



# PSYCHOLOGISTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Dr May Chi, for APS Local Branch Meeting – Bundaberg-Hervey Bay Branch, 06 June 2023

# REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

## AHPRA

[Social media: How to meet your obligations under the National Law](#)

## APS

[APS Code of Ethics](#)

[Ethical guidelines for providing psychological services and products using the internet and telecommunications technologies \(Members\)](#)

[Use social media as a professional tool](#)

[The benefits and pitfalls of social media for psychologists](#)

## AAPI

[Use of Social Media](#)

# ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

## Obligations under National Law

- Confidentiality and privacy obligations
- Professional obligations as defined by your Board's Code of conduct
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Communicating professionally and respectfully with or about patient, colleagues and employers
- Not presenting information that is false, misleading or deceptive, including advertising only claims supported by acceptable evidence

# ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS (CONT)

## Code of Ethics

- A.2. Respect.
  - A.5. Confidentiality.
  - B.1. Competence.
  - B.2. Professional responsibility.
  - C.1. Reputable behaviour.
  - C.2. Communication.
  - C.4. Non-exploitation
  - C.5. Authorship
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- Hot topic: Does what a psychologist post professionally on a social media site constitute as professional advice?

# HOT TOPICS

- Does what a psychologist post professionally on a social media site constitute as professional advice?
- Can a psychologist advertise their business through social media?
- Is it ethical for psychologists to contact or interact with clients through social media messaging?
- If I see a post on social media from a psychologist that is derogative, misleading, or somehow harmful, should I report this?
- Can psychologists comment on socio-political issues? Or will this impede on a potential client's sense of safety in accessing psychological services?

# QUIZ

- Can a psychologist solicit testimonials to publish on their social media?
  - a. No.
  - b. Yes.
  - c. Yes, only if the client is a supervisee.
  - d. Yes, only if the client agrees and provides informed consent.
  
- Can I post whatever I want in a personal capacity when using an open social forum that any member of the public can see?
  - a. No.
  - b. Yes.
  - c. Yes, if there is no way the information can be identified or linked with me in a professional capacity.
  - d. Yes, if I put up a disclaimer that I'm giving a personal, not professional opinion.

# QUIZ

- A client has requested to be my friend on social media. I will:
  - a. Accept their request to break down the power imbalance between us.
  - b. Add them to my LinkedIn only because that is a professional forum.
  - c. Discuss the request with them at our next appointment.
  - d. Reject the request and cancel all upcoming appointments due to boundary violation.
  
- A teenage client is a YouTube enthusiast and has asked me to follow their channel. I will:
  - a. Follow their channel and tell everyone that I'm their psychologist.
  - b. Request that the client follows me in return.
  - c. Lie and say I don't have a YouTube account.
  - d. Take an impartial interest in their productions if it aligns with therapy goals.