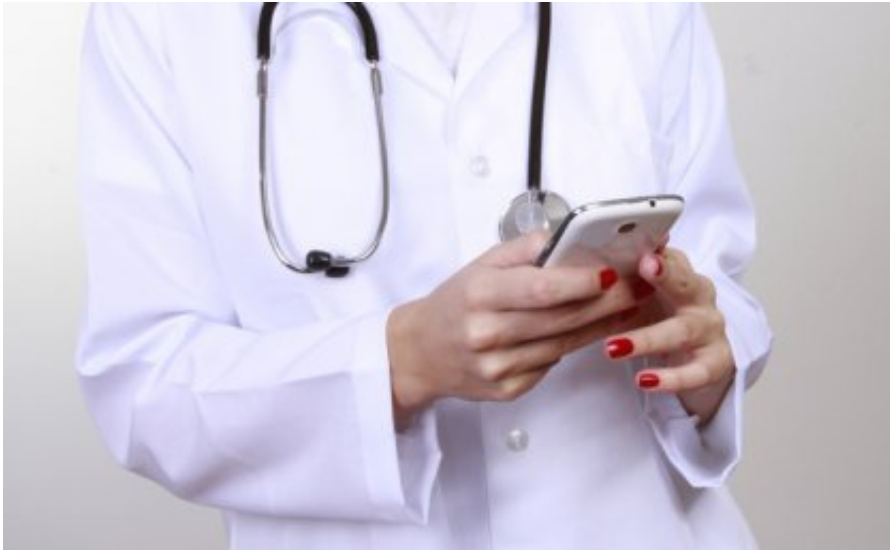


# What is your nurse saying on social media?

October 29 2015

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More than a quarter of new nurses and midwives are unaware of the standards for social media in their workplace, though for the most part, they are a responsible bunch.

Research by Dr Anthony Tuckett of The University of Queensland School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work analysed use of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram among recent graduates in Australia and New Zealand.

"The overwhelming majority – 97 per cent – accepted that there are purposes for which social media ought not be used in their profession,"

Dr Tuckett said.

"They provided almost 100 situations they would avoid where they felt usage was unprofessional, malevolent, illegal or unethical.

"However only 72 per cent said they were aware of the professional standards governing use in their country of registration.

"Given that all but seven per cent of [nurses](#) and midwives surveyed indicated they used social media, we argue it is very important to raise this level of awareness."

A total of 112 respondents were surveyed by Dr Tuckett and colleague Professor Catherine Turner, 46 per cent of whom studied in Australia and 54 per cent of whom studied in New Zealand.

Undertaken in 2014, the research showed Facebook was used by 97 per cent of survey subjects, followed by 46 per cent for YouTube, 42 per cent for Pinterest and 36 per cent for Instagram.

There was minimal usage among recent graduate nurses and midwives for Twitter, LinkedIn, Google Plus, Tumblr and Vimeo, and zero use of Flickr and AboutMe.

"I found the low usage of LinkedIn (eight per cent) and Twitter (five per cent) somewhat remarkable, given they are platforms that can be used to contact fellow professionals and market expertise," Dr Tuckett said.

"Twitter is already widely cited as used by health consumers as a means to spread public health messages and monitor ongoing health issues.

"Our results suggest that for these young healthcare professionals, the utility of social media might not have been explained or reinforced in a

professional development context."

Aside from social and educational purposes, survey participants revealed the most common reason they used [social media](#) was to "look at funny cat pictures".

Dr Tuckett presented the research at June's International Council of Nurses conference at Seoul, South Korea.

The contents have been accepted by the *International Journal of Nursing Practice* for publication.

Provided by University of Queensland

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