

Tennessee Board of Chiropractic Examiners

Policy on Social Media

The term social media refers to all internet and mobile technologies and practices that are used to share content, opinions, experiences and perspectives online. Social media has become widely used by people as a means of communication and in many instances, has become the preferred method of communication. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to: Webpages, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, and blogging sites.

Social media may present opportunities to enhance patient care, education about chiropractic, intra and inter-professional communication and collaboration, and opportunities for continuing education and professional development.

A licensee is expected to comply with all existing legal, regulatory and professional obligations when engaging in the use of social media, including all relevant legislation, regulation, standards of practice, policies and guidelines. The following guidelines identify some of those obligations as they relate to the use of social media. **A licensee must:**

- Uphold and comply with all legal and professional obligations to maintain privacy and confidentiality of patients in accordance with the (HIPAA) Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. A licensee may not divulge information through social media that identifies a patient by name or through a combination of other identifying information.
- Any communication between a licensee and patient, such as providing information, must be done through secure private messaging only. A licensee must have a clear understanding of the privacy settings available in any use of social media, and apply their use accordingly. While patients or licensees of the public may make themselves publicly known through posting, a licensee must not breach the privacy or confidentiality of a patient in any context.
- Not provide any clinical advice, communicate a diagnosis and/or guarantee results to a patient or any public through social media. However, a licensee may provide general health information related to the chiropractic scope of practice for educational or informational purposes.
- Regularly review Tennessee chiropractic scope of practice both in statute and rule regularly. A licensee must be aware of the risks of using social media for professional reasons, such as a the public incorrectly applying information found online to their personal health situation. Whenever a licensee uses his/her professional designation or provides health related information, that licensee is viewed as acting in a professional capacity. A licensee must exercise caution when posting health related information, so that it is clearly used for education or informational purposes, and must not be used as clinical advice.
- Exercise caution when posting health related information and links to journal articles or academic information to ensure he/she is not infringing on any copyrighted material.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries, and avoid posting information, comments or images that may be perceived as disgraceful, dishonorable or unprofessional. A licensee is not to post any information to social media that may be perceived as harassment, bullying, or inflammatory in nature. A licensee is further encouraged to have separate personal and professional social media pages;
- Comply with relevant scope of practice, professional ethics and advertising provisions under Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. Rule sections 0260-02-.02, 0260-02-.13, 0260-02-.20 respectively.
- Understand that information that is posted online cannot be removed easily. A member must consider his/her legal, professional and regulatory obligations and exercise good judgment and caution before posting material to social media.

Adopted By the Board of Chiropractic Examiners on November 9, 2017