



PAUSE. THINK. POST.

Your professional, ethical and legal obligations extend beyond your clinic or office. Inappropriate professional and personal online activity, whether you are using your title or not, could cause harm to patients and reflect poorly on the profession.

Examples of social media platforms



+ discussion forums, including both general and dentistry-specific forums and dental practice websites.

BEFORE YOU POST...

- Avoid posting in haste, anger or frustration.
- Consider implications. Ask yourself “Is this a controversial topic?” “Would my patients feel comfortable reading this post?”
- Be mindful of your language and avoid profanity, slurs, glib statements or sarcasm, as these could be considered disrespectful and inflammatory.

Read our practice advisory on [Professional Use of Social Media](#) for more information.



Questions? Contact
practiceadvisory@rcdso.org



AVOID DISCRIMINATORY CONDUCT

- Refrain from posting content likely to seem unprofessional, unethical or cause offense.
- Disparaging remarks about individuals or discriminatory behaviour toward people is unacceptable. Read the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) for more information.



DISCUSSING DENTISTRY

- Be a responsible disseminator of information. Share accurate content from reliable sources and be respectful to your peers.
- You should comment only within your area of expertise and ensure all content meets College standards regarding treatment and patient care.



MAINTAIN BOUNDARIES

- If dentists interact with patients or persons closely associated with patients online, they must maintain the boundaries of the patient-dentist relationship outlined in the College’s practice advisory on [Maintaining a professional patient-dentist relationship](#).
- When receiving an online “friend”, “follower” or “connection” request from a patient, it may be best to politely refuse and explain it is beyond the scope of your professional relationship.



PROTECT PRIVACY

- Dentists must not post patient information online, including pictures or videos, without the patient’s explicit consent. Read the [Advice on the Use of Patient Images](#) article for more information.
- Use a dedicated professional email or web link to follow up with patients.



ONLINE MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

- All marketing, advertising and communication must comply with the practice advisory on [Professional Advertising](#).
- Be mindful of the title you use online. Dentists are allowed to advertise and hold themselves out by their registration category only, as described in the College’s [Use of qualifications, titles and designations](#) article.