

Title	<u>Social Media for Patients</u>
<p>Introduction</p>	<p>Social media is increasingly part of our lives, in both professional and personal capacities and is used by both staff and patients at the surgery. Social media allows us to easily connect with a wide range of people and organisations.</p> <p>In creating this policy, Central Surgery is not seeking to dissuade the distribution of information online or the freedom of expression of patients or carers. Equally, Central Surgery is not seeking to stifle criticism; we welcome all feedback through the appropriate channels. The purpose of this code of conduct is to encourage mindful reflection by patients and carers of their online interactions regarding Central Surgery.</p> <p>Central Surgery would like to highlight the potential risks of using social media. Social media can be used to fuel campaigns and circumnavigate legitimate complaints against the surgery, members of staff or support staff. Such use of social media can result in damage to the surgery and its staff; it can also be harmful to patients or carers who may read incorrect information which in turn could impact future patients care. Central Surgery considers the use of social media in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of patients or carers.</p> <p>At Central Surgery we welcome feedback from patients and carers. It is important that this feedback is addressed directly with the persons involved. Posting comments online, rather than through the appropriate channels, can prevent Central Surgery of the opportunity to address concerns promptly and effectively.</p> <p>It is not always possible to prevent comments being posted online, however patients/carers should be made aware that there are legal implications should comments make a credible threat to safety, name a member of staff who is subject to an allegation, contain hate content, contain factually incorrect and/or defamatory content or could be considered harassment</p>
<p>Applicability</p>	<p>Patients & Staff</p>
<p>Policy</p>	<p>Expectations</p> <p>Staff at Central Surgery have a reasonable expectation that all patients and carers will treat them with respect and dignity. This applies to all communications; written and verbal, online or otherwise.</p> <p>Central Surgery expects patients/carers to behave in a civilised manner online and not post abusive, harassing or inappropriate comments regarding any aspects of their care or about members of staff. Patients/carers are invited to use the Central Surgery Complaints procedure to address any concerns or complaints they have.</p>

Patients/carers who do not treat staff with respect and dignity will be managed within the zero tolerance behaviour policy.

Code of Conduct

Patients/Carers are expected to adhere to the following:

- Refrain from making complaints, negative comments or factually inaccurate statements about Central Surgery or Staff at Central Surgery in any public forum including social networking sites. If a patient/carer wishes to make a complaint this should be done using the complaints procedure.
- Patients/Carers are not allowed to name or give possible identifiable details about any members of staff in a negative context online.
- Defamatory comments about our surgery are not to be shared on any social media platform.
- Patients/Carers are not permitted to take photographs in the waiting room or areas where other patients are present, nor are photos of staff permitted.
- Patients/Carers are not permitted to disclose any patient-identifiable information about other patients.

Further Action

Any negative comments posted online results in a negative impact on the image of Central Surgery. This negative impact can have lasting effects and cause significant damage which in turn affects all the hard work that Central Surgery staff do to deliver the best possible care they can for patients. Comments about individual staff can have serious consequences on their wellbeing. For this reason, Central Surgery will consider all negative content posted online extremely seriously and will be acted upon in the following way:

1. Central Surgery will contact verbally or in writing the person/people involved and invite them to remove the content of their post within 7 days of notification.
2. If the person does not agree to remove offending content or pages, then the Surgery will report offending material to the Social Media site in question.
3. If a patient/carer directly names or uses detail that identifies a member of staff, the post will be reviewed and consideration given to either issuing a final warning or removing the

	<p>people/persons involved from the surgery list.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Depending on the content of a post, legal advice maybe sought by the surgery and where appropriate a referral may also be made to the Police. 5. Central Surgery will ensure each person contacted has a copy of the social media policy/ 6. Central Surgery will not respond to any complaints, concerns or negative comments via social media sites.
Procedure	
Created	August 2019 RH
Reviewed	Next Review Due August 2021