

How to Use Online Patient Reviews to Improve the Prospects of Your Medical Practice

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Modern technology, top of the line equipment, good infrastructure and trained medical personnel are vital to build a successful practice. But all this will bear no fruit if you cannot connect with your patients on a personal level and ensure that your services satisfy them enough to share their experiences with others and recommend your practice to them.

These days, people increasingly rely on online reviews and testimonials while choosing products and services. To attract patients to your practice, it is not sufficient anymore that your medical practice is in the patient's vicinity.

They must see what other patients are saying about you on your social media pages or websites, in order to trust you and come to *you* for treatment. This makes it necessary for you to share patient reviews online in order to attract a larger client base.

1. Know what your patients want

Selecting a doctor or a nearby clinic is an elaborate choice for patients today. Just having a good doctor and a medical practice close by does not cut it. When patients search for good healthcare centers online, they search for different parameters like infrastructure, trained staff, personal approach, professionalism, timings, crowds, charges and many more.

By keeping an eye on your online ratings, you can understand what your patients are looking for, what they like about your practice and what you need to improve. Don't dismiss a negative review as a one-off write up. Pay attention to complaints and make necessary changes.

2. Respond to feedback

Patients generally leave reviews about any service for two reasons- because they either had a very good experience or a bad one.

They like to see that the medical staff treating them is responsive and attentive to their feedback. It is important to thank all patients who regularly give you feedback and good ratings online. It shows that you care about their opinion and you are grateful for their support. Also, when people see that you quickly respond to positive reviews, it encourages others to leave good reviews for you as well.

If you come across negative reviews, take the criticism in a constructive manner. Thank the patient for the feedback. Apologize for any inconveniences caused and make sure you rectify the situation as soon as



possible and let the patient and others know what you have done about it. Current and prospective patients expect a good patient-physician relationship.

They will trust you more if they see that you are willing to listen to them and respond positively. But remember to always maintain confidentiality, respond to patients in a HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) compliant manner and never disclose identities and PHI (Protected Health Information) of any patient.

3. Share reviews to boost your search rankings

Online reviews are one of the most important factors that affect local search rankings. Reviews help you boost your rankings on Google or other search engines.

Obviously, sharing multiple positive reviews is going to get your medical practice noticed in the top search results and this will in turn get you more footfalls. Apart from this, reviews generate new content on your website which is an added benefit.

People are also more likely to click on websites that have a higher rating; thanks to patient reviews. Patient engagement with your website that stems from online reviews will increase traffic to your website, reduce bounce rate; as people will want to know more about a practice that is highly spoken of, and finally get you more patients.

4. Create good first impressions

Gone are the days when people trusted the opinions and experiences of just their family members and friends. Today, people readily believe online positive and negative reviews written by strangers.

Consumers often trust online reviews almost as much as they do people they know personally. This means that the majority of patients that walk into your medical office might have come with expectations based on someone else's experiences.

If your practice receives a lot of positive online reviews, you will already have created a great first impression on new patients. They will come to you with a positive outlook and look forward to a good patient-physician relationship.

5. Ask for reviews

Just waiting for your patients to review your medical practice and rate their experiences as and when they feel like won't do. You need to get your patients to regularly post feedback and review their sessions with you so that people who search for medical practices online or visitors to your website, constantly have positive experiences to read about. Automated systems are a good way of requesting patients for reviews and filtering out the good ones. This also gives you some amount of control. These reviews can be in the form of questionnaires or ratings on a scale of 1-10.

Patients who give very high ratings can be sent a follow-up email requesting them to provide in-depth reviews about their experience. The not so good ratings can also be followed up with an email enquiring about the problems that the patient may have faced and taking suggestions on how their experience could have been improved.

When you are constantly communicating with your patients, thanking them for their feedback and ensuring them that you are taking constant efforts to ameliorate the doctor-patient experience for everybody, they are more likely to continue giving you positive reviews online and less likely to post negative reviews.

You must also encourage patients to review your practice on sites like Yelp, where people will be comparing various medical practices.

Takeaway

Having a sound reputation management strategy in place that promotes all online reviews which speak of your medical practice in a good light helps you make optimum use of online ratings and reviews to boost your search rankings and increase the prospects of your medical practice.

For more practice management insight read on [here!](#)

About the Author:

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