WHITBY, COAST & MOORS
PRIMARY CARE NETWORK

# Patient social media policy

## Introduction

There are many social media platforms that are widely used by both staff and patients; these include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn. At Whitby Group Practice we have a website and social media accounts, which provides a range of useful information for our patient population.

Whitby Group Practice has a duty to maintain patient confidentiality and to safeguard vulnerable patients. You can help us achieve this by adhering to the code of conduct outlined in this policy.

## Patients at Whitby Group Practice are expected to always adhere to the following code of conduct:

1. The practice requires all users of portable devices to use them in a courteous and considerate manner, respecting their fellow patients. Portable devices are not to be used during consultations.
2. Patients are not permitted to disclose any patient-identifiable information about other patients unless they have the express consent of that patient.
3. Patients must not post any material that is inaccurate, fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, obscene, defamatory, or unlawful. Any such posts on social media will, if brought to our attention, lead to a written warning letter from the Practice Manager.
4. Patients are not permitted to take photographs in the waiting room or areas where other patients are present, nor are photographs of staff permitted. Video recording is also not allowed.
5. Patients must not post comments on social media that identify patients or identify staff who work at the practice.
6. Patients are to use NHS Choices should they wish to leave a review about Whitby Group Practice or fill in a Friends and Family form available on our website. This will enable the Practice Manager to respond appropriately.
7. Defamatory comments about our team are not to be shared on any social media platform. Legal advice will be sought, and the appropriate action taken against any patient who posts defamatory comments.

## Patient complaints on social media

We have a separate complaints policy which patients are to use should they wish to make a complaint. We will only respond to complaints made to the practice in accordance with the practice policy. If a complaint is made on social media and brought to our attention, this too will lead to a written warning letter from the Practice Manager.