

Social media options allow individuals to communicate quickly to a variety of people and on behalf of their organizations or projects. Social media is useful for sharing and disseminating information and for learning about and receiving information. The goal is to provide accurate and unique content to people who use social media to obtain information. A popular social media mantra is: If colleagues, partners, users and participants are using it to communicate, you should use it, too.

The technology that makes this communication possible changes frequently. This policy provides guidance on using social media on behalf of the Carolina Population Center. It also highlights important issues to think about when using social media personally. It applies, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs.

A primary issue is balancing sharing relevant information and resources while protecting the privacy of those who are affiliated with the Carolina Population Center, its projects and study participants. These privacy and security concerns are controlled by the individual establishing and monitoring the site. It is important to decide whether information shared may violate the privacy, confidentiality or best interests of a person or project. At the same time, it is important to use appropriate technological settings as they relate to privacy, and these settings can be changed by the social media provider (e.g., Facebook).

General Considerations for all CPCers

Broad concepts, rules, laws, and expectations apply to all communications mechanisms including e-mailing, giving a presentation, conversing in a meeting, etc.

- Follow UNC and CPC guidelines on ethics, security, and personnel issues.
- As with all communications, spell words properly, check your grammar and proof read before publishing.
- State employees must not use UNC social media accounts for political purposes.

Be mindful of distinguishing between your personal and professional lives.

- Everyone has a life outside of work and sometimes there is overlap between your personal and professional activities, roles and responsibilities.
- Use a unc.edu e-mail address for CPC-related social media accounts and use a personal e-mail address for personal social media accounts.
- Use of personal social media sites while you are working should be minimal just as you should limit making personal phone calls or writing personal e-mails during work time.
- You speak for yourself but your actions represent UNC, CPC, research projects that you may be affiliated with and agencies funding our research activities. This applies to closed groups where individuals will get a view of your work environment from what you post.
- Use appropriate privacy settings, if available.
- Develop and maintain a positive online presence.
- What happens online, stays on Google.

Respect the privacy and confidentiality of others.

- Any information obtained through conversations or other online and offline collaborations, or from study participants should be held as confidential.
- Revealing just a little bit of information, even if it is not a personal identifier, can lead to identifying someone through deductive disclosure.
- Privacy and confidentiality issues also pertain to your use of photos and what you post to your site or to other sites.
- Social media companies can (and do!) change privacy policies and settings. The internet is public and archived: content can be accessible permanently, even if it is deleted by you.
- If it gives you pause, pause. If you don't want your boss to read it, don't post it.

Other Considerations for Specific Groups at CPC**Research project staff need to do the following:**

- Establish the naming conventions for profile names.
- Complete the biography/description area in social media accounts. CPC & UNC should be acknowledged along with any standard acknowledgements related to the project or funder.
- Establish guidelines regarding use of logos, enabling comments, use of photos, etc.
- Check whether the funding agency has requirements regarding the use of social media.
- Determine whether funding agency needs to review and/or approve of social media accounts.
- Share login and password information with others who contribute content so there is a backup if there are changes in project staff.

Resources and Requirements for CPC-Related Social Media Usage

- Obtain permission from the project's principal investigator or from your CPC supervisor to create a professional/CPC-related social media account.
- The CPC Library & Research Translation unit maintains a comprehensive list of all CPC social media accounts. In an effort to ensure that CPC has a consistent online presence as well as provide a back-up record, please send login names and passwords for each social media account to cpclib@unc.edu. This information will be kept in a locked cabinet.
- Send relevant content for CPC's social media sites to cpclib@unc.edu to be shared via other social media accounts (example: sharing NCS Facebook news via the @CPCLibrary Twitter account).
- Contact cpclib@unc.edu for help with account set-up, settings, technical issues, ideas of how to use, etc.

Remember, protecting research participants' confidentiality is paramount.