

AIDS CLINICAL TRIALS GROUP (ACTG) Network Guidelines		
Title	ACTG Social Media Public Guidelines	
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Originator	ACTG Communications Team	Last reviewed: 05/20/2019
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ACTG Social Media Public Guidelines

The emergence and growth of social media has changed the way we communicate and share ideas, start conversations and engage with our communities both local and world-wide. The ability to share information rapidly with interested persons around the globe has created the opportunity – and the expectation – for participation that can help build stronger relationships and engagement around the work we do every day.

To better help inform and advise your participation, the ACTG has created these Social Media Guidelines to provide direction and to help you to better understand the responsibilities associated with Social Media engagement. These guidelines apply to both network-sponsored participation as well as personal participation in social networks that relates to your work with the ACTG.

Responsibilities

All internal/external teams and third parties working with the ACTG must adhere to the following requirements while participating in social media on its behalf.

The use of official ACTG logos and trademarks is also not permissible without prior approval.

When in doubt, ask the social media team before posting something.

Do Not Share Non-Public Network Information

As with any other form of communication, *never share non-public information*. Anything that the ACTG has not made public cannot appear in writing under any circumstances.

Do Be Clear: Work vs. Personal Engagement

Keep your role in mind – while someone may not represent the network through active participation, engagement may be *perceived* to represent the ACTG. Make your role clear to avoid any misrepresentation and confusion.

Do Not Include Impermissible Content

The inclusion of any libelous, illegal, defamatory, or obscene content in any social media participation in which you mention the ACTG or your relationship with the ACTG is strictly prohibited, even if you include the clarification noted above.

Do Respect Copyright and Fair Use Laws

For your protection as well as the ACTG's, it is necessary that you comply with all laws governing copyright when dealing with material owned by others, including the ACTG. You should not use images, videos, or quotes, from copyrighted works without documented permission from the owner.

Do Not Ignore Your Day Job

If your job responsibilities do not require you to engage in social media, then social media engagement should not be allowed to interfere with your work commitments.

Do Let People Know When You Are Taking Their Photo or Filming Them

Not everyone wants a photo or video of them taken and posted to social media sites like Instagram or Facebook. Ask someone before taking their photo or filming them and let them know where you plan to post this information. *Never take photos or film slides during presentations that would lead to disclosure of scientific data or patient information.*

Do Remind People Confidentiality Cannot Be Ensured with Social Media

While the ACTG would never disclose any patient information, people interacting with any of our social media accounts included, but not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Google+ and Twitter should know that these interactions may be visible to the public. We do our best to use social media outlets with security settings. However, we cannot control privacy setting changes made by social media outlet companies.

Procedures

The following are key principles (social media etiquette) that all ACTG personnel and partners should follow when participating in social media for or concerning the network. These principles won't answer every question you may have but stick to them and you can be confident that your participation is productive and well informed.

Be Honest and Genuine

When thinking about what to share and where to engage, focus on your areas of expertise. If you are writing about a topic that the ACTG is involved with but you are not an expert on the topic, you should make that clear. Write like you normally would, informally and in your own words. Write in a way that is open-ended and encourages a conversation. Make sure to broaden the discussion by citing others who are writing about the same topic and allow your content to be shared.

Be Frank and Clear

When engaging in social media always use your real name, identify that you work with the ACTG, and be clear about your role. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing then be the first to point it out. Take ownership for your comments and write in the first person. Be yourself – understand and make clear that your statements are your own, and that they don't necessarily represent the views of the network.

Be Thoughtful and Sensible

What you share online will be around for a long time, so consider what you are sharing very carefully. Write what you know, be truthful, and don't mislead anyone. If you make a claim, make sure you can substantiate it with publicly approved information. When in doubt, check with the social media team first. Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy, and follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites.

Be Responsible and Respectful

What you write is ultimately your responsibility, so your posts should be meaningful and respectful. If you have any hesitation about what you're about to write, don't write it. If you make a mistake, admit it quickly and let the social media team know. Do not engage in adversarial conversations. Avoid making remarks that could be perceived as off-topic or offensive. Bear in mind that not every comment deserves a response. If you choose to disagree with someone, be polite and respectful of their ideas. By engaging, you are inviting reaction from others who may disagree, or who may offer a critical or negative response. Make sure to remain positive, professional and respectful in your engagement.

Be Encouraging and Helpful

Social networks are home to lots of comments, both positive and negative. These comments can be highly visible and can have real impact on how the ACTG is perceived. If you receive a positive comment about the work we're doing, encourage the person who sent it to share it on social networks like Twitter with the relevant hashtags so the community can benefit from their input. If you see comments from individuals who are confused, have had a negative experience, or may simply benefit from additional information, reach out to point them in the right direction. Even if you don't have all the answers your effort will likely be appreciated.

Be Attentive and Vigilant

When engaging in social media, make sure you know exactly who you're sharing information with and what they intend to do with it. As stated above, don't comment or share information unless it is or can be made public and you are 100 percent sure of its accuracy. A good rule of thumb: if it's not something that would be approved for use in other public forums (events, Webinars, ACTGnetwork.org, etc.) then don't share it through social networks either. If you're not sure, ask the social media team for help.

Be Sure You're Adding Value

Are you sharing useful news, information and perspectives? Your writing should be thought-provoking, engaging and interesting. If it helps people build knowledge and understanding or if it adds new thinking to ongoing conversations, then it's probably adding value. Participating in online discussions is just like talking face-to-face: it's better to listen first before jumping right in. You wouldn't interrupt a discussion midstream without knowing first what people are talking about and if what you can add is worthwhile. Treat social media the same way. That way you'll know what the conversation is about and you're more likely to offer a comment or idea that others will find interesting.

Be Willing To Share

As you write be sure to take advantage of the wealth of content that is publicly available through ACTGnetwork.org, our social media channels, our activities at major network events and other informational resources. You can link to these resources, as well as resources of other networks, colleagues, partners, news and blog articles and industry thought leaders that are relevant to what you're sharing. But keep in mind all other relevant guidelines discussed herein.

Know Your Audience

The ACTG supports a global community. Because the Network's audience is full of medical professionals, research institutions and government agencies, among others, poor grammar and writing will be noticed immediately. Whether you're writing formally or informally, make sure to write well and to focus on appropriate grammar, spelling and sentence structure.

Confidentiality and Compliance with NIH Policies

Review and comply at all times with NIH policies regarding confidentiality and information security. For further details, check out the NIH Social Media and Web Management Policy at <https://oma.od.nih.gov/DMS/Pages/Privacy-Program-Social-Media-and-Web-Management.aspx>

If you have any questions, please contact the social media team:

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Website Content Specialist
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Disclaimer

The following disclaimer applies to all of the ACTG's social media channels:
We enjoy hearing your feedback and welcome relevant, insightful comments and discussions. Please be respectful and stay on topic. We reserve the right to delete profane, harassing, abusive, off-topic, spam, comments or posts that solicit medical advice, user content that is derogatory or offensive to ACTG personnel, and to block repeat offenders.