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Giving Professional Advice on Social Media

Question: The parent of a client of mine follows my business page on Instagram. I recently received a direct message from them saying they were not having much luck with the language stimulation strategies I recommended and asking for some advice on how they can better implement the strategies at home. Although it would be quick and convenient for me (and the parent) to respond to their Instagram message, I'm not sure it's appropriate. What should I do?

Advising or educating the client in this situation, or responding to gather more information before providing advice, would be classed as providing professional services, and so would be subject to the client privacy and confidentiality requirements in ACSLPA's [Virtual Care Standard of Practice](#) and the companion [Virtual Care Guideline](#). Even though client's consent to use this mode of communication can be implied by their use of direct messaging on social media, the clinician is still obligated to use a secure platform to provide virtual services. In addition, providing professional services in this manner does not allow for documentation and record keeping that meets ACSLPA's standards of practice.

Giving clinical or professional advice on social media is therefore not an advised practice, even in the case of private messages (as opposed to public posts). Clinicians should not engage in these types of discussions and should let clients know they cannot give advice online on social media platforms. Clients should be directed to the clinician's office contact information as appropriate.

