

Bon Secours Health System, Inc.  
Richmond Region  
St. Mary's Hospital  
Policy/Procedure

Policy Manual: School of Medical Imaging  
Section: Student – General

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

It is the policy of Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital School of Medical Imaging that all students enrolled in the Radiologic Technology program follow approved procedures for the creation of web presence and use of social media.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all students of the School of Medical Imaging (SOMI). Students that are also BSHSI employees must follow the BSHSI Social Media Use policy.

**Rationale**

The purpose of this policy is to provide all students of SOMI with expectations and requirements for participation in any Social Media.

The health care industry, like many other industries, embraces the use of Social Media to facilitate and enhance communication, education, collaboration, research, and remote work, etc. However, the use of Social Media carries with it significant risks, including, but not limited to privacy risks. These risks are lessened through establishing and complying with certain safeguards, policies, and guidelines; providing education and training with certain corrective action when necessary. The intent of this policy is not to restrict the flow of useful and appropriate information or to interfere with students' legally protected rights, but to minimize risk to SOMI, students, and those we serve.

SOMI recognizes the value of online Social Media, when used properly, as resources to positively promote the organization's mission and values, strategic goals, marketing, referral, and recruitment activities, as well as a forum for exchange of information by students who share with their communities how the School of Medical Imaging is living the promise of providing Good Help every day. For example, a well-written post from a member of the community or student about a SOMI related community event, new program or service, or the extraordinary care that students have provided to patients, residents, and families, without disclosing protected health information, can have far greater effects than a paid TV commercial.

## Definitions

**PHI** – protected health information. PHI is individually identifiable information (including, but not limited to, names, dates, medical diagnosis, phone numbers, fax numbers, medical record numbers, and social security numbers) about a patient/resident’s physical or mental health status, the provision of healthcare to a patient/resident, or payment for that care.

**Blog** – Short for “Web log”, a site that allows an individual or group of individuals to share a running log of events and personal insights with online audiences.

**Podcast** – A collection of digital media files distributed over the Internet, often using syndication feeds, for playback on portable media players and personal computers.

**RSS feeds or Syndication feeds** – A family of different formats used to publish updated content such as blog entries, news headlines or podcasts and “feed” this information to subscribers via e-mail or by an RSS reader. This enables to keep up with their favorite web sites in an automated manner that’s easier than checking them manually (RSS known as “really simple syndication”).

**Social Media** – Includes, but not limited to, blogs, podcasts, discussion forums, on-line collaborative information, developing technologies, and publishing systems that are accessible to internal and external audiences (e.g., wikis, RSS feeds, video sharing, and any social media networks).

**Wikis** – Allows users to create, edit, and link Web pages easily; often used to create collaborative Web sites (called “Wikis”) and to power community Web sites.

## Expectations

### *Use of Social Media*

Prior to engaging in discussions on Social Media sites, students should consider the following:

- Does the discussion conflict with SOMI’s mission, culture, code of conduct (Students Rights and Responsibilities), and/or values?
- Does the discussion reveal confidential information, including any information that could directly (e.g., name, Social Security number, address, etc.) or indirectly (e.g., provider name, date of birth, diagnosis, images, etc.) identify a patient, an employee, a student, or the organization?
- Is the content an appropriate and professional reflection of a SOMI student?

**Privacy and Security Compliance:** All uses and disclosures of patient Protected Health Information via Social Media sites are prohibited.

**Respecting Copyright Laws:** Students may not post content or conduct any activity that fails to conform to all applicable state and federal copyright and trademark laws. It is critical that students ensure that they have documented permission to use or reproduce any copyrighted text, photos, graphics, video, music, or other material owned by others. This applies as well to the use of SOMI trademarks, names, and logos.

In conjunction with the provisions of this policy, students must follow the “Common Sense Guidelines”.

### **Common Sense Guidelines:**

- ❖ **Don't assume Social Media posts are private:** Even though there are privacy controls on sites such as Facebook and other Social Media sites, students should assume that anything posted on a web site is seen by the general public, as well as by SOMI. It is important to keep in mind that:
- ❖ **“Friends” can copy your posts and make them available in public:** Your friends may include patients/residents. It is easy for your privacy setting to be set to something other than what you had planned.
- ❖ **Don't jeopardize your reputation and/or future employment opportunities:** Students must consider that everything they post online is part of a lifetime record of him or herself. Increasingly, employers search the online history.
- ❖ **Keep in mind potential implications from posting:** Recognize that student use of Social Media can result in members of the public forming opinions about SOMI and its services, employees, or students.
- ❖ **Comply with applicable law:** Students may not engage in any activity that violates federal, state or local laws.
- ❖ **Use this policy as a helpful resource:** Consult the policy, as necessary, prior to posting or engaging in activity that could amount to a violation.

### **Monitoring and Oversight:**

#### **Corrective and/or disciplinary action for violations:**

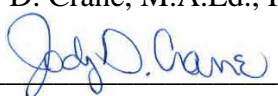
The inappropriate use of Social Media by School of Medical Imaging students is subject to corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal consistent with SOMI policies and procedures. Refer to policy G26 – Student Discipline.

Though not intended for a comprehensive list of prohibited activities, SOMI notes the following activities with respect to the use of Social Media that may be inappropriate and therefore prohibited for students:

- ✓ Using Social Media in a way (e.g., posting information) that conflicts with or violates SOMI's mission, values, code of conduct, or policies and procedures.
- ✓ Posting any copyrighted or trademarked material or property where appropriate permission has not been granted and recorded, including trademarks, names, and logos of Bon Secours Health System, Inc. (BSHSI) and/or SOMI.
- ✓ Compromising the privacy and security of confidential patient health or property business information about BSHSI, its affiliates, patients, vendors, or suppliers, employees, business or financial information. (Note: inappropriate use or disclosure of patient health information may also be subject to fines, legal proceedings and/or criminal charges in addition to any corrective and/or disciplinary actions taken by SOMI.

- ✓ Engaging in any form of harassment, including derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, religion, color, gender, age, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability, or any other characteristics protected by law.
- ✓ Posting material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, or abusive to another person or entity (including SOMI) that is not otherwise protected by law.

**RESPONSIBLE PERSONS:** Program Administration

<b>Approved by:</b>		
Jody D. Crane, M.A.Ed., RT(R) (BD)	Director/Dean	November 1, 2017
		
_____ Signature	_____ Title	_____ Date
<b>Approval History:</b> Committees and Dates:		

**DOCUMENTATION:** None

**REFERENCES:** BSHSI Social Media Use Policy: SYS.COM.001, and Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing: ADM 3.04.