

## Social media policy

This policy outlines The Microbiome Group's commitment regarding interactions with clients, colleagues and others on social media and elsewhere online.

All are welcome to follow The Microbiome Group social media platforms on Facebook, Instagram and any other profile we may set up, as well as subscribe to our email newsletter and blog. Our official online profiles are:

<https://www.instagram.com/microbiomegroup>

<https://www.facebook.com/themicrobiomegroup>

<https://www.themicrobiomegroup.com/subscribe>

<https://www.themicrobiomegroup.com/blog>

1. Clients are entitled to share any information about our practice and their experiences of it, in any public or private setting, as they wish. We understand that some clients are very private about their treatment, while others like to share their experiences widely in blogs, articles, or conversations online or offline. We respect their preferences equally, and we never identify a client to anyone, online or offline, in our posts or comments.
2. We encourage clients to take their online privacy as seriously as we do their confidentiality. To respect our clients' privacy, we do not accept friend requests or follow personal or professional blogs, social media profiles or feeds, or subscribe to other online postings or email newsletters of past or current clients. The Microbiome Group practitioners may also have professional or personal profiles on social media, networking and other sites. We will not connect directly with past or current clients on these platforms either (eg establish 'connections' on LinkedIn) as this may give information that a client may prefer to remain private. The occasional exceptions are clients with who we have an established professional relationship (eg where a healthcare practitioner within our professional network is also a client). In these instances, we will still not identify them as a client.
3. We ask that any communication about a booking or any aspect of your work with one of our practitioners be made through the forms on our website or directly by email. The Microbiome Group cannot commit to responding to communications anywhere else, online, or offline. Contact through social media platforms is not secure and we do not actively monitor these messaging services.
4. We will not search for information about our clients online, view online profiles or activity or seek to communicate with clients through social media messaging.

The exception to this is in the rare event that we have good reason to be concerned for a client's safety, or the safety of others, and we have good reason to think we may find information that could be helpful. We will maintain respect for the client's privacy and check the accuracy of any information we find at their next session.

5. Our social media pages may be linked through likes or follows to other practitioner and relevant pages. Unless we have written a recommendation on their page, this should not be taken as our professional endorsement of their practice or product. We encourage people to ask us directly if they are interested in our opinion of the professional services of any pages we have linked to.
6. In the interests of open discussion and sharing, we have chosen to allow posts from the public to appear straightaway, without the need for approval. We will not delete negative feedback, but we will remove all posts that are impolite or abusive in content or tone. We will also delete all advertising, recommendations, or promotional posts, unless we have given permission for them to be posted. We will also remove posts if we feel concerned that they may be detrimental to anyone's privacy or safety, or if the posts don't fit broadly within the defined purpose of this policy.
7. We will never contact you via social media asking for payment, offering our services, requesting personal information or to promote any other product or service. We encourage our clients to be aware of fake accounts that impersonate individuals and organisations and report them as necessary.
8. We do not solicit reviews, testimonials, ratings, or recommendations from clients. Any recommendations or testimonials published on our social media profiles or elsewhere have been independently volunteered.
9. We may occasionally include clinical material, in general terms, within social media posts, or in more detail in professional articles, presentations and trainings – if we have the express permission of the client to do so. In every case, all identifying information will be removed or changed to protect client confidentiality.
10. There are various places where the Microbiome Group and our practitioners may be referenced online, and with the exception of our website and articles we have published, we cannot guarantee these are part of accurate or current information. We are always happy to discuss a client's responses to any online references, during a session, or if appropriate, through a brief email exchange.
11. Our social media profiles are a space free from AI-generated photos and video. We do not use AI to generate images, audio or video for our social media content, or to modify photos or videos in a way that misrepresents the subject or context. This commitment is set out in full in our AI Policy, available at [www.themicrobiomegroup.com/policies](http://www.themicrobiomegroup.com/policies)

*If a client has any comments, complaints, feedback or questions on this policy, we encourage them to bring this to our sessions or contact us by email: [contact@themicrobiomegroup.com](mailto:contact@themicrobiomegroup.com)*