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# Social media and eprofessionalism in pharmacy students.

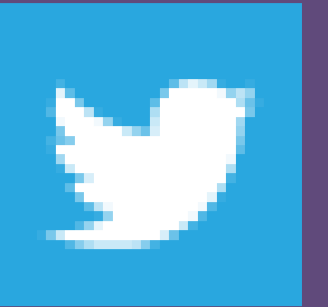
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# Social media and eprofessionalism in pharmacy students

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## Introduction

- 🐦 Literature suggests inappropriate use of social media (SoMe) is evident amongst undergraduate (UG) pharmacy students
- 🐦 Lack of understanding by UG students of how online behaviour may have implications for their Fitness to Practise (FtP)
- 🐦 Need for guidance which will be acceptable and directly applicable to UG pharmacy students

This study sought to develop peer-group designed recommendations for pharmacy student SoMe guidelines.

## Method

Qualitative activity-based focus groups conducted with UG pharmacy students

Topic guide informed by existing literature and previous study

Themes inducted from analysis of focus groups using the topic guide as a framework

Ethical approval granted by RGU School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences



## Results

Focus groups conducted across 4 Stages of MPharm (n=32 students)

The majority did not use SoMe guidelines, despite daily SoMe use, but used personal judgement to decide on appropriate SoMe content

There was no agreement on 'appropriate behaviours'; general concerns emerged around guidance impinging personal personas and impacting perceptions of professionalism

Some elements of existing guidance were seen as valuable but lacked balance of content/tone and examples of appropriate SoMe behaviours

## Conclusions

- 🐦 SoMe guidelines for UG pharmacy students should address concerns surrounding eprofessionalism
- 🐦 Guidelines should include examples of good practice, yet should contain clear 'points for practice' in a simple, user-friendly format alongside a video or lecture presentation
- 🐦 Student-specific guidance was viewed as beneficial to support UG students, in particular, with the blurred boundaries between personal-professional personas



The results of this study have been used to inform the delivery of SoMe support for students with the RGU MPharm course. Further research is being undertaken to explore the definition of appropriate online behaviours and provision of guidance as part of doctoral studies. With thanks to Louise Brown, Cameron MacKay, Liu Ping Nam, Liam Scullion, Lara Seymour and Arran Sidhu for their role in data collection.