

Royal College of Nursing: Social media community guidelines

These guidelines cover RCN social media accounts run by members and/or staff

1. What are RCN social media accounts?

A list of RCN social media accounts is available on [the RCN website](#).

RCN social media accounts are defined as ‘a social media account displaying the RCN logo which is aimed at RCN members by entity or sub-entity, and has at least one member of RCN staff with administration access’.

2. What is the purpose of RCN social media accounts?

RCN social media accounts (Facebook pages, closed Facebook groups, Instagram, LinkedIn, X and YouTube) are spaces for professional discussions relevant to your field of practice and/or area of RCN interest (for example students; branches; or reps).

3. How should members use RCN social media accounts?

Please engage with RCN social media accounts in a professional manner at all times, following the [RCN Respect Charter](#).

RCN members are encouraged to engage in RCN social media accounts to share your professional opinions on matters of nursing interest. While you may not agree with the opinions of other members or wider public on social media, we ask that you treat everyone with respect. There is a zero-tolerance policy in place, which means any comments or DMs which we deem to fall into one of the following categories will be hidden or deleted from our page and the user will be banned from viewing the social media profile the comment/DM was posted to.

Categories:

- Death threat
- Risk of harm to a member of the public
- Risk of harm to a member of RCN staff
- Grooming
- Threatening sexual or physical abuse
- Hate speech

Those who use social media in a way that is not in line with the NMC code of conduct and can be identified as an RCN member are at risk of being reported to the NMC. You can read the NMC’s guidance [on their website](#).

Please do not post spam and off-topic content including persistent negative and/or abusive posts to others.

Remember, anything you post can be seen and shared by others. Do not post, like or share anything that may be considered inappropriate or offensive. Do not post comments that share personal information about others or that could bring you, your patients, profession or employer into disrepute.

Not all RCN social media accounts are moderated directly by RCN staff, and so the accuracy of each post or tweet shared by accounts cannot be guaranteed by the RCN. We advise members to treat all posts with caution and use evidence to underpin your practice.

Please do not use RCN social media accounts to post job vacancies, sell products or promote non-RCN paid events.

Please do not post messages that are deceptive or misleading. Do not post messages that are in violation of any intellectual property rights, including copyright or in violation of any law or regulation.

4. Community guidelines for RCN WhatsApp groups

RCN WhatsApp groups are intended as a convenient way to organise and react quickly and efficiently and for members and staff to communicate easily with each other regarding specific RCN matters in their local area or specialism.

Groups are set up in a spirit of informal communication amongst people sharing the same interest. To ensure its smooth running please note the following rules:

1. Please keep the conversation relevant to the purpose of the group.
2. Please always comply with GDPR. Confidential or sensitive information about the RCN or individuals should not be shared. Do not share identifiable patient information under any circumstance.
3. Any opinions expressed are the opinions of individual members. Group administrators are not responsible for any comments posted by individual members of the group.
4. It is not necessary to respond to every post unless it is requested. Always consider other users and members when posting content, and always post with efficiency in mind.
5. If your message is not relevant to the majority of group members, please message the person directly rather than the entire group if you have consent to do so.
6. The group abides by the [RCN Respect Charter](#). Inappropriate posts include using inappropriate language, insulting messages and voicing grievances will be dealt with the [Member Resolution Policy](#) or the [RCN Complaints Guidance](#).
7. If there is a breach of any of the community guidelines, the group administrator reserves the right to remove those involved from the group and delete any inappropriate messages.
8. Group administrators will not be contactable outside of 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.
9. RCN WhatsApp groups are not designed to deal with workplace or membership queries. Please contact [RCN Direct](#).
10. If you are no longer an RCN member, it is your responsibility to remove yourself from this WhatsApp group.
11. Respect everyone's privacy and safeguard your own.
12. You are free to leave the group at any time. This will not affect other communications you receive from the RCN.
13. By participating in this WhatsApp Group, you agree to adhere to these group rules.

Further information

If you are an RCN member and need advice or support, you can contact our Advice team by direct messaging @RoyalCollegeofNursing (Facebook), @theRCN (X and Instagram) or by visiting www.rcn.org.uk/get-help.