

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	2
1.1 Document Purpose	2
1.2 Document Scope	2
1.3 Related documents	2
1.4 Definitions	2
<b>2. Background</b>	3
<b>3. Guiding principles</b>	3
<b>4. Naming Conventions</b>	4
<b>5. Accounts</b>	4
5.2 Official accounts	4
5.3 Personal accounts	4
<b>6. Permissions</b>	5
6.1 National Office	5
6.2 State and Territory Branches	5
6.3 Personal use	5
<b>7. Inappropriate use</b>	5
<b>8. Policy Breach</b>	6
<b>9. Delegations</b>	6
9.1 National Branch	6
9.2 State & Territory Branch	6
9.3 Others	6
<b>10. Examination, Diagnosis or Treatment advice through social media</b>	6
<b>11. Dental Board of Australia Policies</b>	6
<b>12. Complaints through Social Media</b>	7
<b>13. Deleting posts</b>	7

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Document Purpose

This policy is intended to provide clarity on the use of social media platforms for employees, members and supporters of The Australian Dental and Oral Health Therapists Association (ADOHTA Inc.) and its branches.

### 1.2 Document Scope

Social media is online media that allows for interaction and/or participation. This includes but is not limited to:

- Social networking and micro-blogging sites like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Bebo, Foursquare, Tumblr, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Skype
- Video and photo sharing sites like Instagram, Flickr and YouTube
- Online forums and discussion blogs, including comments on online news articles

### 1.3 Related documents

ADOHTA Ethics Position Statement

### 1.4. Definitions

<b>ADOHTA Inc:</b>	<i>Australian Dental &amp; Oral Health Therapists' Association Incorporated</i>
<b>Identification</b>	<i>for the purpose of this policy, as 'how a social media bio, post, tweet, account, blog or page description identifies that particular social media channel as being affiliated with ADOHTA Inc or its branches'</i>
<b>Official use</b>	is when an employee, member or the general public is using social media as a representative of ADOHTA Inc. or any ADOHTA Branch.
<b>Personal use</b>	<p>is when an employee, members or the general public is using social media as themselves, not officially representing the ADOHTA Inc or its branches, and identifying themselves as affiliated with ADOHTA Inc in their online biographies, profiles or posts, or through other digital platforms.</p> <p>People who are employees, members or the general public who do not identify themselves as being affiliated to ADOHTA Inc are still counted as representing the organisation, as the nature of the online world means they could be traced back to the organisation through their online presence. Post from these accounts must:</p> <p>Comply with ADOHTA Inc. Code of Ethics and the guiding principles stipulated within section four (4) of this policy;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do no harm</li> <li>• Not suggest or imply that ADOHTA Inc endorses individual businesses, money making ventures or political candidates or Parties.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Media</b>	social media is defined as <i>'any conversation or activity that occurs online, where people can share information or data that might impact on ADOHTA Inc or the</i>

## 2. Background

ADOHTA Inc provides national representation for dental and oral therapists whom are being encouraged to raise their profile as one overarching profession and one voice, to raise the profile of their profession and be the first consideration as a stakeholder organisation for oral health and co-related health policy in Australia.

With the dissolution of state dental boards in 2010, replaced by Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), members are encouraged to see themselves as national profession and access/communicate by means of social media and internet based programs that allow them to discuss issues or seek information with members in other states and territories.

Predominantly social media is being used to provide the public and ADOHTA Inc employees and members with;

- Details and updates of national issues addressed by ADOHTA on behalf of its members
- Details and updates of state branches serving members and their activities on behalf of members  
Provide resources for members
- Details of continuing professional development opportunities
- Opportunities for member to discuss and share opinions on current issues affecting members and their professions
- Point of contact for members of the community to learn about the organisation and services


This document aims to establish a process by which ADOHTA's official social media interactions can be managed with the best interests of ADOHTA's brand and reputation in mind.

This policy provides a framework consistent with the ADOHTA Inc Code of Ethics which sets out expected behaviour for members and people who officially represent ADOHTA Inc via social media.

## 3. Guiding principles

ADOHTA Inc employees, members are encouraged to participate in social media. Whenever ADOHTA Inc employees and or members are interacting on social media, whether in an official or personal capacity (see section 1.4 for definitions), the following guiding principles should be kept in mind.

- I will respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally
- I will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly
- I will disclose conflicts of interest where I am able
- I will link to online references and original source materials directly
- I will be polite, considerate, kind and fair
- I will always ensure my activity does no harm
- I will champion ADOHTA Inc and its services

	Title: Policy & Guideline 5: Social Media Policy	
	Date Reviewed: September 2014	Version PG5.14.0
	Approved by: Executive Council	Next Review: September 2015

- I will post information relevant to the profession i.e. does not include selling or marketing of any private products.

## 4. Naming conventions

All uses of the ADOHTA Inc trademark (including the name, acronym or logo) online and in social media must be differentiated based on geographical location to ensure the public can find and obtain information most relevant to them. For example: ADOHTA Victorian Branch Inc.

The ADOHTA Inc Trade Mark Licence Agreement also outlines that prior to any Centre or Retail Outlet registering a social media account or website domain name, prior written permission from National Branch is required.

Written permission is required to ensure:

- Consistency across naming conventions to differentiate branches based on geographical locations
- Branches are not disadvantaged by another branch securing a generalised domain or social media account name like ADOHTA Inc Oral, etc.
- Using localised identifiers like a branch name also ensures members of the public utilising search engines like Google will find their most relevant branch

## 5. Accounts

### 5.1 Official accounts

An official account (be it a blog, webpage, twitter account, Facebook page etc.) that represents ADOHTA Inc should stipulate this within its bio, page or account description. An official social media page must be sanctioned by the ADOHTA Inc (national branch).


The account must carry the following, or a version of the following, words.

*“This is the official account/page/etc. for ADOHTA Inc” followed by a brief description of ADOHTA Inc and the purpose of the account relating to the particular social media platform. For example, on twitter, it might say “ADOHTA Inc is the professional organisation for dental and oral health therapists in Australia and uses this account to promote support, updates and promote discussion with the community”.*

### 5.2 Personal accounts

Accounts (being it a blog, webpage, twitter account, Facebook page etc.) that are not official, but are set up by employees or members of ADOHTA Inc or members of the general public for personal reasons can have an affiliation to the organisation, so long as the following is undertaken:

1. It should not have the affiliation with ADOHTA Inc as the primary identifier
2. It should stipulate that the opinions expressed are the persons' own, and not that of ADOHTA Inc
3. It should state a disclaimer that reposting, 'likes', retweeting, etc. do not represent the views of ADOHTA Inc For example, on Twitter a member might have this for their bio “Likes dancing,

	Title: Policy & Guideline 5: Social Media Policy	
	Date Reviewed: September 2014	Version PG5.14.0
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interested in politics and the news, member of ADOHTA ... opinions are my own and are not endorsed by ADOHTA Inc”.

## 6. Permissions

### 6.1 National Branch

At ADOHTA’s National Branch, the Communications Officer (overseen by the President), is responsible for all official use of social media.

Personal use as defined in 3.2 is up to the individual employee, member or the general public, however, individuals are accountable for the consequences of their actions on social media, and will be disciplined according ADOHTA Inc i.e. post deleted, permanently removed from the platform used or expulsion of membership.

### 6.2 State and Territory Branches

ADOHTA Inc National Branch have jurisdiction over their operations regarding social media delivered in their name. However, state and territory branches have an obligation to the organisation to ensure they comply with this policy and ensure they keep National Branch abreast of the social media platforms they are active in. State and territory branches have a responsibility to ensure that social media is maintained, that best practice is used and that members are adequately trained to use the medium.

### 6.3 Personal use

Individuals who are employees, members or the general public have permission to post on the ADOHTA Inc social media platforms. The administrator may disapprove any post deemed not appropriate. Anyone may, repost, re-tweet etc. ADOHTA Inc. posts, material or comment without substantial or meaningful change as part of showing their affiliation or support for the organisation.

## 7. Inappropriate use

Inappropriate use of social media includes, (but not limited to):

- Conducting a private business on ADOHTA Inc social media presence
- Using discriminatory, defamatory, abusive or otherwise objectionable language
- Stalking, bullying, trolling or marginalising any individual or group
- Accessing or uploading pornographic, gambling or illegal content, including extreme images of graphic content (blood and gore etc.) or information regarding activity relating to firearms, bombs, terrorism etc.
- Accessing sites that promote hatred or extreme/fundamental beliefs and values
- Direct political affiliation, unless an individual is running for election (but only on a personal account)
- Excessive debate on public policy, (unless in an official capacity)
- Uploading information of a confidential nature, especially in regards to members of the general public i.e. patients.
- Hacking or attempting to infiltrate the systems of ADOHTA Inc or another organisation

- Criticising or denigrating ADOHTA Inc, or other organisations, and our/their Employees or members or dental and oral health therapists.
- Activity that interferes with work commitments
- Activity that uses excessive data, either uploading or downloading,
- Paid endorsement of any kind, including in kind services or gifts
- Activity that brings or may bring ADOHTA Inc or the person's professionalism or ability to act in a professional manner into disrepute
- Criticism of clients, colleagues, ADOHTA Inc, related Government policy, or other dental or health related professions.
- Activity which may breach terms of employment

It is the duty of everyone who is affiliated with ADOHTA Inc to alert the National branch serving members, to any inappropriate content they may come across.

## 8. Policy Breach

Misuse of social media can have serious consequences for ADOHTA Inc, and consequently that misuse can have serious consequences in terms of disciplinary action for staff and members. State and territory branches and National Branch are responsible for ensuring adherence to the Social Media Policy by their staff and members. This includes undertaking appropriate risk assessment and performance management or disciplinary action, of any suspected or identified breach. In the event of serious misconduct, disciplinary action may occur.

## 9. Delegations

### 9.1 National Branch

The president of the ADOHTA Inc National Branch has delegation for all official social media activity undertaken, with secondary delegation to the President of each state or territory branch. The President of the ADOHTA Inc National Branch has veto rights on state or territory branches.

### 9.2 State & Territory Branch

The State & Territory branch has delegation for all official Social Media activity undertaken in their state.

### 9.3 Others


Individuals who undertake personal activity in the social media space can self-moderate.

They should use common sense and be sensible about their use, always ensuring they are in line with the requirements of this social media policy.

## 10. Examination, Diagnosis or Treatment advice through social media

It is not appropriate, for a number of reasons, for dental and oral health therapists to undertake any examination, diagnosis or treatment planning through social media channels due to clinician's inability to correctly identify, diagnose or provide ongoing support for the client.

Social Media can however, be used for case conferencing or general discussions on treatment planning or treatment provision provided that all information is de-identified and presented in a generic format.

	Title: Policy & Guideline 5: Social Media Policy	
	Date Reviewed: September 2014	Version PG5.14.0
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## 11. Dental Board of Australia Policies

The Dental Board of Australia has guidelines on Code of Conduct, Advertising and use of Social Media all of which may be relevant to posts on social media sites. ADOHTA strongly urges anyone to familiarise themselves with the policies and how they may impact upon using Social Media.

## 12. Complaints through social media

Complaints or negative comments regarding ADOHTA Inc. may be made through social media channels. Both official and personal users of social media are discouraged from arguing or refuting complaints or negative feedback through social media channels. This behaviour can antagonise or fuel further attacks on ADOHTA Inc services or its members, the profession at large and/or reputation.

In the event of a complaint or negative comment about ADOHTA Inc. it is important to address the comment as soon as possible by responding with the following, or a tailored version.

“Sounds like you have not had the experience you expected when using ADOHTA’s services. Your feedback is important to help us improve the way we help our members and the general public. Consider providing your feedback through our website at [www.adohta.net.au](http://www.adohta.net.au).”

## 13. Deleting posts

Social media is fluid, two-way, busy and often self-regulating. Social media can be used to disseminate information, but should be considered a form of two-way communication and a vehicle to listen to members and the ‘wider’ community views.

Organisations that heavily control content on their social media pages, blogs and accounts, mostly through the deletion of questionable or disapproving content, significantly reduce the impact, and usefulness, of social media as a channel for information distribution.

ADOHTA Inc will not delete posts that are complaints, or negative, except when they breach any of the conditions outlined for employees, members and general public in the ‘inappropriate use’ section eight (8) above. Where possible, the administrator will contact the user whose post has been removed, providing them with an explanation why it has been removed and the necessary action(s) for it to be reposted.