

Eli's Rehab Report

Marketing: What Happens When Someone Googles You?

The answer to that can boost your business ☐ or put you out of it.

The vast majority of potential patients ☐ more than 90 percent ☐ look at online reviews.

What's really scary: Even if a review is fake or incorrect, it can steer patients away and affect your bottom line.

Tracking what folks say about you is called Online Reputation Management ☐ "ORM" for short ☐ and for an outpatient therapy provider there are steps you can take to right any perceived wrongs.

How Do You Look Online to Your Patients? This Quick Test Will Tell You

Step #1: Log out of your personal computer settings and clear your cache so you see what potential patients will see.

Step #2: Look yourself up on Google, Yelp, and Healthgrades, and keep an eye out for any other mention of your practice, whether it is in a blog or even the comment section of your local newspaper.

Pro tip: If nothing has been written about you, that's almost as bad as having a bunch of negative reviews because it means you don't come up in searches.

How To Encourage Positive Reviews

Negative reviews can be hard to remove (more on that in a moment), but the best defense is a good offense. Aim for good reviews in the first place. Try some of these tips:

- **Make it easy:** Ask customers to write good reviews. Put reminder cards at the check-out station, in the waiting area, or even in the take-home paperwork. It's now easy to add a widget to your website, social media page, or email signature that links to your review sites. »
- **Follow up:** Use the patient's HIPAA-approved contact to reach out a day or two after the visit and ask for feedback.
- **Go after the easy stuff:** Did someone just write you a thank you letter? Ask them if they'd turn it into an online review.
- **Be persistent:** Even if they say they will, most people won't go to the trouble to write a review. It takes a lot of effort to follow through, so it's important to ask every patient at every visit.

What To Do About Negative Reviews

Even the world's best resorts and luxury stores get negative reviews. Turning them positive ☐ or making them go away ☐ is tough but can go a long way toward building a stellar reputation.

If the negative review is accurate, ask yourself: Does it happen all the time? Why did it happen? How can I fix it? This is the time to learn from mistakes.

- **Contact the patient.** Ask if there is any way to fix the problem and, if it gets fixed, if the patient could delete the negative review. This can work even if the review is anonymous.
- **Don't argue:** It looks bad. Also keep in mind HIPAA compliance.
- **Learn:** Harsh as it can be, unfiltered feedback gives you