SINGAPORE NURSING BOARD

Adoption of International Nurse Regulator Collaborative (INRC) Position Statement on Social Media Use: Common Expectations for Nurses

Singapore Nursing Board has adopted the International Nurse Regulator Collaborative (INRC)'s Position Statement on Social Media Use to provide specific and clear guidelines on nurses' and midwives' professional responsibilities and accountability when engaging in social media.

The Singapore Nursing Board is a member of the INRC:

- Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA)
- Nursing Council of New Zealand (NCNZ)
- Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)
- Singapore Nursing Board (SNB)
- College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO)
- College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia (CRNBC)

The purpose of the International Nurse Regulator Collaborative (INRC) is to promote understanding and cooperation in the development of standards to protect the public through the regulatory process of nurse licensure/registration. Specifically, the INRC discuss and explore issues of mutual concern regarding the regulation of nurses and nursing practice.

Social Media Use: Common Expectations for Nurses

The INRC reviewed the use of social media guidance for nurses across their organizations and found that all nurse regulators draw on their professional code of conduct and standards of practice. Members of the INRC recognize that while social media is a beneficial tool, there are principles that nurses need to pay attention to in order to reduce risks to members of the public.

Definition
"Social media" describes the online and mobile tools that people use to share opinions, information and experiences, images and video or audio clips, and includes websites and applications used for social networking. Common sources of social media include, but are not limited to: social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn; personal, professional and anonymous blogs; WOMO, True Local and microblogs such as Twitter; content-sharing websites such as YouTube and Instagram, and discussion forums and message boards.

Common expectations for nurses include:

1. Benefits and Risks
Know the benefits and risks of social media. Build your competence. Know the technology and have the skills and judgment to use it appropriately and ethically. Be aware of social media's evolving culture and changing technology. Reflect on the intent and possible consequences of your online behaviour – before you blog, post or tweet.

2. Professional Image
Use the same level of professionalism in your online interactions as you do face-to-face. Keep your personal and professional lives separate. Use different accounts for personal and professional activities.

3. Confidentiality
Do not share any client information on social media sites. Leaving out details when you post information or images does not protect client confidentiality. Report confidentiality breaches to the right person, immediately.

4. Privacy
Set and maintain your privacy settings to limit access to your personal information. Be aware of your privacy settings and know that even if you use the highest privacy settings, others can copy and share your information without your knowledge or permission.

5. Boundaries
Maintain professional boundaries. Just as with face-to-face relationships, you must set and communicate these boundaries with clients online. End your professional relationships appropriately and don't accept client "friend" requests on your personal social media accounts. If you use social media with clients, use a professional account separate from your personal one.

6. Expectations
Use caution if you identify yourself as a nurse online. If you do so, others may ask for advice, which could lead to a nurse-client relationship. Using a name that hides your identity does not release you from this expectation. Know this and practise accordingly.

7. Integrity
Protect yours and the profession's integrity. Use proper communication channels to discuss, report and resolve workplace issues – not social media. Refer to colleagues or clients online with the same level of respect as you would in the workplace. Before you blog, tweet or share information about your practice, reflect on your intentions and the

possible consequences. Understand that "liking" someone's disrespectful comments is not much different than making them yourself.

8. Employer Policies
Know and follow employer policies on using social media, photography, computers and mobile devices, including personal, at work. If you communicate with clients via social media, work with your employer to develop policies.

9. Accountability
Make sure you can answer for your actions. Reflect on why, how and when you use social media and help others do the same. Know that personal use of social media while working could be viewed as client abandonment. If you are unable to discuss your online behaviour with others, consider this a red flag. Use professional judgment to keep your obligations to clients, colleagues and employers front and center.

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Purpose of INRC
The above organizations recognize that there are potential benefits to be gained from a closer collaborative relationship to better protect the public health, safety and welfare. Therefore, they entered into a memorandum of understanding and cooperation to confirm closer links between the organizations in order to develop standards for the regulation of nurses and nursing practice and to facilitate the free exchange of professional knowledge that contributes to the development of standards.

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6 'P's of Social Media Use

Professional — Act professionally at all times

Positive — Keep posts positive

Patient/Person-free — Keep posts patient or person free

Protect yourself — Protect your professionalism, your reputation and yourself

Privacy — Keep your personal and professional life separate; respect privacy of others

Pause before you post — Consider implications; avoid posting in haste or anger

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