

The CANVASSING CODE

Relating to three-yearly elections to the post of the RCPsych President and Five-yearly elections to the posts of RCPsych Registrar, Dean and Treasurer

Canvassing means trying to persuade an elector to vote for or against a particular candidate or party, as defined by the Electoral Commission in the UK

1. The Canvassing Code sets out the manner in which all candidates for the posts of RCPsych President, Registrar, Dean and Treasurer are required to conduct canvassing, during the elections that take place on either a three-yearly cycle (for the President) or five-yearly cycle (for the other Honorary Officers).
2. The RCPsych supports canvassing and indeed encourages it, but it is essential that, in the interests of clarity and to provide a fair process for all candidates, while also encouraging informed participation, the Code is fully complied with.
3. Canvassing by candidates is therefore allowed, subject to compliance at all times with the terms and conditions of this Code and with the terms and spirit of the RCPsych's "Officers, College Members, Lay People and Employees: Joint Code of Conduct" (Appendix 1), the RCPsych's "Values and Behaviours" (Appendix 2) and the RCPsych's Social Media Policy (Appendix 3).
4. All candidates are required to prepare personal election addresses, limited to a maximum of 500 words, which will be uploaded to the RCPsych website and linked to the RCPsych's centrally managed social media accounts.
5. All candidates are required to produce a 50-word summary election address statement for use on College communication channels. Presidential candidates are also required to produce an edited version of their personal election address, limited to a maximum 250 words, which will be published in the RCPsych College membership magazine, RCPsych Insight.
6. Presidential candidates will be required to record a three-minute election video, recorded as live, for which the RCPsych will provide assistance, and which will be used on College communication channels.
7. All candidates will be required to take part in a hustings event that will take place in the last week of the election campaign. During the hustings event, candidates will be required to make a statement, after which there will be a live "Q&A" session, to be officiated by the current President or a senior member chosen by the President.
8. The RCPsych may facilitate an online "Q&A" to be hosted for a period of time to start in the first week of the campaign. It will be managed by the RCPsych on the RCPsych website.
9. All candidates can address RCPsych committee meetings or events during the election period. Where a committee facilitates one candidate to address its members, they must make all reasonable efforts to invite all of the other candidates standing for the same office to address its members at the same meeting or event, provided that this does not become a hustings event.
10. College committees cannot hold their own full scale hustings events. It is also important that the College committees inviting the candidates treat them fairly and equally including how they may organise their travel to and from the event.

11. There will be a set number of College meetings/events (other than the hustings event) that candidates will attend, and the request by the Faculties, Divisions and Devolved Nations will have to be signed off by the Chief Executive.
12. Candidates should not attend any other events during the election period, such as those hosted by Trusts and hospitals for campaigning purposes.
13. Canvassing by candidates and their supporters on their personal social media is allowed, but this must comply with the College Values, in particular the value of respect and comply at all times with this Code and those codes referred to in Section 3.
14. Use of RCPsych social media, email accounts or mailing lists for canvassing purposes, including those of RCPsych committees, is prohibited.
15. Candidates must not approach any member of College staff for assistance in their canvassing for election.
16. Members of the RCPsych Board of Trustees must not endorse nominations for any individual candidate, nor should they campaign for any candidate (unless campaigning for their own election to a particular office). Other RCPsych office or post holders are allowed to openly support individual candidates but must do so in their personal capacity, not as an office or post holder of the RCPsych and not through any RCPsych channels or using RCPsych resources including contact details of members.
17. Canvassing by personal email and phone is allowed.
18. In their personal election address, candidates may include links to their own social media accounts and/or a URL to a personal website. Candidates may also make available for download from their social media accounts and personal websites, any live recordings made, as referred to in this Code, and the podcasts from the hustings.
19. Information about candidates standing in the elections for Honorary Officer roles may be made known by Chairs of College committees or groups to members, but such information must include the names of all the candidates and must not advocate support for any one particular candidate.
20. Social media accounts of RCPsych committees and groups must not advocate support for any candidate in an election, neither can they be critical of any particular candidate.
21. The RCPsych does not provide funding for candidates' campaigns.
22. Candidates can spend their own money on permissible activities such as, travel and accommodation. If in doubt, please contact the Chief Executive.
23. Money spent on elections by candidates is **NOT** to be used for media, political or web advice, or any form of marketing or advertising
24. Receipts for money spent on election activities are to be submitted to the Chief Executive every month until the election concludes. If candidates are uncertain whether the spending is appropriate then they should contact the Chief Executive. The following restrictions apply to canvassing by candidates:
 - (a) candidates and their supporters must not use, or attempt to access, any databases or other records held by the RCPsych, including any of its committees or groups, and nor can they use their own personal databases for any purpose connected to the

elections to the extent that those databases include contact information for members held by the RCPsych;

- (b) candidates and their supporters must not use any RCPsych email address, RCPsych social media accounts, branding or stationery or any RCPsych resources to conduct canvassing;
 - (c) candidates must not conduct any canvassing through the national media or press, and nor should any comments or responses be made to journalists, the national media or press by candidates, including through social media. Any enquiries received must be referred immediately to the Strategic Communications department at the RCPsych;
 - (d) candidates must not engage paid-for agents, external organisations, or any non-RCPsych members to act for them in the conduct of their canvassing; Candidates must not accept endorsement from external organisations. External organisations must not encourage their members or affiliates to vote for any specific candidate. If candidates become aware of endorsement or encouragement from an external organisation, they should inform the Chief Executive immediately.
 - (e) candidates must ensure that any statements or claims made by them or their supporters are accurate, fair, reasonable and not misleading;
 - (f) candidates and their supporters must not make any adverse comment about, or make reference to, another candidate's personal election address, or any live recording or podcast made pursuant to this Code, nor to another candidate's canvassing campaign generally and must not make any comments that are not in line with the RCPsych's Values (Appendix 2);
 - (g) candidates must at all times maintain the confidentiality, integrity and good standing of the election and its process and the RCPsych, and not bring the election or the RCPsych itself into disrepute; and
 - (h) RCPsych staff members must remain neutral and candidates must not request support from members of staff. If candidates would like College information, they should request this from the RCPsych Chief Executive Officer/Returning Officer or Head of Membership and Governance.
 - (i) Candidates should not be canvassing during the festive period in December (from 23 December to 4 January) to enable all candidates to have a restful festive period.
25. Where 'RCPsych communication channels' have been referred to, this includes those of Civica Election Services.
26. The RCPsych Chief Executive Officer/Returning Officer and Scrutineers reserves the right to determine whether or not a candidate is complying with this Code, and to take appropriate steps.
27. Candidates may be liable to disqualification from the election by the RCPsych Chief Executive Officer/Returning Officer and Scrutineers if found to be in breach of the spirit and terms of this Code.
28. The Code is mandatory for all candidates, and the RCPsych reserves the right to amend its terms and conditions as it sees fit.
29. The decision of the RCPsych Chief Executive Officer/Returning Officer on all matters relating to the Code shall be final and binding on all candidates.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists, October 2024

Appendix 1

Officers, College Members, Lay People and Employees: Joint Code of Conduct

Joint Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is the professional membership body of psychiatrists. We work to secure the best outcomes for people with mental illness, learning difficulties and developmental disorders by promoting excellent mental health services, training outstanding psychiatrists, promoting quality and research, and being the voice of psychiatry.

The RCPsych has over 20,000 members who are supported through the work of more than 380 staff across the UK and is one of the most influential medical royal colleges. We have played a key role in shaping modern psychiatry and ensuring that our standards of psychiatric practice provide the benchmark of the effective delivery of psychiatric services in the UK and many other nations around the world.

Working together

Since its foundation in 1971, the College has achieved its impact through its members, lay people and staff (employees and workers) working collaboratively as valued colleagues to promote excellent mental health care. Across RCPsych HQ and the RCPsych in the Devolved Nations, the Faculties and Divisions members of the College, lay people and staff work together in unison, respecting each other's expertise and the contribution they make.

Underlying principle

For the RCPsych to continue to operate effectively, it is critical that everyone involved in the organisation treats everyone with whom they work – College members, lay people and staff – with respect and courtesy.

Our Values

Our values underpin everything that we do at the College.

Our values are:

- Courage
- Innovation
- Respect
- Collaboration
- Learning
- Excellence

The RCPsych's Expectations

This document explains the RCPsych's expectations about the type of behaviours that are necessary for a successful working relationship to exist between College members, lay people and College staff.

'College members' means everyone involved in RCPsych activities across the UK including (but not limited to) Honorary Officers, Trustees, members of Council, members of Executive Committees of Faculties, Divisions and Special Interest Groups, Special Advisors and Leads.

Similarly, 'lay people' means everyone involved in RCPsych activities across the UK who are not staff or members of the College.

Behaviours

The behaviours in the document apply equally to working relationships solely involving College members, solely involving lay people and solely involving staff. It also applies to all lay people on all committees, groups and boards across the College.

The RCPsych offices are a professional business environment which may be culturally different from the closer-knit environment with which clinicians are familiar. All who share in the RCPsych's work (as staff, as lay people and as members) are entitled to be treated with the professional respect commonly found in a business environment. The College is also mindful of its obligations as an employer.

To this end we are committed to ensuring that College members, lay people and staff are not subjected to behaviour that may be considered to be out of place in a professional environment or unlawful. We want anyone who genuinely feels they have been subjected to inappropriate behaviour to be empowered to speak out by using the appropriate College policies and procedures, as set out at the end of this document.

The law: The Equality Act 2010

Everyone in Britain is protected by the Equality Act 2010. The "protected characteristics" under the Act are (in alphabetical order):

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Further, in Northern Ireland Section 75 of, and Schedule 9 to, the Northern Ireland Equality Act 1998 should be observed.

What behaviour is unlawful?

Under the Act people are not allowed to directly discriminate, indirectly discriminate, harass, or victimise another person because they have any of the protected

characteristics. Instructing, causing, inducing, and helping discrimination is also prohibited.

There is also protection against discrimination where someone is perceived to have one of the protected characteristics or where they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Unlawful behaviours

Some examples of unlawful behaviours are:

- Comments about the way someone looks which they may find demeaning
- Treating someone unfairly because of their marital status
- Indecent remarks
- Touching without permission
- Spreading malicious rumours about someone's sexuality

It is important to emphasise that although those exhibiting a particular behaviour may intend it to be friendly it is the way that behaviour is perceived by the recipient which normally determines whether it is appropriate.

Unacceptable Behaviours

This section should be read in conjunction with the RCPsych's *Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy*, which concerns bullying and harassment and makes specific reference to all forms of harassment in the context of working relationships, not only between staff but between RCPsych members and staff.

We have listed below examples of unacceptable behaviours. This is a non-exhaustive list.

Oral and written harassment:

- Verbal abuse of any kind
- Derogatory or abusive comments
- Offensive banter, insults, and taunts
- Emails or any form of written communication that is aggressive, rude, upsetting or which could amount to sexual or racial harassment, or harassment on the grounds of someone's disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or being or becoming transgender. Email harassment can arise simply from unreasonable repeated or unwanted requests, or messages containing sexual or racial innuendos
- Distasteful jokes or ridicule and making someone the butt of jokes
- Asking intimate questions about someone's personal life
- Gossip, speculation or malicious rumours
- Transmission or display of pornographic or sexually suggestive images
- Suggesting sexual favours that may further an employee's career or that refusal may hinder it

Other personal harassment:

- Individuals can also experience harassment based on disability, race or national origin, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, age, gender, being or becoming transgender, or sexual orientation

- Assumptions based on stereotyping
- Asking unwanted intimate questions

Our Behavioural Expectations

What we expect of staff (staff and workers)

What members and lay people should expect from staff:

- Using their knowledge, skills, and expertise to deliver the best possible service
- Listening to views and trying their best to understand and solve problems
- Taking responsibility for problems and getting back to people when they say they will
- Being honest about what they can and cannot do
- Giving a balanced view of the facts
- Being courteous, respectful, and helpful
- Recognising members' expertise
- To inform the necessary individuals if agreed actions have not been implemented within a reasonable time
- Appropriate use of social media as set out in the RCPsych's Social Media Policy

What we expect of members

This section asks members involved in College work to make a number of specific commitments, including observing the Nolan Principles of conduct in public life.

What staff and lay people should expect from members:

- Being courteous, respectful, and supportive
- Being challenged in a constructive way at the right time and place
- Listening and understanding
- Respect for their areas of expertise
- Respect for management authority
- Freedom to say to members when something is not achievable due to resource or time constraints
- An understanding that the relationship between College members and lay people/staff is not the same as between clinicians, clinical managers and members of the clinical team.
- Appropriate use of social media as set out in the College's Social Media Policy.

What we expect of lay people and other members of multi-disciplinary team involved in the work of the College.

This section asks those involved in College work to make a number of specific commitments, including observing the Nolan Principles of conduct in public life.

What members and staff should expect from lay people

- Being courteous, respectful, and supportive
- Being challenged in a constructive way at the right time and place
- Listening and understanding
- Respect for their areas of expertise

- Respect for management authority
- Freedom to say to members and staff when something is not achievable due to resource or time constraints
- An understanding that the relationship between lay people and College members/ staff is not the same as between patients/carers and clinicians and members of the clinical team
- Appropriate use of social media as set out in the College's Social Media Policy (August 2013)

How to raise a concern

Below is a list of related policies and procedures that should be read in conjunction with this Behaviour Framework and followed dependent on the nature of the concern. Some policies only apply to staff of RCPsych. Each policy contains an explanation as to the parameters of the policy and details the relevant process as applicable.

To raise a concern please contact your normal College contact/ Chief Executive Officer/ Honorary Officer/Complaints Manager

Please note that each policy, where possible, in this list has been hyperlinked to allow ease of access (read only access).

- Grievance
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment
- Disciplinary
- Whistleblowing
- Conflict of Interest
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Social Media
- Remit and Procedures of the Disciplinary and Complaints Committee ([Disciplinary and Complaints Committee \(rcpsych.ac.uk\)](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk)) Complaints Procedure – for College staff ([THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS \(rcpsych.ac.uk\)](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk))
- Complaints Process for Workers ([complaints-process-for-workers---feb-2021.pdf \(rcpsych.ac.uk\)](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk))
- Exam Code of Conduct ([mrcpsych-code-of-conduct-for-examination-candidates--march-2022.pdf](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk))

All Members will support the College in maintaining the integrity of College exams. Members will take no action that could jeopardies the integrity of the exams. They will support the College in ensuring that trainees comply with the exams code of conduct.

Each policy listed above is subject to regular review, or there is a significant change in employment law.

Sanctions

Failure to adhere to the behaviours stated in this framework may result in sanctions in line with the College's policies as listed above up to and including dismissal, removal from membership, and removal from office.

Appendix 2

Values and Behaviours

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS **VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS**

COURAGE

- Champion the specialty of psychiatry and its benefits to patients
- Take every opportunity to promote and influence the mental health agenda
- Take pride in our organisation and demonstrate self-belief
- Promote parity of esteem
- Uphold the dignity of those affected by mental illness, intellectual disabilities and developmental disorders

INNOVATION

- Embrace innovation and improve ways to deliver services
- Challenge ourselves and be open to new ideas
- Seek out and lead on new, and where possible evidence-based, ways of working
- Have the confidence to take considered risks
- Embrace the methodology of Quality Improvement to improve mental health services and the work of the College

RESPECT

- Promote diversity and challenge inequalities
- Behave respectfully – and with courtesy - towards everyone
- Challenge bullying and inappropriate behaviour
- Value everyone's input and ideas equally
- Consider how own behaviour might affect others
- Respect the environment and promote sustainability

COLLABORATION

- Work together as One College – incorporating all members, employees, patients and carers
- Work professionally and constructively with partner organisations
- Consult all relevant audiences to achieve effective outcomes for the College
- Work together with patients and carers as equal partners
- Be transparent, wherever possible and appropriate

LEARNING

- Learn from all experiences
- Share our learning and empower others to do the same
- Value and encourage personal feedback
- Use feedback to make continuous improvements
- Create an enabling environment where everyone is listened to, regardless of seniority
- Positively embrace new ways of working

EXCELLENCE

- Deliver outstanding service to members, patients, carers and other stakeholders
- Promote excellent membership and employee experience
- Always seek to improve on own performance
- Promote professionalism by acting with integrity and behaving responsibly
- Demonstrate accountability in all that we do
- Uphold the College's 'Core Values for Psychiatrists'

Appendix 3



Social Media Policy for employees, office and post holding Members, other College members and patient and carer representatives:

March 2022

1. Purpose of the document

This document highlights how the College expects all employees, Members and patient and carer representatives to conduct themselves on social media and social networking sites, when publishing internet posts or blogs, or when creating any other form of online material.

It applies to use which is related in any way to the College and the work of the College, as well as personal use that may affect the College in any way.

It also includes a reminder to all College members of the requirement to comply with the General Medical Council's guidance relating to social media.

Nothing in this policy is intended to suppress or prevent open, respectful discussion and debate.

2. Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all employees, workers, Members and patient and carer representatives.

For the purpose of this policy, "**Members**" means any member of the College who is also a Senior College Office Holder or Other College Post Holder.

Section 9 applies to members of the College who are not 'Members'.

3. What do we mean by social media?

By "social media" we mean Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok, Tumblr, Wordpress, Google + or any other online platform where you are publishing content to a network of people, which can be viewed publicly, shared and/or commented on. This includes the publishing of text, videos, podcasts, blog posts, comments, images and other content. It also includes your responses to other people's content.

4. Using personal social media accounts to promote and discuss the work of the College

The College welcomes employees, Members and patient and carer representatives supporting College communications by promoting positive messages about the work of the College on social media.

There are many ways to do this, including

- a) Re-tweeting or sharing tweets/posts from College accounts.
- b) Liking tweets or posts published by the College.
- c) Creating your own posts/tweets to publish positive messages about the work of the College and your work area in particular.
- d) Positively and respectfully engaging the wider public in the work of the College and psychiatry.

Have separate accounts for work use and personal use if possible

We ask that, rather than having social media accounts on which you publish posts about both your work and your personal life, you consider having separate accounts for each where possible.

Creating separate accounts for work and personal content will help to ensure that:

- a) you are able to tailor your posts appropriately to the target audience, and
- b) you are able to keep a clear separation between your professional and personal posts.

Please bear in mind, however, that even if you do have separate accounts for work and personal purposes, when you are posting from a personal account (particularly one which is publicly accessible) you may still be seen as connected to or affiliated with the College.

We therefore ask that you bear in mind and adhere to the values and Codes of Conduct of the College whenever posting content which relates to the College, the work of the College, your role with the College or which may affect the College in any way.

Bios

If as an employee, Member or patient and carer representative, you have set up a social media account on which you post content which is partially or entirely related to the work of the College, we ask that you make clear the nature of your affiliation with the College in your bio, and that you keep it up to date.

If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or any social media postings, you must include the disclaimer "all views are my own" (or otherwise make clear that your views do not represent those of the College) in your bio or post.

Posting content and commenting

When posting content or commenting on social media, you should be mindful that your posts or comments can have implications for the College's business and reputation. This includes posts and comments which relate to the College, its work or your role with the College, but also to personal posts and comments where you have outlined your affiliation with the College in your bio (or your affiliation with the College is otherwise known or apparent).

You should therefore ensure that your posts and comments don't contravene College values, any applicable College Code of Conduct or any other professional rules or Codes of Conduct which may apply to you.

Employees, Members and patient and carer representatives who have responsibility for relationships with politicians, decision makers and/or stakeholder organisations must take particular care if they have personal accounts and use these to promote College work. In such circumstances, you should not make statements that are overtly political or that could compromise College stakeholder and decision maker relationships.

More information about the behaviours and conduct expected from you when using social media, where such use has or may have an effect on the College or its work, is provided in Section 6 below.

Responding to negative comments about the College or College work

Please avoid responding to negative comments about the College on behalf of the College. Instead raise the negative comments with the College's Digital team in the first instance.

If you feel you are being harassed or bullied on social media, please refer to Section 7 of this document.

Doctors using personal social media for work reasons

Members who are practising doctors should familiarise themselves, and comply at all times, with the General Medical Council's guidance on Good medical practice and its specific guidance Doctors' use of social media.

- [Good medical practice](#)
- [Doctors' use of social media](#)

This policy is intended to be supplementary to the GMC guidance outlined above.

5. Using RCPsych social media accounts to promote and discuss the work of the College

The College has accounts on a range of social media channels including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. We also have a wide range of accounts on Twitter.

If you wish to create a new College social media account, please do not do so without contacting the Head of Digital first, who will explain the process.

If you post, comment or otherwise create content on a College account, you must comply with the expected behaviours and conduct set out in Section 6 of this document.

The College's Digital team has also produced guidelines to make sure what we publish on our social media channels is consistent in terms of design and tone of voice. Please ensure that you comply with these style guides when using College social media accounts. For more information please refer to the:

- Style guide for Twitter
- Style guide for Facebook
- Style guide for LinkedIn
- Style guide for Instagram

6. Standards of behaviour and conduct when using social media

Employees, Members and patient and carer representatives using social media (as described in section 3 above), where such use relates to the College, the work of the College, their role with the College or which may affect the College in any way, must comply with the following standards of behaviour and conduct at all times:

- 1) You are personally responsible for your posts and comments, which will be published on the internet and may be viewed publicly. They can be hard to delete once published and may remain online for a long time. Reflect carefully on these guidelines below before publishing content or commenting.

Make sure content and comments are appropriate

- 2) You should take care, and use your best judgment, to ensure that you post material and make comments that are appropriate, respectful and do not contravene any applicable rules, regulations or laws.
- 3) Each social media channel has a set of terms and conditions, including around appropriate use; you should be familiar with these and comply with them.
- 4) If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with your line manager or other appropriate manager or senior College member.

Be respectful

- 5) Respect other people; posts and comments should not be abusive, intimidating, harassing, discriminatory, defamatory or offensive in nature, and should not be made to deliberately provoke others. We recommend that replies to any disagreements or negative comments are kept polite and professional at all times, regardless of how hostile or challenging these may be. One should remain mindful and understanding of differences of experiences. It might at times be preferable to 'agree to disagree' without getting into protracted debates.
- 6) If, in the context of content or a post relating to the College or its work, you feel provoked by what you consider to be a negative or personal comment, please try not to respond and contact the RCPsych Digital Team in the first instance.

Do not publish inappropriate content or comments

- 7) Do not publish content or images which:
 - Are defamatory or disparaging.
 - Are harassing or bullying.
 - Are discriminatory.
 - Are false or misleading, or impersonate colleagues or third parties.

Do not damage the College's reputation

- 8) Be aware of the effects your actions on social media may have on your professional reputation, as well as the reputation of the RCPsych as an organisation and its employees and Members (in the broader sense of the definition). You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage the reputation of the RCPsych.
- 9) You must not express opinions on our behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so by your manager or a senior College member.

Do not publish confidential information

- 10) Do not publish, post or release anything publicly which is confidential or not intended to be seen by the public. For example, you must not post comments about sensitive business-related topics or do anything to jeopardise our confidential information or intellectual property. If you are unsure about when is considered confidential, please check with the Human Resources department.
- 11) When posting in relation to the work of the College, do not promote commercial products and services.
- 12) Be very cautious about revealing personal details about yourself, and do not reveal personal details about other people. Don't reveal personal contact details such as phone numbers, email addresses or postal addresses.
- 13) When publishing in relation to a College event, please make sure the speaker has given permission for the talk to be covered on social media, and/or for pictures of the speaker and their slides to be published (as applicable). There are some instances where social media coverage of any form is prohibited, or information from some slides is not for sharing more broadly than with those in the room. There are also instances where photos and videos are not permitted. It is important to always understand the policy at any given event, and seek consent for publication before doing so.

Comply with safeguarding and GDPR requirements

- 14) When publishing content and images, please comply with the College's policy on safeguarding and GDPR, and seek consent from any applicable third parties in advance of publication.
 - You must get appropriate permission before referring to, or posting content or images relating to, current or former employees, workers, Members (in the broader sense of the definition), patient and carer representatives, vendors or suppliers.
 - You must get appropriate permission to use a third party's copyrighted or trademarked material, or other intellectual property (including text, quotes, logos and images).
 - When posting a picture be careful not to include confidential information or information you have not obtained consent to post by mistake, including (but not limited to) addresses on envelopes or stickers on laptops.
- 15) If as an employee you have concerns about the mental or physical wellbeing of someone who gets in touch via one of the College social media accounts, please contact the Public Information and Engagement Manager who deals with incoming calls from members of the public concerning mental health issues.

Refer media queries to the College

- 16) If you are approached by the media on social media, please refer the enquiry to the media team, in the Strategic Communications department.

Adhere to College values and codes of conduct

17) The College's values underpin everything we do and must be taken into account when posting in relation to RCPsych or its work, and in circumstances where your post may affect the College in any way. Below are each value and the behaviours which we expect from our employees, Members and patient and carer representatives.

- Courage

- Champion the specialty of psychiatry and its benefits to patients
- Take every opportunity to promote and influence the mental health agenda
- Take pride in our organisation and demonstrate self-belief
- Promote parity of esteem
- Uphold the dignity of those affected by mental illness, intellectual disabilities and developmental disorders

- Innovation

- Embrace innovation and improve ways to deliver services
- Challenge ourselves and be open to new ideas
- Seek out and lead on new and, where possible, evidence-based, ways of working
- Have the confidence to take considered risks
- Embrace the methodology of Quality Improvement to improve mental health services and the work of the College

- Respect

- Promote diversity and challenge inequalities
- Behave respectfully – and with courtesy - towards everyone
- Challenge bullying and inappropriate behaviour
- Value everyone's input and ideas equally
- Consider how own behaviour might affect others
- Respect the environment and promote sustainability

- Collaboration

- Work together as One College – incorporating all Members, employees, patients and carers
- Work professionally and constructively with partner organisations
- Consult all relevant audiences to achieve effective outcomes for the College
- Work together with patients and carers as equal partners
- Be transparent, wherever possible and appropriate

- Learning

- Learn from all experiences
- Share our learning and empower others to do the same
- Value and encourage personal feedback
- Use feedback to make continuous improvements
- Create an enabling environment where everyone is listened to, regardless of seniority
- Positively embrace new ways of working

- Excellence

- Deliver outstanding service to Members, patients, carers and other stakeholders
- Promote excellent membership and employee experience

- o Always seek to improve on own performance
- o Promote professionalism by acting with integrity and behaving responsibly
- o Demonstrate accountability in all that we do
- o Uphold the College's '[Core Values for Psychiatrists](#)'

18) In addition Members should take into account the RCPsych Core values for psychiatrists:

- Communication: successful conveying or sharing of information, ideas and feelings
- Dignity: being worthy of respect
- Empathy: showing the ability to understand and share the feelings of another
- Fairness: treating people equally without favouritism or discrimination
- Honesty: truthful and sincere
- Humility: having a modest view of one's importance
- Respect: due regard for the feelings, wishes or rights of others
- Trust: firm belief in the reliability, truth or ability of someone

19) Members should also take into account the RCPsych Framework for Senior College Office Holders and Other College Post Holders and comply with the associated Code of Conduct.

Report misuse of social media to the College

20) If you become aware of any misuse of social media, or if you see social media content which disparages or reflects poorly on the College, you should report this to the College's Head of Digital

7. If you feel you are being bullied or harassed

We encourage employees, Members and patient and carer representatives to block, and if appropriate report, any users they feel are bullying, harassing or insulting them on their personal social media accounts.

If you feel you are being bullied or harassed on a College social media account, or by a College member of employees, Member or patient and carer representative, please refer to the applicable College anti-bullying and harassment policy for further information on how to escalate your concerns.

8. Breaches of this policy

All employees, Members and carer and patient representatives are required to adhere to this policy.

Staff should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action under the applicable College disciplinary policy. Serious breaches of this policy - for example, incidents of bullying or harassment of colleagues, or social media activity causing serious damage to the College or its reputation - may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to summary dismissal.

Any individual suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with any associated investigation we may carry out.

You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

9. For other College members

Other College members who are practising doctors are reminded that they should familiarise themselves and comply at all times with the General Medical Council's guidance Good medical practice and its specific guidance Doctors' use of social media.

- [Good medical practice](#)
- [Doctors' use of social media](#)

10. The status of this policy

This policy does not form part of the contracts of employment of any College employees or workers, and we may amend it from time to time as we consider appropriate.

11. Kate's Twitter tips

Twitter is the most heavily used social media platform by College staff and Members. The College's Dean from 2016-2021, Dr Kate Lovett, shares her tips below on how to successfully run a Twitter account.

Kate's Twitter Tips



<https://youtu.be/V9FGFOU0JHQ>