Communications Resources: Social Media Best Practices

APRIL 2024

Social Media Best Practices

Through the social media channels owned and managed locally, your facility has an opportunity to tell their story about the culture, legacy, values, and commitment to excellence within each of the communities we serve.

Social media is a team sport. It's a collaborative effort between employees and department leaders to flag stories of care quality, compassion, and inspiration. Healthcare is local and each team should feel empowered to share the meaningful work we do for patients and residents every day. These storytelling efforts reflect how we each live out our mission by bringing care to those who need us most.

Following are best practices and helpful tips designed to serve as a tool for harnessing social media as an effective channel for sharing the positive stories beyond the walls of your facility.

Adhere to HIPAA and Be Mindful of Privacy Rules

Protecting patient and employee privacy is paramount. Following are strict parameters when it comes to social media content:

- **Always** get signed waiver forms from individuals being featured in photographs – staff, patients, residents, family members, or otherwise.
  - Better safe than sorry: if photos are taken and a waiver form was not signed, err on the side of caution and do not use the photo.
- **Never** share patients' medical conditions, statuses, or information without their written permission.
- **Never** have sensitive documents in the background of photos. Instead, aim for simple backgrounds (without clutter or paperwork) that don't distract from the main focus.

Use High-Quality Photos to Increase Engagement

Clear, higher-quality photos generally perform better than those of lower quality. To increase engagement on your facility's social media channels, remember to:

- Watch for consistent lighting
- Use simple backgrounds
- Make sure your subject is in focus
- Get close to your subject (while still providing enough room to capture background context)
- Use the rule of thirds
- Leverage digital software like Canva or PowerPoint when appropriate to help you create images

PACS Branding

In the interest of brand cohesion, please do not create imagery with PACS branding, logos, etc. For questions regarding design or photos, contact Social Media Manager, Francis Banks, at francis.banks@pacs.com, who will be happy to collaborate!

Post During Optimal Times of Day

While we encourage you to post at any time, Facebook specifically tends to elevate content on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings. Posting at these times will help maximize visibility and engagement.

Put Your Audience First and Focus on Personalization

Content on your channel/s should reflect the audiences who follow our pages and interact on the platform/s. Think about our patients and families, their personalities and demographics, and craft specific messaging and visuals with them in mind. Photography with people in it tends to drive the most engagement from users!

When creating post imagery and language, consider:

- **The community with whom we are engaging:** what words and images will resonate with them and drive engagement?
- **How a post may need to differ between platforms:** does phrasing need to be shortened or simplified based on where we're posting it? Will a photo, video, or other multimedia be best suited for the channel?

Remain Nimble, Capture Real-Time Content Whenever Possible

Be mindful of content opportunities as they arise. "Real" feeling, real-time content performs best because it shows audiences that we are actively engaged alongside them. Capture photos and information at events and around your facility, in addition to using fixed content calendars with posts planned in advance (national awareness days, holidays, etc.).

Connect with Community Partners

Whether they are volunteer organizations or other local groups, ensure relationships with facility supporters are reflected on social media.

This may mean tagging local partner organizations on social media (for example, "@United Way of San Diego County"), showing gratitude for their involvement and using related hashtags, as appropriate: #HealthcareElevated, #PostAcuteCare, #Aging, #Longevity, #SeniorLiving, #SkilledNursing

Post with Purpose

Ensure each post is fun and simple yet has a purpose. Whether that's showcasing patient stories, team culture, or facility amenities, try to keep your post copy to three to four sentences, whenever possible. Be clear on your call to action and what you want audiences to do (visit a link, comment below, etc.) or take away from the content.

::: PACS.