

Headway North Staffordshire (Head Injuries Association) Ltd

Headway House, Elder Road, Cobridge, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 2JE
Tel: 01782 280952



Headway North Staffordshire **Social Media Policy**

Headway North Staffordshire recognises that the internet provides employees with opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of social media such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and various sites on which you may blog. However employee's use of social media can pose risks to our confidential and proprietary information and reputation and can in some instances jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, to avoid the loss of productivity and to ensure our IT resources and communications systems are used appropriately we expect employees to adhere to this policy.

1) Scope and purpose of the policy

- 1.1) This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media including: Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, all other social networking sites and all other internet postings including blogs.
- 1.2) It applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether including office hours or otherwise and applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to the members of staff.
- 1.3) Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in serious cases. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours and regardless of whether our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach.
- 1.4) Any staff member suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with our investigations into the matter, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.
- 1.5) Staff may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

2) Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

- 2.1) All managers have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all staff understand the standards or behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

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2.2) All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Chief Officer. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Chief Officer.

3) Compliance with related policies and agreements

3.1) Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example employees are prohibited from social media to:

- Breach our Computer E-mail and Internet Usage Policy.
- Breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies.
- Breach any obligations they may have relating to Confidentiality Policy.
- Breach our Disciplinary Procedure Rules.
- Defame or disparage Headway North Staffordshire contacts, service users or contacts.
- Harass or bully other staff or volunteers in any way.
- Breach our Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Breach our Data Protection Policy.
- Breach any other laws or ethical standards (e.g.: never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

3.2) Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references – positive or negative can be attributed to the organisation and create liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

3.3) Employees who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of their employment.

4) Personal use of social media

4.1) Personal use of social media is never permitted during working hours or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communication systems.

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5) Monitoring

5.1) The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are our property. Staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post conversation or message or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communication systems.

5.2) We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network technologies.

5.3) We may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

5.4) You must not use our IT resources and communications systems for any other matter that you wish to be kept private or confidential from the organisation.

6) Business use of social media

6.1) If your duties require you to speak on behalf of the organisation in a social media environment you must seek approval for such communication from the Chief Officer, who may require you to undergo training before you do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.

Headway the brain injury association's Director of Communications will also advise on all media opportunities.

6.2) Likewise, if you are contacted for comments about the organisation for publication anywhere, including in a social media outlet, direct the enquiry to the Chief Officer and do not respond without written approval.

6.3) The use of social media for business purposes is subject to the remainder of this policy.

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7) Responsible use of social media

The following sections of the policy provide staff with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

7.1) Protecting the reputation of Headway North Staffordshire: Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

- Our organisation, including your fellow colleagues and volunteers.
- Our clients/service users.

7.2) Other stakeholders

- Staff should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the business reputation, even indirectly.

7.3) Staff and volunteers should make it clear in social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Write in the first instance and use a personal e-mail address when communicating with social media. Staff and volunteers are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. Remember that what you publish might be available to read by the masses, (including the organisation itself, future employers and social acquaintances). Keep that in mind before posting any content.

- If you disclose your affiliation as an employee of our organisation, you must also state that your views do not represent those of your employer. For example you could state " the views in this posting do not represent the views of Headway North Staffordshire". You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to clients and colleagues.

- Avoid posting comments about sensitive charity related topics. Even if you make it clear that your views on such topics do not represent those of the organisation, your comments could still damage our reputation.

- If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from making the communication until you discuss it with the Chief Officer.

- If you see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on Headway North Staffordshire, you should contact the Chief Officer. All staff

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are responsible for protecting the reputation of Headway North Staffordshire.

- As an employee of Headway North Staffordshire it is advisable that you regularly check the privacy settings on your personal social media and networking sites. Consider whether you want or need co-workers seeing your personal profiles.

8) Respecting intellectual property and confidential information

8.1) Staff should not do anything to jeopardise any confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media.

8.2) In addition, staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other companies and individuals, which can create liability for the organisation as well as the original author.

8.3) Do not use our logos, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without prior written permission.

8.4) To protect yourself and the organisation against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate reference sources of particular information you post or upload and cite them accurately. If you have any questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark, ask the Chief Officer before making the communication.

8.5) The contact details of business contacts made during the course of your employment are regarded as our confidential information and as such you will be required to delete all such details from your personal social networking accounts, such as Facebook and LinkedIn on termination of employment.

9) Respecting colleagues, clients, partners and suppliers.

9.1) Do not post anything that your colleagues or our service users or other stakeholders would find offensive, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

9.2) Do not post anything related to your colleagues, our service users or other stakeholders without their written permission.

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10) Monitoring and review of this policy

10.1) The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for reviewing this policy from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

10.2) Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the Chief Officer.

Related Policies:

Disciplinary Procedure

Confidentiality Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Data Protection Policy

Social Media Policy

I have read and understood the Social Media Policy and I understand that by signing the following declaration I am agreeing to abide by the statement.

A breach of confidentiality may constitute gross misconduct under the company disciplinary procedures and may lead to dismissal.

A copy of this signed statement will remain on my personal file in the Chief Officers office.

Signed _____

Name _____

Date _____