

## Marketing My Practice Through Social Media – Taking the Risk

Social media is an attractive avenue for marketing for anyone in business and it can also be effective for [healthcare professionals](#). It helps to get the word out about your practice, what it offers, the credentials of your staff and anything and everything that distinguishes you from your peers.

Anything goes on social media; the trick is to learn to control yourself. What is acceptable and what is appropriate? Knowing when and if you do cross that boundary how that may affect your professional liability insurance is important.

### 4 Do's and Don't's for Marketing on Social Media:

- **Content:** Remember that your patient has to trust you. Posting certain comments or connecting with those who are irresponsible in their tweets and their posts can burden you. Be careful who you connect with and what you comment on as a healthcare professional.
- **Connections:** Use caution when “friending” people; it could expose you to inappropriate dialogues and conversations. Because social media is an open forum in which there are basically no limits for comments, healthcare professionals are wise to limit their conversations on sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Expressing views on politics and religion can also hurt you; we suggest staying away from those types of controversial topics all together.
- **Telemedicine:** The practice of telemedicine, whereby medicines are prescribed over secure networks, has become a less expensive way for patients to receive care. Telemedicine medical malpractice insurance has precipitated stricter laws to ensure such internet communication is used professionally. Such a broad reach, however, can be a boon to both physicians and patients.
- **Education:** Social media is a great way to provide education on specific subjects. Take control of your social media presence by educating people on their disorders and diseases. Give people a place to seek answers, this positions you as a credible resource in your field.

While medical malpractice insurance has certainly grabbed onto the phenomena of using social media, some liability insurance companies now offer cyber liability covering healthcare professionals for risks associated with internet use. An innocent post on social media could open up a can of worms – and medical lawsuits – so having such coverage is important should you become involved in social media.

Use the power of the internet, but also be cautious. It is an extremely helpful tool to educate and inform but make sure you are covered should something go awry. Social media certainly has no limits, but the amount and scope of your interaction should.

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