

Social Media Guidelines for MS Ireland Branches

Introduction

Most people now have some form of social media account, whether it's on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram

MS Ireland encourages the use of social networking sites to help promote the work and activities of our Branches. Social media is really just another way of sharing content and engaging with people. Social media channels can work alongside more traditional channels of communication- magazines, newspapers, books, websites, etc. as ways of sharing knowledge and immediacy, allowing real-time engagement with readers/users.

We use social media across all of our work here at MS Ireland. We use it to campaign, to raise awareness of the condition, to ask people to support our events and lots of other things too. It's a great way of reaching lots of people and making sure they know all about our work.

A lot of our volunteers, supporters and staff are all on social media too. They use it to help share information about MS Ireland but also their private lives. We have a strong presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and find that social media is allowing us to support more and more people living with MS each year. And by connecting with us on social channels, and sharing positive stories, you can really help us spread the word.

However, there are a few general rules that we ask you to follow when you're referring to us online, joining in the conversation or using the MS Ireland brand. Sometimes these are for legal reasons but they are mostly intended as 'house rules' with plenty of tips and helpful pointers. If you are ever confused about using social media in relation to MS Ireland, please get in touch with your comms@ms-society.ie

Nationally, MS Ireland uses the following social networking sites to update the MS Community and stakeholders:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Instagram](#)

Setting up your Social page

If your Branch is considering setting up a Facebook page, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

Branches can create a Facebook page but should **not** use the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland logo unless it has been amended to include the name of their voluntary branch.

Please see screenshots below for the 'Galway Branch logo' – if you don't have a branch logo, please email comms@ms-society.ie for



Branch Logo

Branch Cover photo

Upload Branch logo and cover image where applicable

Upload your branch logo – please email comms@ms-society.ie for official branch logo

In the 'About' section please insert the following statement:

This is the official Facebook page for the (insert branch name) Voluntary Branch of MS Ireland.

The page is run by the Volunteers of the (insert branch name) Voluntary Branch of MS Ireland and the views and opinions may not necessarily reflect the official position of MS Ireland.

Tips and Hints

- Promote your local branch events/activities
- Spell check (type text in word, spell check & copy/paste)
- If unsure, don't post it. You should err on the side of caution when posting. Contact comms@ms-society.ie if unsure
- Don't make promises without checking. Social networks are very public, so don't make any commitments or promises on behalf of the Society without checking that the charity can deliver on the promises.
- Fact check. Don't post links to information that isn't from a reputable source. Check with Aoifek@ms-society.ie for a reputable source.
- Handle complex enquires via other channels. i.e. National office or the information line.
- Remember, anything you say can be made public. Your privacy settings won't necessarily stop people sharing your posts.
- If taking photos, inform people that they may appear on social media platforms, if people don't want this then politely asked them to step out.
- If you require a social media consent form, please contact comms@ms-society.ie
- Posting often, and at optimal times (i.e, not in the middle of the night)
- Provide followers with an insight into what goes on both locally & nationally.
- Be yourself – try to write posts as you would speak to someone in real life, we're all human, after all.
- Keep it simple.
- Use a trusted website link to show your followers more information.
- Use photos or videos when you can, they are proven to engage with a greater number of people.
- Think about whom you are talking to in your posts and what kind of message you want to convey.
- Think about who is going to see your post – if you are in doubt about the content of your post or worry that it might offend others, contact aoifek@ms-society.ie
- Unfortunately, almost everything we post online can be copied and shared, even with private social media accounts.
- If you want to protect your personal privacy, change your social media settings to private.
- Be kind, supportive and enthusiastic

We are here to help, if you have any issues/difficulties please contact comms@ms-society.ie