Growing your business
How to grow a practice

○ HPCSA guidelines
○ Branding
○ Advertising and marketing
○ Website and social media
How to grow a practice

Anyone engaged in marketing?
Your thoughts?
Your thoughts?
Your thoughts?
HPCSA Guidelines

MEDICAL AND DENTAL PROFESSIONS BOARD

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND THE MEDICAL SCIENCES

GUIDELINES FOR MAKING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES KNOWN

BOOKLET 5

PRETORIA
JULY 2003
HPCSA Definitions
Your thoughts?


Hands On answers your questions

Send us your questions – whether they relate to running your business, personal issues or clinical aspects of your practice – and we will seek out experts who can provide answers. We will obviously not identify you in the magazine – and if anything in the question would enable readers to guess who you are, we’ll change it or leave it out – so do let it all hang out. We’re sure that others will have shared similar dilemmas, and will find the answers helpful.

Please send any questions to mandiwrite@icon.co.za.

Two issues around ‘touting and canvassing’, as defined by the HPCSA, have arisen in recent weeks.

**QUESTION:**
I have been approached by Groupon with regards to marketing my practice on their website. Is there any ethical conflict with this form of marketing?

**ANSWER:**
The Peer Review Committee has looked at this issue in the light of what the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) allows us as a profession to do and not do. The committee feels that this could be seen as touting and canvassing for patients as per the definition below from Booklet 2 on generic ethical rules. It is also prohibited to attract patients to a service that they do not need, which could be seen as overservicing.

“Touting” means conduct which draws attention, either verbally or by means of printed or electronic media, to one’s offers, guarantees or material benefits that do not fall in the categories of professional services or items, but are linked to the rendering of a professional service or designed to induce the public to the professional practice.

“Canvassing” means conduct which draws attention, either verbally or by means of printed or electronic media, to one’s personal qualities, superior knowledge, quality of service, professional guarantees or best practice.

“Advertising and canvassing or touting

1) A practitioner shall be allowed to advertise his or her services or permit, sanction or acquiesce to such advertisement: Provided that the advertisement is not unprofessional, untrue, deceptive, misleading or causes consumer unwarranted anxiety that they may be suffering from any health condition. (2) A practitioner shall not canvas or tout or allow canvassing or touting to be done for patients on his or her behalf.”

**QUESTION:**
A large physiotherapy practice operates out of the hospital where I also work as a private sector practice. This hospital has the policy of handing every patient a form to complete as they leave the premises, in which they are asked to assess the service they’ve received. Lately, the administrative staff have been required to include another similar form for physiotherapy – but this form includes the large practice’s logo and details – which is handed to each and every patient, irrespective of whether they’ve used that practice’s services. Large boxes are placed at strategic points, bearing the large practice’s logo, in which the completed forms must be placed. I am concerned that my practice is thus linked – and confused – with the large practice. What should I do?

**ANSWER:**
Approach the large practice and inform them that:

- This could be seen as canvassing;
- While it is a requirement in terms of the accreditation process that such forms be handed out, they have no right to give them to people who are not their patients, which might give them access to confidential patient information they should not possess. Any such forms must be handed out only to people who are patients of that specific practice and must be returned to that practice;
- The admin staff cannot and should not be obligated to hand out forms on behalf of any practice. This is an internal responsibility of the practice and should be handled by staff employed there.
Advertising and canvassing or touting (1) A practitioner shall be allowed to advertise his or her services or permit, sanction or acquiesce to such advertisement: Provided that the advertisement is not unprofessional, untruthful, deceptive or misleading or causes consumers unwarranted anxiety that they may be suffering from any health condition. (2) A practitioner shall not canvass or tout or allow canvassing or touting to be done for patients on his or her behalf.
Canvassing: means conduct which involves direct contact with prospective clients verbally or by inter alia distributing letters, pamphlets, circulars or other means of communication including printed or electronic communication, in which attention is drawn to one’s personal qualities, superior knowledge, quality of service, professional guarantees or best practice in order to secure the prospective clients’ custom.
Canvassing is the systematic initiation of direct contact with a target group of individuals commonly used during political campaigns. A campaign team (and during elections a candidate) will knock on doors of private residences within a particular geographic area, engaging in face-to-face personal interaction with voters. Canvassing may also be performed by telephone, where it is referred to as telephone canvassing. The main purpose of canvassing is to perform voter identification – to poll how individuals are planning to vote – rather than to argue with or persuade voters. This preparation is an integral part of a 'get out the vote' operation, in which known supporters are contacted on polling day and reminded to cast their ballot.
Touting: means, but is not limited to, conduct which draws attention, either verbally or by means of printed or electronic media, to one’s offers, guarantees or material benefits that do not fall in the categories of professional services or items, but are linked to the rendering of a professional service or designated to entice the public to the professional practice.
**Wikipedia:** a tout is any person who solicits business or employment in a persistent and annoying manner (generally equivalent to a solicitor or barker in American English, or a spruiker in Australian English). According to the American Bar Association, touting occurs when a person advertises, promotes, or otherwise describes a security for sale without disclosing that the person is being paid to do so.
Definitions

An example would be a person who frequents heavily touristed areas and presents himself as a tour guide (particularly towards those who do not speak the local language) but operates on behalf of local bars, restaurant, or hotels, being paid to direct tourists towards certain establishments.
Policy statement on perverse incentives

The following is not permissible for any health care professional, nor is it ethical for any health related body to encourage a health care professional to engage in the following acts:
3.3 Advertise or endorse or encourage the use of any healthcare establishment or orthodox medicine, complimentary medicine, veterinary medicine, medical device or scheduled substance or health related product or health related service in a manner that unfairly promotes the practice of a particular health care professional or a health care facility for the purpose of improper financial gain or other valuable consideration
So what can’t we do?

Healthcare practitioners should refrain from advertising that can be interpreted as:

- Misleading
- Cause unwarranted anxiety or stress to the general public
- Canvassing or touting for patients
- Draw improper attention to best prices offered
- Claim to be superior to other services or denigrating other healthcare professionals
Branding

- Logos
- Colours
- Branches or franchise
- Tag line
- Co-branding
- Practice vs Facility
Advertising and marketing

- Governed by
  - HPCSA
  - Consumer Protection Act
Points to be covered:

- Making your professional services known
  - HPCSA
  - CPA
Before we start...

Meet the Richest Physical Therapists in the World:

- Neither of them are dependent on ‘traditional sources of referrals’
- Both of them market directly to the public
- Both have a unique program that appeals to consumers and doctors alike
- They emphasize ‘differentiation’ from competitors
- Both focus on aggressive, ‘pull’ marketing as opposed to traditional, ‘push’ marketing
- They focus on ‘high leverage’ activities that ‘shout’ as opposed to ‘low leverage’ activities that ‘whisper’
- They integrate additional business models (massage, fitness, running programs etc) used for ‘revenue cushioning’ to minimize dependence on the traditional insurance pay model.
Before we start...

- Why should we advertise?
- For who do we market?
- How do we measure affectivity effectively?
- Do we vary our price, or vary our service offering?
Before we start...

- Private sector vs. public sector
- Service vs. facility
- Marketing the profession vs. your practice
- To the public vs. colleagues vs. other medical practitioners
- Reason for marketing?
- Internal marketing?
- Word of mouth...
Conventional advertising

- Newspapers
- Radio / Television
- Practice stationary
- Fliers and posters
- Newsletters
Discussion...

- Designing your message
- What are the influencing factors?
  - Funders / funding
  - Evidence
  - NHI and the political view
  - Other makro-economic issues
- What are we selling??
Printed media

- Newspapers
  - Adverts
  - Columns
  - Press release
- Magazines
- Brochures

Billboards?
Radio / Television / YouTube

- Interviews
  - Profession
  - Field of expertise
  - Opinion piece
Interviews

Become the Healthcare Communicator by:

- Planning, preparation and run-throughs
- Be clear about your topic, content, purpose and format
- Anticipate the questions
- Formulate talking points in advance
- Do a mock interview
- Be calm – remember you are the voice / face of authority in this field
Practice stationary

- This is clearly defined by the HPCSA
- Includes:
  - Letterheads, business cards
  - Account forms
  - Electronic format
    - Email signature
    - Electronic claims submission info
    - Website?
    - Facebook etc...
**Professional Stationery**: is amended by the exclusion of the word “only” as follows: A practitioner shall print or have printed on letterheads, account forms and electronic stationery information pertaining only to such practitioner’s:

- Name
- Profession
- Registered category
- Speciality or sub-speciality or **field of professional practice**
- Registered qualifications or other academic qualifications or honorary degrees in abbreviated form (not *cum laude*)
- Registration number
- **Addresses** (including email address)
- Telephone and fax numbers
- Practice or consultation hours
- Practice code number
Fliers & Posters

- Keep it professional
- Keep it accurate
- Keep the message simple and to the point
- Use professional photographs and graphics
- Spend time on your logo
- Consider a tag line
Who said:

“Everything keeps going right………………”
“Impossible is nothing”
“……….we like to keep you moving”
“Shop where South Africa shops…….”
“Simpler, better, faster”
“Today, tomorrow, together”
“You pay less at..........”
“You 2 year guarantee store”
Who said:

“Steve”
“Sheer driving pleasure”
“Finger-lickin’ good”
“Because I’m worth it”
“I’m lovin’ it”
“Just do it”
“Connecting people”
“Let your finders do the walking”
Newsletters

You may want to communicate to:

- professional colleagues
- current patients
- potential patients
- past course delegates
Newsletters

You may want to communicate:
- business structure & internal changes
- latest training / courses attended
- latest product / service offering
- latest review of your practice, and strategy
- testimonials
- professional colleagues
- patient needs
- internal changes
Newsletters

Consider:
- having a clear and accurate distribution list
- ensure recipients permission to receive newsletter
- an option to opt out, and honour that
- don’t flood the channel
- keep it informative and interesting
- analyze the distribution, reading, and responses
Internal Marketing

- Marketing to fellow HCP’s
- Communication with medical colleagues
- Marketing to improve or establish referral networks
- Marketing to co-workers
Points to be covered:

- Social media advertising and engagement
  - Website
  - Facebook & Google+
  - Twitter
  - RSS Feeds
  - Blogging
PricewaterhouseCoopers findings tell us (USA Survey):

- **One third** of consumers now use social media sites for health-related activities;
- **40% of consumers** have sought out reviews of treatments, physicians, and other patient experiences;
- **45% of consumers** say information from social media sources would affect their decisions;
- **73%** would welcome social media-based tools like make an appointment, or ask a question – but expect a quick response;
- **54%** are comfortable with their doctors using online physician communities for advice related to their health situation; and
- Consumers are **significantly more likely** to trust social media information from their doctors or hospital, and less likely to trust insurers or drug companies.
Social media is a means for patient and provider to interact, to humanize institutions, to learn from each other and to support a patient-centered system. It is a means to speak, listen, understand and begin a relationship.

The Internet and social media are tools for patient and provider interaction... and often where continuing relationships begin.
Website

- How well does your website sell?
- How user friendly is the design?
- How easy or hard it is to navigate?
- Does it make your healthcare organization seem welcoming?
- How up to date is your SEO (search engine optimization)?
- How can you improve your competitive ranking?
Content marketing is the timely creation and distribution of pertinent and engaging materials that are of interest to (and influence the purchase decisions of) select current and prospective patients or prospects. These are long-term messages, and require on-going input and attention.
Content marketing

Your long-form marketing message(s) can be communicated via:

- Blog posts
- Case study/trend analysis
- Data-driven content
- Discussion Forums
- E-books
- Educational game/quiz
- E-Newsletters
- Instructional articles/guides
- Technical report interpretation
- Podcasts
- Print newsletters
- Research reports
- Videos
- Virtual conferences
- Webinar/webcast
- Website
- White papers
5 Basic Rules of Content Marketing

1. Begin with the audience in mind. Carefully focus your material in a way that is pertinent and relevant to a defined audience or group of individuals who you seek to influence and engage over time. Remember that it is about what interests them (not you).
2. Retain the human element. Content marketing materials should be presented in an authoritative, but easily understood, manner. Utilize people-oriented story-telling or conversational tones to humanize the meaning or consequences of dry data or technical details. HCP’s should draw on their people experience over medical science.
3. Self-promotion is self-defeating. In contrast to direct response advertising, content marketing engenders a relationship over immediate action. The reader or recipient gains a profoundly greater sense of trust and believability from material that is unbiased. An impartial and informative voice is convincing and reliable.
4. Results take time and effort. The benefits of content marketing develop over a period of time that is needed for the audience to grow in size and in acceptance. Depending on the marketing goals, this can be used in addition to traditional (and more immediate) advertising methods.
5. Begin only what you can sustain. The value of content marketing comes in part from being a reliable, timely and consistent resource with regular updates and fresh material. Match your efforts to your resources, beginning with a modest effort that you can support (and prospectively grow). A blog, for example, can build credibility, but neglect (infrequent posts) is suspect and no longer trustworthy.
Content marketing delivers something of value to the public in a manner that is likely to inspire confidence in the practitioner, fuel informed word-of-mouth or referrals, and connect and engage the reader. It also plays an important role in being seen (and found) by patients using various Internet search engines.
Website and social media

- Less is more – keep it simple and clear
- Keep it dynamic – static sites are lost
- Get endorsements / support through partnering
- Patient testimonials
- Good logo
- Good graphics
- Good language
- Easy navigation
The Empowered Patient: How are you tracking their needs and expectations?

- The typical patient of only a year or so ago is different from the patient you'll be seeing today.
- Patients are increasingly empowered by social media and online resources.
- Systemic push for patient-centered delivery.
New age advertising

What to do:

- Ask patients about their expectations
- Use conversations, surveys, follow-up activities
- Perhaps patients want to make appointments online
- Perhaps they can download their exercise program
- Devise a system / office routine that provides timely feedback and regular interaction opportunities for your patients
Facebook and Google+

- Both platforms are primarily a social networking tool
- Integrating various elements of their service offering
- Search elements are critical in raising your presence on any platform
- Separating personal and informal networking, from business networking is critical
- Enter LinkedIn
- Paid advertising is made possible in all of these platforms, with the ability to target your audience very specifically, based on:
  - Location
  - Interests
  - Existing networks
  - Pay for specific outcomes
Twitter and RSS feeds

- Push notifications
- You decide on the content you are interested in
- Easy to forward on, or read full content through links
- Twitter
  - topics are searchable - #tags
  - Twitter companies / people are searchable - @tags
  - Twitter posts are limited to 140 characters – nice😊
- RSS – Real Simple Syndication
  - Website changes are sent through via a feed burner
  - More challenging to channel in
Blogging

- Should be easy to do – e.g. Windows Live Writer
- Instant
- Utilize other channels of communication
  - Automatically
  - As required
- Need to keep it up regularly
- Keep it topical
- Can be used as a “website”
Take home message

- Marketing efforts should not be a race to the bottom
- Understand the legislation
- Unleash your creativity on the marketing plan
- You can only manage what you can measure
- Keep the patient in the forefront, and the profession a close second
- Communicate
- Define and plan your “word-of-mouth” strategy
- Your marketing plan must be an extension of your business strategy
- Have fun!
Contact us

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