**PURPOSE:**
The purpose of this policy is to provide Union Hospital employees with guidelines for participation in social media, including Union Hospital-hosted social media, and in non-Union Hospital social media in which the employee’s hospital affiliation is known, identified, or presumed.

Social Media includes forms of online publishing and discussion, including blogs, wikis, file sharing, user-generated video and social networks e.g. Facebook.

**POLICY:**

**Union Hospital-Hosted Sites**

1. **Using Social Media:** Employees are expected to adhere to Union Hospital compliance requirements and the Code of Professional Behavior policy (HR-326) when using or participating in social media. All the rules that apply to other Union Hospital communications apply here, specifically: respecting patients, customers and one another; protecting confidentiality, privacy and security; and safeguarding and proper use of Union Hospital assets.

2. **Use of Social Media in the Workplace:** Employees may access Facebook during work time, exclusively during breaks or at the direction of management, for the sole purpose of viewing the Union Hospital Employee page. Employees are expected to act responsibly and in accordance with Union Hospital policies and procedures.

3. **Be Respectful.** Employees may not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, or embarrassing to another person or entity when posting to Union Hospital hosted sites.

4. **Derogatory comments about Union Hospital** and/or individuals associated with Union Hospital (i.e. nurses, physicians, other staff, student, contractors, volunteers, Board members) are harmful to the organization, and can be harmful to the professional reputation of the individuals. Anyone deemed to have violated this policy is subject to progressive disciplinary action in accordance with hospital and medical staff policies.

5. **Personal Health Information:** Employees may not post any content that is personal health information including patient images on any social media site. You may not use the social media site to provide medical advice.
6. **Abide by the law and respect copyright laws.** Employees may not post content or conduct any activity that fails to conform to any and all applicable state and federal laws. For Union Hospital’s and our employees’ protection, it is critical that everyone abide by the copyright laws by ensuring that they have permission to use or reproduce any copyrighted text, photos, graphics, video or other material owned by others.

7. **Obtain pre-approval before setting up Union Hospital-hosted sites.** Employees must seek approval from the Director of Public Relations & Marketing before setting up a Union Hospital-hosted blog or other social media site.

8. **Political Endorsements:** You may not provide any content to our social media site that may be construed as political lobbying or solicitation. Also, you may not use the social media site to link to any sites of political candidates or parties or use the Social Media Site to discuss political campaigns, political issues or for taking a position on any legislation or law.

**Non-Union Hospital Hosted Sites**

1. **Proprietary Information:** Employees may not disclose any confidential or proprietary information of or about Union Hospital, its affiliates, vendors, or suppliers, including but not limited to business and financial information, represent that they are communicating the views of Union Hospital, or do anything that might reasonably create the impression that they are communicating on behalf of or as a representative of Union Hospital.

2. **Patient Confidentiality:** Employees may not use or disclose any patient identifiable, protected health information of any kind on any social media site without the express written permission of the patient. Even if an individual is not identified by name within the information you wish to use or disclose, if there is any conceivable basis to believe that the person could still be identified from that information, then its use or disclosure could constitute a violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Union Hospital policy. If in doubt, at all, do not disclose the information.

3. **Self-Hosted Sites:** Employees must not say or suggest that the views and opinions they express related to Union Hospital and health care topics represent the official views of Union Hospital.

For questions regarding Social Media please contact the Public Relations & Marketing Office at 410-392-7002.

**REFERENCES:**

- HR-326 Code of Professional Behavior
- HR-319 Use of Computers, Telephones, & Other Equipment
- HR-325 Cell/Camera Phone Policy
- AG-225 Confidentiality
- AG-374 Disclosure of Protected Health Information to Law Enforcement