POSITION STATEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

The International Society of Plastic and Aesthetic Nurses (ISPAN) supports and encourages the responsible use of social media outlets as they relate to professional nursing practice. Social media is playing an increasingly important role in plastic and aesthetic nursing (Montemurro, Porcnik, Heden, & Otte, 2015). It is virtually impossible to control the quality of all information available to patients via the Internet, but it is the duty of all plastic and aesthetic nurses to ensure that any information shared in one’s capacity as a registered nurse be accurate, professional, and in the best interest of any current or potential patients (American Nurses Association (ANA), 2017; Montemurro et al., 2015).

RATIONALE

Social media outlets present multiple benefits to the plastic and aesthetic nurse; however, sharing inappropriate or inaccurate information can pose a substantial barrier to the delivery of safe and patient-centered care (ANA, 2017; Hagopian, 2019).

Social media offers a form of communication that can reach a very specific audience in an instant (Montemurro et al., 2015). This communication can facilitate collaborations among healthcare providers, an exchange of ideas leading to innovations in the way care is provided, the dispersion of valuable healthcare education, and the promotion of nursing as a profession (ANA, 2017). For the field of plastic and aesthetic nursing, in particular, it offers a readily available and effective form of advertisement (Montemurro et al., 2015). When utilized appropriately and monitored continuously, social media may benefit plastic and aesthetic patients.

Social media presents multiple barriers to the delivery of safe and patient-centered care. Misleading advertising and inaccurate information shared by non-professionals can contribute to the development of unrealistic and unsafe patient expectations (Montemurro et al., 2015). There is a risk of information being shared that compromises patient privacy; this directly violates the ethical obligations of all registered professional nurses (ANA, 2015; ANA, 2017). Another potential ethical violation that accompanies participation in social media is the breach of boundaries within the patient-nurse relationship; relationships that extend beyond the promotion, restoration, and
protection of a patient’s health are unprofessional (ANA, 2015; ANA, 2017). When social media is utilized by the registered professional nurse, in the capacity of the registered professional nurse, efforts must be made to ensure that the information being shared is appropriate and accurate and that it does not violate patient confidentiality.

**ISPAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

Plastic and aesthetic registered nurses should:

- Reflect on the content of a post before sharing it (National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN), 2018).
- Understand that any content posted to the Internet is legally discoverable by a court of law, even once it has been deleted (NCSBN, 2018).
- Engage in continuous review of any content shared via social media to avoid complacency, whether intentional or not, with deceptive advertisements (Hagopian, 2019).
- Educate patients to encourage the use of reputable and reliable resources when researching potential procedures and/or products (Montemurro et al., 2015).
- Protect the privacy of patients by refraining from posting or transmitting identifiable information online (ANA, 2017; NCSBN, 2018).
- Maintain the boundaries of a professional nurse-patient relationship by maintaining separate professional and personal social media accounts (ANA, 2017).

**REFERENCES**


**DISCLAIMER**

These clinical practice guidelines and/or recommendations and/or other guidance published herein are provided by the International Society of Plastic and Aesthetic Nurses to assist practitioners in clinical decision-making. The information should not be relied upon as being complete and should not be considered inclusive of all proper treatments, methods of care, or as a statement of the standard of care. All guidelines and recommendations require periodic revision to ensure that clinicians utilize appropriate procedures, and that the materials encompass the recent critical review of literature and expert opinion. The reader must realize that clinical judgment may justify a course of action outside of the recommendations contained herein.

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