How to Handle Online Reviews

Provided by The Online Practice

For medical specialists everywhere, online reviews are now a fact of life. But how should you respond to them? This question goes beyond mere etiquette. Your Internet reputation may very well attract or repel new patients.

The following pieces of advice should help you deal with reviews in ways that are both shrewd and equitable.

Positive Reviews: Short and Sweet Responses

It's wise to post succinct rejoinders to positive online reviews. In a polite but restrained manner, say "thank you," and tell that person that his or her opinions are important to you.

At the same time, don't sound desperate. Stay away from language that's gushing. Also, avoid making tacky requests like "please tell your friends about us."

Negative Reviews: Wait-and-See Approaches

When you get a negative review, try putting it into perspective. After all, people sometimes exaggerate their grievances when they feel ill or upset. And if your practice rarely receives critical feedback, most Internet users who skim your reviews will pay it little attention.

Obviously, medical employees make occasional mistakes. If an error led to a nasty review, you could respond by admitting the mistake and apologizing for it. Many people who read your reflection will give you credit for courage and honesty.

If you know the reviewer's identity, you might call that person and ask him or her to come see you. You could find out if there's any way to work out your differences. That patient may then feel appreciated and might even delete the review.

Also, other patients might post responses in which they counter the negative reviewer's claims and compliment your practice. If that happens, there's probably no need to write something of your own.
Disputing Negative Reviews

If you feel you must challenge an unfair review, do so broadly. That is, touch on the substance of the criticism but not on the person who made it. For instance, imagine someone has complained online that one of your staff members wouldn't answer his questions. You might explain that it's your office's policy to address all patient questions fully and promptly and that you're proud of the service your employees consistently provide.

Thus, you'd tackle the content of the review without delving into this specific individual's circumstances. Indeed, whether you're replying to positive or negative commentary, you should never supply even the vaguest detail about a patient.

In sum, with measured and dispassionate reactions, you'll be able to contain the damage of negative reviews and maximize the benefits of those that are positive.

Interested in online reviews, but not sure where to begin? Contact The Online Practice at 800-468-6632 today!