YouTube is about you recording yourself speaking to camera like a news reader or even worse recording a meeting. You need to capture your audience's attention. For example, you might wish to demonstrate the amount of sugar or salt in certain food products. Make it stick in their minds by introducing some 'killer' facts.

3

### Pay attention to detail

You don't need to spend your budget on some slick company to come and create your videos for you. A simple Flip camera, microphone and tripod is all you need. Even simpler just use a smartphone or tablet (see asthma video below). Better still, see if your local college can offer your project as part of one of their courses. Perhaps the local job centre has some unemployed digitally skilled people on their work experience programmes waiting for someone to give them a project to add to their CV. You won't know if you don't ask.

If you do it yourself make sure someone else is working the equipment so you don't disappear from camera to turn it off!



4

### Maximise your SEO

When you have uploaded your video to YouTube make sure you use keywords in your title and tags. For example, if your video is showing how much salt there is in common household foods use the tags 'salt in food' 'salty food' 'health' 'food' 'unhealthy food' 'health' 'healthy tips'. The best way to achieve this is to put yourself in the mindset of your target audience – what words would they use to search?

5

### Keep an eye on your site

To maximize the potential of YouTube you need to allow comments on your video. You will need to keep an eye on these though as part of your moderation process. If you take your eye off the ball all that hard work could be undone by some offensive or embarrassing comments on your page..





05

## The five W's of using Social Media

### Why...

are you using social media? Are you clear on what outcomes you want to achieve?

### What...

evaluation measures do you have in place to measure your return on investment?  
Social media may be free to set up but it can take up a lot of staff time to manage, moderate and measure.

You need to have in place some clear measures to make sure it is time well spent. It will also help you keep on track to achieve your objectives.

### Which...

groups are you targeting?

### Where...

will you find them?

It is no point creating a platform where most of its audience is 25+ if you are looking to engage with 16-24 year olds. Do your research.

### Who...

is going to set up and manage these channels?  
Who will moderate them if necessary? Are you doing this in house or commissioning it externally?

Alternatively are you going to devolve management of the sites to designated staff like  
<http://www.facebook.com/belgravemedicalcentre>  
There are lots of examples of dormant social media sites, don't add yours to the list.

# Social Media Etiquette

## for Practice Staff



06

DO



Always consider your practice's reputation in anything you say online



Make sure you schedule your posts for times when your patients are most likely going to see them. Otherwise your hard work is wasted.



Explore different ways of using sites such as Facebook. This might be pages, closed groups etc



Feel comfortable in using social media to find out answers to problems and challenges but beware of how much information you reveal – use generic circumstances.



Ensure you build your social media use into your day to day practice business. Don't look at it in isolation but as part of your customer service.



Adapt the tone you use to the social media channel you are using.



Ensure you are fully aware of information governance restrictions and advice in this area. Don't ever publish confidential material on social media channels.



Do ensure you have thought about the objectives you want to achieve before deciding the channels to use.



Market the fact you are there. People rarely stumble upon Facebook or Twitter feeds – tell your patients you are using them.



Know when to get involved and when to back away. Some people simply cannot be reasoned with. Take the discussion offline.

**Practice Staff** use  
of social media some do's  
and don'ts

# Social Media Etiquette

## for Practice Staff



06

**DO NOT**



Upload confidential information of any kind to any social network. Even if it's private.



Get into public arguments or political discussions.



Make any claims about things unless you are sure they are true. Libel laws apply on social media as any other channel so be careful about what you say.



Take things personally.



Call into question the validity or experience of other people either in public or in private.



Think that deleting something makes it go away. Google 'remembers' old content for a period of time.



Set up a social media presence without giving evaluation, safety, safe guarding or practice reputation good consideration.



Bury your head in the sand if you're struggling to keep up. Ask for help.



Allow your comments to be taken out of context.



Give an official opinion on behalf of your practice unless you have been authorised to do so.



Mix your personal social media accounts with practice ones. Keep them entirely separate.



Post health information from dubious websites. Stick to using NHS sites.

**Practice Staff** use  
of social media some do's  
and don'ts

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