

How to Monitor and Promote Online Feedback for Your Medical Practice



While there's many ways to control your medical practice's online presence, affecting what patients say about your medical practice on review sites can seem like a different story. And since nearly four out of ten patients view physician rating sites as [very important when choosing a doctor](#), this isn't something medical practices can afford to take lightly.

It can often seem like consumers are only interested in reporting negative experiences, and review sites like Yelp are constantly searching for new ways to root out manipulative practices to boost ratings. So what can medical practices *actually do* to influence patients to leave more, better reviews?

The key to promoting good reviews is customer relationship management. In this post, I'll cover a few actionable tips you can use to reach dissatisfied patients before they turn to online reviews to vent their frustrations – and encourage happy customers to share their experiences with others.

Use satisfaction surveys to control the conversation

Digital communication has benefitted today's health care system [in many ways](#), but ensuring patient satisfaction is a valuable perk in particular for medical practices interested in managing their reputation.

One of the most common ways to keep tabs on patient satisfaction is by using surveys and feedback questionnaires. In addition to keeping open lines of communication, this makes it easier for patients to reach you to resolve their problems before they make them public with online reviews.

Your satisfaction survey should provide enough information for you to accurately assess patient satisfaction without requiring so much input as to turn away frustrated users. Simple questions allowing users to answer based on a scale (from 1-10, worst to best, etc.) or a simple yes/no are effective, and additional fields for explaining their responses can provide the best of both worlds for convenience and thoroughness.

Try making satisfaction surveys a regular part of your patients' visit. When dealing with negative feedback, follow up to clarify their problems and make amends. And when you receive positive feedback, take the opportunity to send your thanks – along with a few links to your review pages!

Promote your review profiles on and offline

Connecting happy patients with your review pages is just one of many strategies to boost positive feedback. Often, simply making patients aware that these pages exist in the first place is enough to drive more reviews.

Use badges on your practice's website, call-to-actions in your appointment-related emails, and links on social media profiles online to make patients aware of your review profiles. To promote these pages in the real world, use signage around your office, references on promotional materials, and so on.

In addition to driving awareness, this can be a great way to leverage positive feedback to prime new patients in seeing the best out of their visit. Try using snippets from testimonials (with your patients' permission!) and other elements of your profile (such as your overall rating) as proof of your practice's high quality while promoting those pages at the same time.

Become an active listener on social media

Customers from practically every industry are using social media to give feedback to businesses. But is your medical practice listening? If your idea of social media engagement is queueing up inspirational posts and quotes, you may find customer engagement lacking. Unfortunately, this has become the norm for many practices.

Patients are more likely to post negative reviews to voice their issues if they're ignored on social media. Instead of using social media as a one-sided broadcast, monitor social platforms (with the help of tools such as Google Alerts) for mentions or messages containing references to your business.

When engaging negative feedback, it is essential to keep personal issues on private channels of communication. Social media offers numerous ways to violate patient confidentiality, and [even seemingly innocent content](#) can result in medical professionals facing career-jeopardizing controversy.

Know when to flag inappropriate reviews

We're often forced deal with negative reviews once they're live for the world to see, but any reviews making false claims, contain derogatory content about your staff, or blame your staff for medical issues beyond their control do not belong on your review profile. This also goes for off-topic reviews, complaints about staff who no longer work with your practice, and of course, spam.

Platforms like Google My Business and Yelp, along with physician-specific sites like RateMDs, have built-in flagging systems to notify a moderator when a patient posts inappropriate content on your profile. Other sites like Vitals.com have a dedicated email address for filing complaints.

Regardless of where your practice is online, it's always worth questioning whether negative reviews of your firm are grounded in fact. When reviews are based on the patient's unique situation rather than your medical practice's performance, you most likely have grounds for having that review moderated.

How do you manage your medical practice's reputation online? Share your tips and experiences with a comment below.

About the Author



Manny Oliverrez

Manny Oliverrez, CPC, is a 20-year healthcare veteran and the CEO and co-founder of Capture Billing, a medical billing services company located outside of Washington, D.C. He teaches the nation's physicians, administrators, and medical practices how to maximize billing and revenue cycle management processes. Manny also frequently posts articles and videos on his [award-winning healthcare blog](#). For more information on Manny and his company, please visit [his website](#), or call (703)327-1800. And if you're on [LinkedIn](#), please look for him there too. **READ MORE**

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