

## NOAHE Virtual Forum Best Practices

This document has been produced to guide NOAHE Virtual Forum users as they engage in online discussions. The guidelines are a compilation of best practices and will help you use this forum effectively, protect your personal and professional reputation, and help you follow NOAHE policies and standards.

Useful information to get started:

- This may be someone's first experience with a forum – be patient with others.
- Remember, if you wouldn't do or say something in person because it would be inappropriate or disrespectful, don't do it online.
- To help keep track of discussions, set up email notifications to alert yourself when you receive posts/comments.



1. **Read forum rules and guidelines before posting.**
2. **Before posting, look at other discussions to see if your topic or question has already been addressed.**
3. **Use a meaningful title for your thread.**
4. **Stay on topic.** Ensure your post answers or addresses the topic at hand, and don't post new problems or questions on someone else's thread. If a new question comes up in a thread, start a new topic to address that new question.
5. **Please do not double post or cross post.** *Double posting* is when the same message is written twice in one thread, and *cross posting* is when the same message is posted into several forum areas. Both are considered to be poor forum etiquette.
6. **Please do not type in ALL CAPS.** This may be interpreted as shouting.
7. **Please be careful with respect to jokes or humour.** Without hearing or seeing you, others may not realize you are joking.
8. **Be brief.** When replying to questions or comments, please keep your posts concise.
9. **Be accurate and state your sources.** Ensure your facts are correct before posting, and cite and link to your sources whenever possible. If you didn't write it or haven't properly cited your source, don't post it. If you make a mistake, correct it quickly and visibly.
10. **Please use proper grammar and avoid acronyms.** If you must use an acronym, please spell it out the first time it is used. *CRI*, for example, is an acronym for Cancer Research



Institute, Congressional Record Index, Cranial Rhythmic Impulse, and Cardiac Recovery Index, among others.

11. **Refer to the question you are answering.** If you refer to something posted earlier in a discussion, remember to quote (copy and paste) key lines from the post so others don't have to scroll back and forth to figure out what you are referring to.
12. **Remember your manners.** Remember to say *please* and *thank you* when requesting and receiving help from forum users.
13. **Be respectful.** If you disagree with a forum user, acknowledge the valid points your co-worker has made and remember to criticize *ideas* not *people*. It is important to avoid:
  - a. name-calling,
  - b. ad hominem attacks,
  - c. responding to a post's tone instead of its actual content, and
  - d. knee-jerk contradictions.

If you feel angry or passionate about a post, you may wish to delay posting until you are calm again.

14. **Protect your privacy.** Remember to keep private information private. Do not even post your email address.
15. **Respect the privacy of others.** Do not post anyone else's email address or other identifying or private information.
16. **Do not post anything that violates a copyright.** If you refer to a copyrighted image, publication, document, etc., post a link to where that item can be found.
17. **Ask for help.** If you are unsure whether to post, comment, or respond on social media, contact NOAHE for guidance.

**Please note:** The Institute of Health Economics (Secretariat to the Network of Alberta Health Economists) reserves the right to delete any posts or materials that it deems as inappropriate or offensive, at any time, without notice to the author of the post or other contributors. For further information, please contact [NOAHE@ihe.ca](mailto:NOAHE@ihe.ca).



## Definitions

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