Electric Communications and Social Media Policy

PURPOSE

This policy aims to ensure that All About Care Australia (AACA)'s engagement in all forms of electronic communication is of a high standard that serves the interests and reputation of AACA and our participants, families, staff and volunteers.

AACA seeks to encourage information sharing amongst its membership, staff and volunteers and seeks to utilise the expertise of its employees and volunteers in generating appropriate social media content whilst complying with the highest standards of professional online conduct.

At the same time, social media posts should be in keeping with the image that AACA wishes to represent to the public, and posts made through its social media channels should not damage the organisation's reputation in any way. They must align with online protocols, such as consent for using images or other material.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all AACA staff and volunteers, including contractors and other interested parties.

DEFINITIONS:

Electronic communications

Electronic Communications, for the purpose of this policy, refers to the written word or images sent via internet-based tools such as email or any other electronic means, e.g. Microsoft.   This includes communications both internal and external to AACA.

Social media

Social media is the term used for internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among people. It refers to user-generated information, opinion and other content shared over digital networks.

Social media may include (although is not limited to):
- social networking sites (for example Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn)
- video and photo sharing websites (for example Instagram, Tik Tok, Flickr, YouTube)
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- blogs hosted by media outlets (for example 'comments' or 'your say' feature on theage.com.au)
- micro-blogging (for example Twitter)
- wikis and online collaborations (for example Wikipedia)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (for example Google groups, webinars, Zoom)
- vod and podcasting
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (for example World of Warcraft, Second Life)
- instant messaging (including SMS, Snapchat)
- geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare)
- any social media also includes all other emerging electronic/digital communication applications

| AACA-PP009
| All About Care Australia
| June 2023

AACA

All About Care Australia
www.AllAboutCareAustralia.com.au

P a g e | **1**

Electric Communications and Social Media Policy

POLICY

AACA's use of social media shall be consistent with the following core values:

- **Integrity**: AACA is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and to protecting the organisation's reputation and will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about its own work, the work of other organisations, or individuals.
- **Professionalism**: AACA's electronic communication and social media reflect the organisation, and AACA seeks to maintain a professional and consistent tone. Staff and volunteers may, from time to time and as appropriate, post on behalf of AACA using its online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organisation rather than a group of individuals.
- **Information Sharing**: AACA is committed to the sharing of online information that is relevant, appropriate to its aims, and of interest to its members.

In accordance with AACA's Code of Conduct, Privacy Policy and Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination Policy and Procedure, the following restrictions apply to electronic communications and social media-

1. Consent to use must be obtained in 'all instances where photographs, film footage, audio material, electronic images, correspondence and/or quotations are used in the material using AACA's name and/or logo' (Participant Authorisation Form and Staff Authorisation Form).

2. Use of electronic communications
Staff and volunteers should not communicate electronically directly to participants unless directed to do so on the Participant's Support Plan.

Where a carer/parent is not included in the communication, staff should:
- Ensure such communication ONLY promotes authorised 'social' activity and participant contact
- Not request a participant keeps a communication a secret from their parents/carer or guardian
- Not communicate with participants using unauthorised Internet forums such as chat rooms, dating or gambling sites

3. Monitoring of electronic communication
All staff and volunteers are required to ensure the appropriate use of the internet when browsing websites at work, using AACA devices (laptops, computers, mobile phones, tablets) confining activities to work-related searches and that usage is in line with acceptable professional standards of behaviour.

When using their own electronic devices during work time staff or volunteers are required to comply with acceptable professional standards of behaviour.

In accordance with the normal principles of duty of care, staff are required to respond to situations where they observe that a participant's use of an electronic device places them or others at risk of harm, such as exposure to:
- explicit sexual or violent material
- abuse or exploitation via social networking
- exploitation/risk via gambling sites
- the taking or exchanging of non-consensual photos
- risk of exchanging explicit or damaging material
- Apparent attempts from an external party that would constitute grooming for illegal or illicit purposes.

| AACA-PP009
| All About Care Australia
| June 2023

AACA

All About Care Australia
www.AllAboutCareAustralia.com.au

P a g e | **2**

However, the primary responsibility for developing rules around using personal electronic devices lies with the parent/guardian of the AACA participant. AACA supports the right of staff to refrain from participation or involvement in preferred electronic activities requested by participants or their families on ethical or cultural grounds or if the expectation is that staff will participate in an external electronic platform that places unrealistic and unacceptable demands on a staff member or volunteer (time allocation and right to privacy).

4. Maintain and respect confidentiality

As an AACA staff member or volunteer, you are responsible for protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and families with whom you work. You should not discuss confidential information relating to the participants, families or other staff members, with the exception of seeking professional advice from AACA management. Nor should you engage in discussions of a private nature in front of participants, volunteers, staff, other parents or members of the general public. A breach of participant confidentiality may be considered serious misconduct.

Privacy breaches can occur in the home, workplace or community. Staff and volunteers must be vigilant in ensuring that sensitive information gained whilst employed by AACA and at the cessation of their employment remains private and confidential across time and situations.

PROCEDURE

1. Approved Participation on authorised email and social media accounts

Before representing AACA on any electronic or social media, the staff member must be authorised to do so.

All authorised social media accounts, user names, passwords, connections, and posts made on behalf of AACA belong to the organisation.

Staff are not to disclose the Username and/or Password without authorisation.

2. On-line responsibilities and behaviour

When participating in electronic communication and social media staff and or volunteers must:

- Act for the sole purpose of benefitting AACA
- Disclose their role with AACA
- Comply with AACA's Code of Conduct and all other organisational policies
- Not make disparaging or negative comments about AACA, the management, staff or volunteers, participants and families, funding bodies, or sponsors
- Adhere to professional conduct and boundaries as outlined in the Code of Conduct and AACA's Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination Policy and Procedure
- Not post material that threatens; is obscene; sexually explicit; sexually harassing; defamatory; harassing; discriminatory; or hateful to another person or entity
- Not make posts that could be deemed to be illegal

AACA-PP009
All About Care Australia
June 2023

AACA

All About Care Australia
www.AllAboutCareAustralia.com.au

Page | 3

    •   Not make posts or statements which are misleading or deceptive
    •   Not store or upload photos of AACA participants on personal devices or social networking sites

3. Confidential information

Authorised AACA Users must:

    •   Ensure they are not the first to make any announcements on behalf of AACA unless they are specifically authorised to do so
    •   Not comment on topics that are not within their area of responsibility
    •   Ensure that any posts are in accordance with the AACA position on a particular issue
    •   Abide by AACA's Privacy Policy and keep confidential information confidential

The director is the only authorised person to respond to media or reputational challenges about AACA or its activities. Enquiries responding to a critical incident that is receiving media attention will be directed to a single source of authorised communication on the AACA website, with updates regularly provided. Staff must comply with directing all enquiries to this source.

4. Intellectual property

Staff using authorised accounts must ensure they do not breach any laws by using:

    •   AACAs names, logos and trademarks or other such intellectual property without permission
    •   Materials that are subject to Copyright and passing them off as their own original work

5. Notice of surveillance

All staff and volunteers will be subject to surveillance in the knowledge that:

    •   Internet communications are not private and AACA may monitor internet usage and browsing history.
    •   Participation in social networking sites may be monitored, even if the networking group is closed to general access.

6. Breach of procedure

Failure to comply with this Policy/Procedure may result in disciplinary action or, if the breach is deemed serious enough, dismissal may occur, or if deemed to be unlawful, the incident will be reported to the Police.

7. Breaches of procedure that may lead to disciplinary action and/or dismissal

1. Use of social media sites during working hours- staff may not access their personal social media accounts during working hours unless they are using personal devices and it is during their break.
2. Sending material or making any post that is deemed to be illegal
3. Disclosure of AACA's confidential information
4. Making postings that amount to sexual harassment, bullying or racial vilification
5. Posting obscene, vulgar or pornographic content

AACA-PP009
All About Care Australia
June 2023

AACA

All About Care Australia
www.AllAboutCareAustralia.com.au

P a g e | 4

6. Posting information that may cause damage to AACA or any of its associates including staff, volunteers and participants

7. Posting material that breaches the staff member's obligations of good faith to AACA, our participants, volunteers, sponsors and supporters

8. Friending participants and their families without disclosure of a professional conflict of interest

AACA-PP009
All About Care Australia
June 2023

AACA

All About Care Australia
www.AllAboutCareAustralia.com.au

Page | 5

References /Related Documents

- AACA Code of Conduct
- Privacy Policy
- Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination Policy and Procedure
- Participant Authorisation Form
- Staff Authorisation Form

AACA-PP009
All About Care Australia
June 2023

AACA

All About Care Australia
www.AllAboutCareAustralia.com.au

Page | 6