

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Social media: Who? Me? Why?

If you are interested in stepping into social media, the AMA can help you get started – and stay healthy while doing so.

Social media has a massive impact on today's society in every dimension. Many Alberta physicians have been active and highly effective as activists to support their profession. The social media environment is not an easy one. You may have observed from a distance and wondered if you would ever – or should ever – venture in yourself.

Undoubtedly, social media offers one more venue where physicians can perform their professional role as defined by the [CanMEDS Framework](#) of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPS).

With respect to the advocacy role, the RCPS states: “As Health Advocates, physicians contribute their expertise and influence as they work with communities or patient populations to improve health. They work with those they serve to determine and understand needs, speak on behalf of others when required, and support the mobilization of resources to effect change.”

From this perspective, you might begin using social media because you are passionate about advocating for a certain health care issue. You might want to support a cause. You might want to influence others by serving as an example or providing advice. Social media can support all these goals.

At the same time – and to use an evocative phrase – social media can be like trying to sip from a fire hose. There can be a lot of pressure from your first forays. The pace can be unrelenting. Making time for social media is another aspect of screen time that must be managed. There are undoubtedly many angry individuals looking for places to fight. Social media has offered an unprecedented incubator for unhealthy personalities with whom you may be challenged to interact.

To help ensure that your social media experience will be as productive and healthy as possible, the AMA is offering *Social Media 101*. The training provides perspective on how members can work in social media by intentionally establishing or refining their presence. The goal is that members consciously follow the parameters of their own brand to guide how they interact, and to what ends — and where they will not interact. The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta has developed [Advice to the Profession for Social Media](#).

Our trainer, [Linda Hoang](#), has worked with the AMA since the *Share the Care* social media campaign of March 2020 and through our negotiations and advertising programs in 2020-21. She currently supports us by managing high-volume periods on social media and providing ongoing support and strategy for our efforts.

Social Media 101 sessions are available throughout the year. [Learn more here](#).

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