



Ethical Policy for Photos, Videos, and Social Media

Child Family Health International (CFHI) is committed to promoting responsible and ethical photography and social media engagement among its participants. This policy outlines guidelines and expectations for representing CFHI through photos and videos taken, and content shared on social media. All CFHI participants are Global Ambassadors for Patient Safety (GAPS) and ethical, thoughtful global engagement that recognizes power and privilege, as well as presents individuals and communities in a strengths-based light.



By representing CFHI through social media outlets you acknowledge and will abide by our Photo and Social Media Ethics Policy, below.



Think Before You Share

Often, what seems obvious in retrospect is not so obvious at the moment. When deciding what pictures/videos to share on social media, take into consideration who you are featuring, what you are featuring, and where you are. Keep in mind how you are representing CFHI and yourself. First and foremost, you are a guest in the country and community. Just as you would at home, think about how a local person would want their community portrayed. Consider what the impacts of sharing are.



Consider that when you initially arrive in an environment, your opinions might be different from when you leave. Do not post negative comments if possible and consider other outlets for expressing negative sentiments. If you are posting things that can be construed negatively, consider doing so after you have spent significant time in the community and can make sure your comments are warranted.



Photography in the Clinical Setting

Unless you have gone through a process with CFHI to seek special written permission to take clinical photographs, **do NOT take photographs of people in clinical settings**. The potential risks to patients are high; those seeking medical care are in a state of vulnerability and all priorities should focus on patient well-being and safety. Even obtaining consent in a clinical setting presents a significant challenge, as power differentials between patient and provider (or student) can influence a patient's decision to agree to have their photo taken. There might also be cultural or social norms with which visitors are unfamiliar.

In clinical settings, patients may be reluctant to say no because they fear it will jeopardize their access to needed healthcare. In clinical settings, focus any images on your teachers, co-participants, and yourself in a learning environment, rather than on patients receiving care. Generally, even if you have sought and received special written permission from CFHI to take photos of patients in a clinical setting for research purposes, the patients will need to be de-identified with blurring of faces or redaction of identifying markers (such as their eyes).

Consider reversing the roles: would it be appropriate if a stranger from a different country asked you to take your photo whilst undergoing a medical procedure? Remember, "if you can't do it here, you shouldn't do it there."

Permission

Participants should always request verbal permission in the local language to take photos/recordings of people. Some populations are more vulnerable than others. For example, Children are unable to give consent for photos being taken of them. **We do NOT allow the use of photos/videos where children are present and recognizable.**

You serve as an ambassador for CFHI, as well as the organizations you engage with. Your social media activity goes beyond raising awareness; it also supports our programs, organization, local projects, affiliates (such as universities and alumni), and, in some cases, even entire nations.

Keep posts appropriate and non-offensive. For example, do not post a picture or video of violent behavior. Also, do NOT take or share photos/videos of patient encounters that reveal patient's faces or identities.

Some food for thought:

- Would you want someone taking a picture of you at a doctor's appointment?
- Would you want this picture to represent yourself or your community?

All persons are entitled to say “no”, to having their photograph taken, and we have the responsibility to respect their decision. In addition, realize that it is often difficult for people to say no to outsiders or people from wealthier places due to cultural practices as well as power and privilege dynamics.

When taking photos or videos of subjects, **consider the potential vulnerability and victimization you may be portraying.** Consider these questions:

- Do I have permission to use this photo?
- Does this moment really need to be shared?
- What message am I sending?
- Do the subjects want to be recognized?

It is your duty to respect and uphold their anonymity, which may entail changing the subject/s name and/or exact location of where you are. Always respect and follow the rules, laws, and customs of the country and community.

The ethics of photography begin before a photograph is taken. Even if you don't plan to share a photograph, think through these considerations before taking a photo:

- **Make sure all persons are aware you are taking a photo/video and have given permission**
- **If someone does not want you to take a picture or video, simply do not take it**
- **Respect the subject's privacy, no photos in the clinical setting of patients or children**

Situational Awareness

Be aware of your surroundings and if you see the potential for harm to you or anyone else, through obtaining a photo/video or by sharing it online, step away. Be aware of what's going on and refer back to 'Think before you share'. When in doubt, refrain from photography that can be exploitative of underserved subjects.



Responsible Representation

When you share and post a photo/video online, you aren't just sharing your experiences. Your engagement represents the experiences of your colleagues and community as well. It is important to show the truth to the best of your ability, which means minimal photo manipulation.

What photo manipulation entails is adding or subtracting from the photo to enhance and or to misguide the audience. Filters are allowed if they do not mislead or drastically change the message.

Cultural Sensitivity

We must all be aware of the image we are projecting. Our photographs/videos/posts should not impose our culture on the communities we are trying to serve. Avoid posting photos that show host community members as victims or simply recipients of "help", lacking agency, etc.

For example:

- Avoid posting photos of a smiling foreign visitor surrounded by local children
- Avoid depicting your role in heroic terms via photos or captions, we are engaging in these programs to learn from the local community, not to perpetuate myths of saviorism

Remember, there are also many alternative ways to capture a moment that do not include photography and social media- these include writing an essay, a reflection paper, maintaining your professional journal, and meeting with a member of the CFHI local team to discuss questions and share experiences.

Child Family Health International (CFHI) reserves the right to use photographs and text (blogs, testimonials, etc.) related to a participant's' CFHI program whether they are submitted to CFHI or posted to the Internet.

If you are in doubt about any of these situations, please ask for help from CFHI- contact madelene@cfhi.org with questions.

