

BAC Social Media Policy September 2024

The use of social media has significantly enabled worldwide communications with the cytopathology community. Social media promotes connectivity, education, awareness, distribution of information, sharing of resources and helps promote and build communities. However, there are risks associated with the use of social media.

To maintain the integrity of the BAC, the profession and to help keep people safe online the use of social media by the BAC must align with the objectives of the association with the best interests of the association, members, patients, and wider cytopathology community in mind.

This policy provides an overview of the practice adopted by the BAC and any countermeasures required in an adverse event. This policy is reviewed annually or more frequently if required.

The use of social media by the BAC

Any social media shared by the BAC must align with the objectives of the association.

- To encourage the science and art of Cytopathology by encouraging higher standards in Cytopathology for the benefit of the public
- To encourage research in Cytopathology and related fields and the publication of useful results

The platforms used by the BAC for social media are:

- LinkedIn
- Bluesky
- Website (<https://www.britishcytology.org.uk/>)
- Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmAeloAxiFTGmS2hhUSfQdQ/videos>
- Mailchimp

The BAC welcomes interaction, engagement, conversation, and discussion through these platforms. The BAC regularly monitors and answers comments and provides timely replies.

The website is open to the public however the content is targeted at the global cytopathology community. The website contains restricted areas exclusively to members that contain additional educational material. These areas include, but are not limited to: Blogs, case studies, quizzes, access to bursaries and webinars.

The website has been designed to be inclusive to the wider cytopathology community and where possible the site design incorporates accessibility by using simple colours, writing in clear language, the use of images, video content, bullet points, descriptive buttons, and consistent layouts.

Each platform adopts the associations branding and when case studies or presentations are required branded templates are provided.

Moresoda (Website supplier) is contracted to maintain the functionality and security of the site.

The use of social media by trustees

When placing material on social media platforms trustees must be aware that removal of content can often be difficult. Trustees can have their own social media accounts and are free to post and share personal content. However, trustees must have an understanding that there is a risk of their opinions being misinterpreted as the views of the BAC. Each trustee is responsible for managing this risk and reducing any likelihood of damage to personal reputation or reputation of the association. HCPC (Health care professions council) or GMC (General Medical Council) codes of conduct must be followed by trustees when sharing content.

Trustees must not post content regarded as:

- Harmful
- Inconsistent with work, purpose or best interests of the BAC
- False information
- Breach in law
 - UKGDPR (publishing personal information).
 - Privacy (misuse of private information or a person right to privacy).
 - Copyright law.
 - Defamation law.
 - Whistle-blower protection.
 - Equality and human rights – including discrimination, victimisation, harassment and freedom of expression.

Patients' protection is paramount. To ensure this the following principle ethical rules must be followed.

Posts on social media must not contain:

- Patient names
- Hospital or NHS numbers
- Laboratory numbers
- Barcodes or QR codes
- Ethic group
- Dates on any material shared.
- Medical advice

When posting, trustees must refrain from including anything that could be regarded as ill taste, controversial or offensive to patients and members of the public.

All Trustees should adhere to each platforms security and privacy policies to reduce the likelihood of hacking and scam activities.

Overuse of social media can result in reduction of performance and productivity with the potential of causing addiction. Health risks due to physical inactivity must be considered.

The BAC's Professional support services manager and Social media lead have more involved roles with regards to social media. To ensure these trustees have the skills and knowledge to use social

media appropriate training will be provided for each of the platforms. Enhanced secure access is provided to these higher-level users for the term in the role.

There is a social media committee formed of trustees. The committee meet on an ad hoc basis and report to the BAC executive.

Aims of the committee:

- To develop and maintain a framework of communication to members and others including but not limited to:
 - Webinars/videoconferencing
 - Website
 - Email
 - Other social media
 - Print communications
- and to monitor the effectiveness of these methods by appropriate forms of measurement.
- To ensure that a system exists whereby information provided via these routes is current – this particularly applies to the website.
 - To ensure that providers of these services (where a choice exists) are fit for purpose and provide value for money. This may require formal tendering.
 - To ensure that the above framework facilitates the primary functions of the BAC, particularly involving maintenance of standards and education as well as
 - raising awareness of events and resources that support membership
 - raising the profile of the BAC and Cytopathology as a service and a discipline
 - facilitating exchange of ideas and information between members

Membership of the committee

BAC Chair or President

BAC treasurer

Social media lead

Professional support services manager

At least two other named members of Executive

Associate Editor for SCAN section of Cytopathology journal

The professional support manager, social media lead and platform leads are responsible for Bluesky, LinkedIn, Youtube and the website content and account management. These trustees also can remove content where required. Case studies and blogs require approval from two trustees prior to sharing, normally these are from the social media committee. Mailchimp emails require approval from at least two from the following trustees: Chair, President, and Social Media lead. High profile announcements or in the event of a social media crisis must have prior approval from the Chair, President, and Social media lead.

Problematic content

Responses to complaints, abuse or criticism on social media must be dealt with as a priority.

Notifications on Youtube, LinkedIn and Bluesky are activated and received by the BAC's Professional support services manager. Who will notify the Social media lead, Chair, and President on

identification of an issue. Complaints aim to be resolved in a private forum and the post removed from the platform.

Illicit content due to hacking or any other website infringements will be reported to Moresoda immediately for resolution.

If abusive content is posted from individuals external to the BAC executives, then assessment of risk to personal safety must be ascertain and support for trustees provided. Contacting the relevant authorities may be required dependant on the severity and the content. Users that post abusive content are reported to the platform provider, which may result in them being banned from the platform or block from seeing and interacting in BAC content.

Problematic content posted or shared by anyone connected with BAC will be removed immediately where possible and escalated to the chair and president.

On identification of creation of false accounts, the platform developer will be informed as a matter of priority. Further information is provided on the government website: Charity guide for cybersecurity.

Where an apparent breach of law has occurred content must be removed or deleted immediately, and a full investigation initiated. Part of the investigation is to review if the social media policy was breached. BAC treasurer involvement is required where the BAC faces charges for any breach in the policy such as where unintentional copyright infringements have been identified.

In serious incidents a corrective public statement may be needed based on risk. Any serious incidents must be reported to the Charity commission in accordance with their policies.

Legal advice will be sort where appropriate.

All breaches will be reported to the full executive.

Reference

Charities and social media – January 2023 Gov.uk

[Draft guidance: charities use of social media - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/draft-guidance-charities-use-of-social-media)

Dirilenoglu F, Önal B. A welcoming guide to social media for cytopathologists: Tips, tricks, and the best practices of social cytopathology. Cytojournal. 2019 Feb 11;16:4. doi: 10.4103/cytojournal.cytojournal_1_18. PMID: 30820234; PMCID: PMC6388539.