

2016 Healthcare Online Reputation Management Guide

Cardinal Web Solutions

Table of Contents



CHAPTER ONE

Online Healthcare Reputation Management Basics

1 - 2



CHAPTER TWO

2016 most used healthcare review website

3 - 6



CHAPTER THREE

Respond to reviews without violating HIPAA

7



CHAPTER FOUR

Quality online reviews will enhance your local SEO rankings and visibility

8 - 9

Introduction

What do you think is more valuable for choosing a new physician or practice - an online review or the suggestion that your friend makes? **Nearly three out of four consumers (72%) say they trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations.** As consumers become increasingly accustomed to checking online reviews before making an appointment, this willingness to trust online reviews is impacting professional services, including medical practices. In the last year alone, 68 percent more patients turned to online reviews to gather information about potential healthcare providers. And **nearly half of all patients (44%) may be willing to seek out-of-network doctors** with favorable online reviews. Does your online reputation have new patients lining up to schedule an appointment or is it scaring folks away?

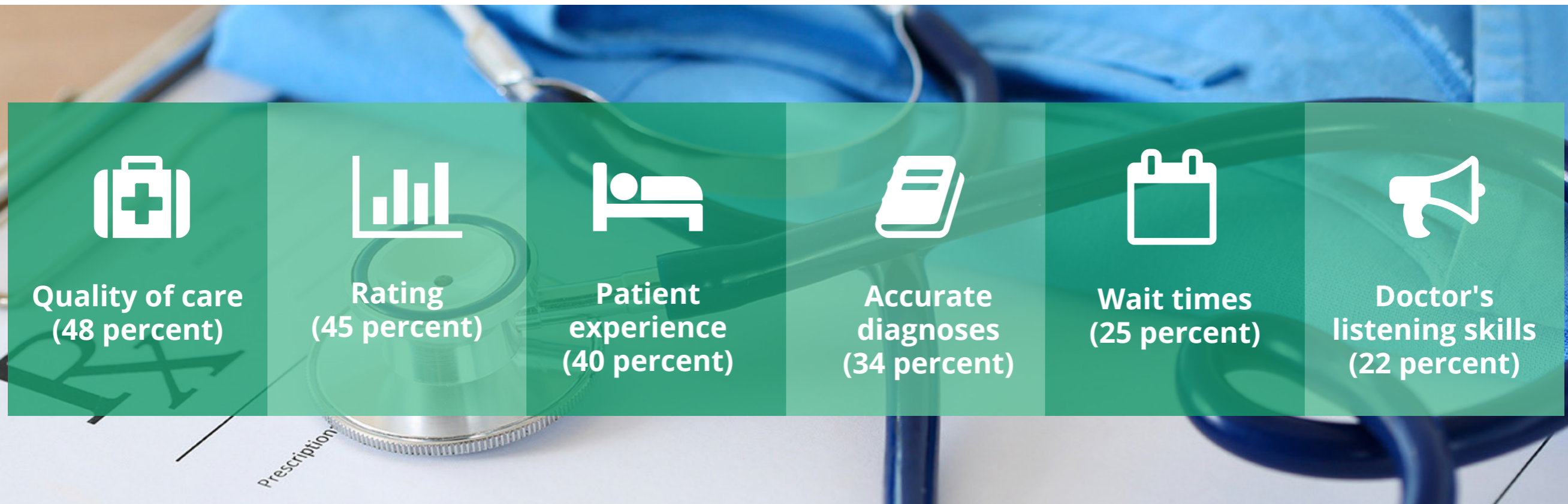


Online Healthcare Reputation Management Basics

Online reputation management can be tricky. On the one hand, candid reviews are important for protecting prospective patients from an unethical physician or poorly managed practice; however, these practice and physician-related problems are pretty rare. Most of the criticism that's leveled at doctors in online reviews—a long wait before an appointment, the high cost of a treatment—are systemic

issues that a single physician or practice cannot single-handedly fix. Additionally, doctor-patient confidentiality prevents physicians from directly engaging online critics. While you can't wage all-out war with an online critic, the good news is that you don't need to. And many factors outside a physician's immediate control, like wait times, actually rank as one of the least important factors for patient reviews.

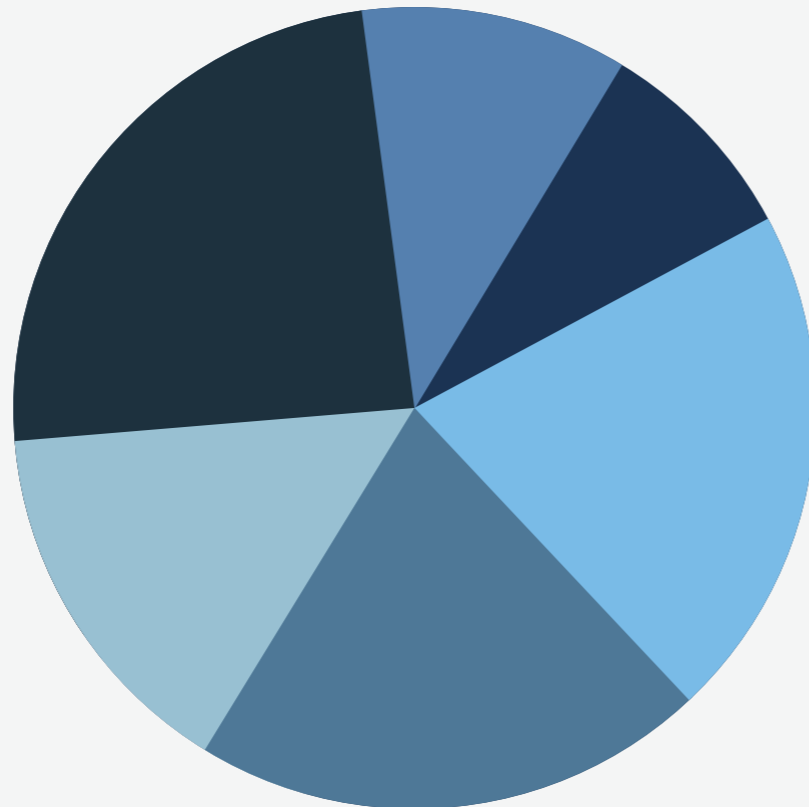
A survey of **4,000** patients using reviews found that the following review elements are most important when deciding whether or not to schedule an appointment at a physician's practice:



In general, most physicians are rated positively and have higher rankings for hospitals and medical practices that are associated with better medical care. Unfortunately, since physician review websites (PRWs) do not verify the authenticity of a patient's review, there's a high possibility for abuse, misinformation, and outdated information.



2016 Most Used Healthcare Review Websites



27% - Yelp

26% - Healthgrades

26% - Rate MDs

11% - Vitals

7% - ZocDoc

4% - Other

While you cannot directly control the quality or quantity of your practice's reviews, these reviews play an increasingly important role in generating referral traffic to your website and appointments for your practice. The following steps are a good start for online reputation management:



72%

of consumers find online reviews just as trustworthy as personal recommendations.

STEP 1

Keep tabs on your profiles. You can't improve what you don't know! Popular PRWs include Healthgrades.com, Vitals.com and RateMDs.com. Increasingly, websites like ZocDoc.com also offers patient reviews in conjunction with the ability to book appointments with participating physicians. Don't spend all month manually checking each site for new reviews, there are plenty of technologies out there that will send automated reports notifying you of any new updates. A few tools to check out to handle this for you: Connectivity, Yext.

STEP 2

Set up an online profile. Many PRWs allow physicians to display professional profiles; use the information in your profile to control your reputation and protect against potential criticism. For example, you could highlight your willingness to accept same-day appointments or your expertise in a highly specialized practice field. Use modern platforms to make sure all directory listings are up to date at all times. Please remember that inaccurate listing information can damage your SEO rankings.

44%

of patients are willing to choose out-of-network doctors if their reviews are better than in-network doctors

STEP 3

Request feedback from patients. In general, you can expect positive feedback from long-time patients. Post a sign in your waiting area saying that you value feedback and send an appointment-follow-up email, inviting patients to take a short online survey. Quote positive reviews and link to additional positive content on your practice's site. An agency can help setup your review solicitation and management system so that your practice can concentrate on what it is best at – helping patients return to health. Use technology that guards against negative reviews. Some of the newest reputation management

technology out there sends out surveys to your patients asking for reviews. If the review returns back negative then that review is directed to your practice administrator rather than posting

34%

of patients said the top reason they ignore online reviews is that they seem exaggerated.



Respond to reviews without violating HIPAA

Healthcare providers have to be careful in how they respond to reviews in order to maintain patient confidentiality. **A few tips:**

Respond privately

It is not advised to publicly comment on any patient information even if the patient mentions it first. Respond to the patient privately and ask that they call the office to resolve the situation. There may be a reason you have to respond publicly. If so, do not admit that the reviewer is a patient of the organization.

Learn from the negativity

There is usually a grain of truth to every comment. Evaluate reviews for consistency and if there is a stream of comments similar to each other than have your practice administrator look into them. Use a modern technology to evaluate sentiment so each month you are quickly brought up to speed on what is going well and what needs improvement at your practice.

Never get defensive

You won't always get great reviews. Other reviewers will be looking to see how you reacted to negative commentary. It is always best to admit fault when appropriate and ask that the reviewer contact the practice personally so the issue can be resolved. Reassure your reviewers that you take the issue seriously and that you are looking into fixing the issues.



Quality online reviews will enhance your local SEO rankings and visibility

A big part of the search results page recently has been the 3 pack of Google local business reviews” to “You will notice that in most search results pages on Google there are 3 businesses listed with business reviews.

Just like company culture, your reputation will build whether you tend to it or not, let’s make sure it’s a positive one to “Having a great reputation online is critical for so many reasons.

If you need further elaboration on anything discussed, feel free to reach out to:

Cardinal – www.CardinalWebSolutions.com
or call **404-585-2096**



SOURCES MED NET

2014 Patient Use of Online Reviews
survey by Software Advice

www.softwareadvice.com/resources/medical-online-reviews-report-2014/

2014 Patient Use of Online Reviews
survey by Software Advice

www.softwareadvice.com/resources/medical-online-reviews-report-2014/

2016 Healthcare Online Reputation Management Guide

Cardinal Web Solutions
404-585-2096
www.cardinalwebsolutions.com