

# Communication Policies

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The Communication Policies are guidelines to help students navigate communication.

## Social Media Policy

### Scope

Social media is an important and powerful tool. Students of The University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School are prohibited from disclosing Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)-protected and other confidential patient information in any medium, including via social media.

### Policy

When using social media, students must:

- Respect patient/doctor confidentiality and the privacy rights of patients, including HIPAA-protected information and other confidential patient information.
- Understand that no material posted on social media is entirely private, and should be considered public and permanent.
- Understand and accept any legal or professional liability that accrues from posting on any social media platforms.

Students are strongly discouraged from sharing personal expressions in the form of text, photos, and/or images or video that could impair a student's ability to form a therapeutic relationship with patients or to have a professional relationship with medical colleagues and supervisors.

The inappropriate or illegal sharing of patient and other confidential information is subject to discipline pursuant to the university's Medical Student Conduct and Discipline Policy.

References:

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA): <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/>

American Medical Association, Professionalism in the Use of Social Media: <https://code-medical-ethics.ama-assn.org/ethics-opinions/professionalism-use-social-media>