

## Social Media Policy – Society for Clinical Trials

The Society for Clinical Trials (SCT) is committed to leveraging social media to provide the public, as well as its members, with opportunities for dissemination of information regarding clinical trials and research, as well as trustworthy sites for interactive discussions of all aspects of clinical trials and research.

### Definition of Social Media

The term “social media” encompasses a wide variety of online resources for sharing content among users. It is defined to include video and picture-sharing sites, forums, blogs and discussion groups on various social networking sites and social media platforms on which SCT has a presence. These currently include Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

### Basis of Social Media Policy

SCT supports use of social media to achieve the following goals:

- To reach a larger audience by disseminating news alerts and scholarly information in a rapid and effective manner.
- To boost the image of SCT as a trusted resource on issues pertaining to clinical trials and research.
- To promote understanding of clinical trials and research to the public.
- To encourage discussion among clinical researchers.
- To foster collegiality and camaraderie within the profession.

Although the use of social media offers significant benefits, it also raises a number of concerns. Thus, the following policies shall govern participation in SCT social media:

- **Treat all online communication as public.** With paywalls and privacy settings, it is easy to believe that the information one posts will only be viewed by intended recipients. That, however, is not always the case. Inasmuch as one of the main tenets of social media is sharing, friends and followers may share posts and information at will. Moreover, even websites with the best privacy restrictions can be subjected to hackers and unintentional sharing with advertisers or other third parties. It is important to treat all social media as if it is a public communication.
- **Respect intellectual property rights at all times.** Social media is a place for sharing, but intellectual property rights, including copyright and trademark, still apply. Among other things, scholarly material must be appropriately referenced when used. Users of SCT social media may not post or distribute files, articles or other information subject to trademark, copyright, or other proprietary rights, except with the express consent of the owner of the rights. For example, one should not copy the text of a newspaper story and post it on a social media site, even if the individual doing the posting is the subject of or otherwise featured in the copied work. The best approach is to share a link to the material, rather than copying it.
- **Remember that members retain their identity as professionals on Social Media.** A member retains his or her identity as a medical professional regardless of the social media site to which he or she elects to post information. Thus, anything posted, including articles shared online, products liked or followed on a social media site, or answers to simple questions, can be perceived as medical advice or an endorsement. When sharing online, it is important to provide

context about what is posted and why. This is also true when reposting or retweeting something that someone else has shared.

- **Follow the rules.** Most social media sites have their own rules, which are often referred to as “Terms and Conditions” or “Community Guidelines.” It is important to be familiar with and follow those rules. What is allowed on one social media site may not be permitted on another, even if the sites are similar. Users should familiarize themselves with any social media policies adopted by their associations and institutions, with which they are required to comply.
- **Do not exceed authority.** Except as expressly granted authority on some other basis, no user of SCT social media has authority to speak on behalf of SCT or to make any statement that implies, directly or indirectly, that the user’s opinions are those of SCT. In addition, any and all actual, potential or apparent conflicts of interest should be disclosed as they arise.
- **Be transparent.** Anonymous postings are neither necessary for purposes of SCT social media nor consistent with the professional level of dialogue expected. Therefore, members and other users should include their names with any and all posts and should not falsely portray themselves as anyone else.
- **Exercise common sense.** All users should exercise both common sense and courtesy in the messages they transmit on SCT social media and may not use SCT social media to transmit defamatory, obscene, and otherwise offensive communications, including, without limitation, any discriminatory statements regarding gender, race, religion, nationality, or sexual orientation. SCT social media is not to be used for posting commercial messages advertising or selling goods or services, or for any illegal purpose.
- **Recognize that deleting a post from social media does not necessarily erase it, even if it is no longer visible on the screen.** This is especially true as many people use third-party applications or view social media on mobile devices that may only capture a site at one point in time. Users should assume that everything posted exists in perpetuity. That said, if one accidentally posts something, the post should be taken down and, if appropriate, the mistake should be acknowledged.
- **Be aware of how a post may be used in the future.** What you communicate may need to be preserved and provided by EAI in litigation or investigations.

**SCT officers, spokespersons and committee members, please remember:**

- **You represent SCT – even on your own time.** You are personally responsible for what you communicate in social media venues. Be conscious of your association with the Society, and your audience in private social networks. People who read your posts could interpret you to be writing on behalf of SCT, even if that is not what you intended. Your posts may be accessed and read by colleagues, competitors and regulators, whether that was your intention or not.
- **Remember your responsibility to SCT.** Do not talk about or disclose confidential or proprietary information, including business results, plans, etc. in a social media context – or any other public

forum. Don't communicate in a way that might be misunderstood or misconstrued in a way that could damage SCT's goodwill or business reputation, even indirectly.

The views expressed on social media are those of the individual users. They do not and should not be construed as representing the views of SCT. SCT makes no warranty, guarantee, or representation as to the accuracy or sufficiency of the information posted on SCT social media, whether posted by SCT or any third party, and SCT assumes no responsibility or liability regarding the use or misuse of such information for any purpose. SCT disclaims any responsibility to maintain copies of any information posted on SCT social media or to assure that such information is deleted. Unless specifically stated otherwise, SCT does not endorse, approve, recommend, or certify any information, product, process, service or organization presented or mentioned on SCT social media, and information from SCT social media should not be referenced in any way to imply such approval or endorsement.