

Harness the Power of Social Media for Advocacy

Social media can be a powerful advocacy tool because it gives you easy access to your representatives in government. Many elected officials use social media to share information with their constituents directly. You can use social media to communicate with your legislators in the same way when advocating for policies that impact your patients and the practice of medicine.

What makes social media an effective medium for interacting with elected officials is the immediacy and public nature of the communication. Legislators' offices will often see and respond quickly to an engagement on social media. This makes social media especially useful when advocating for an issue that is time-sensitive — for instance, if a vote is about to occur on a piece of legislation that is important to you.

This guide assumes that you are already familiar with the basics of social media platforms and focuses on how to use those platforms specifically to communicate with legislators' offices.

GET STARTED BY FOLLOWING THE MMS

The MMS has established a presence across the major social media platforms, with influential members, the mainstream media, legislators, and other key stakeholders following the Society. We leverage these social media channels to maximize our efforts to advocate on behalf of you, our members, your patients, and the profession. The Society encourages members to engage with and amplify the Society's social media activity via our established social media channels.



- Instagram: [@massmedicalsociety](#)
- Facebook: [facebook.com/massmed](#)
- LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/massachusetts-medical-society](#)
- Presidential Instagram: [@MMS_President](#)

KNOW YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Identify Learn who represents you at the state and federal levels by visiting the Massachusetts Secretary of State's Elections Division [website](#).



Follow Elected officials have social media accounts for the same reason they have phone numbers and emails: they want to hear from their constituents. Effective advocacy through social media begins with strong relationships with your elected officials. By following them on social media, you can track what issues your elected officials are prioritizing, as well as upcoming events, town halls, and debates. Send a message to your elected officials to introduce (or reintroduce yourself) and engage with them on social media about issues of importance to you.

Follow-up You might not receive a response on social media, but your message still gets through. If you have time, it's always wise to follow-up your social media engagement with a phone call or email to your elected official(s). When you meet them in person, let them know that you've been interacting with them on social media (specify the channel). When they can connect the messages with the people sending them, they pay attention.

DIGITAL ADVOCACY GUIDELINES FOR MMS MEMBERS



Per the MMS bylaws, the President is the official spokesperson of the Society, unless that duty is designated on a case-by-case basis to a subject matter expert by the President. This applies to all communication methods, from media interviews to social media activity and legislative advocacy opportunities.

Your voice is valuable to expanding the Society's advocacy efforts and utilizing our collective expertise and knowledge across the Commonwealth and beyond. The following presents guidelines and procedures for member involvement in digital advocacy that may impact the MMS.



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AMPLIFYING MEMBER VOICES AND STRENGTHENING THE MMS BRAND ON SOCIAL MEDIA



The Society encourages members to support MMS's advocacy initiatives via social media and to amplify our messaging, tagging MMS's main and presidential social media accounts when appropriate. When tagging the MMS in such posts, members' social media commentary should be in alignment with the [MMS's policy positions](#).

Members should always be judicious regarding participation in debates or discussions online because there are many unproductive comments and/or conversations on digital channels. In many cases, engaging with social media trolls or in negative debates can be harmful to an individual's reputation and/or the MMS's, as well as impact organizational goals. Never argue with an elected official on social media.

It is also important for individuals to be mindful of any policies their respective practices or employers may have with regard to the use of social media for advocacy or business-related purposes.

Members may consult with the MMS Communications team (communications@mms.org) regarding questions about social media strategy and best practices.

We encourage you to review the [additional resources](#) the Medical Society has curated for members about how to use social media professionally.



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