Introduction to Social Media in Practice

Today, I want to walk through how to think about social media as a medical practice in a way that is practical and grounded. We'll talk about what role it actually plays, how approach the different platforms without feeling overwhelmed, what to post, and how avoid the two biggest mistakes I see over and over again.

Ignoring it entirely or treating it too casually. Welcome to Medical Money Matters, the podcast where you can find experts, answers, and resources so that you achieve mastery over the financial and business aspects of your practice.

Hello everyone, I'm your host, Jill Arena. I began my career in accounting and finance and I have more than 30 years of experience running medical groups.

In 2020, I co-founded the Physician Leadership Project, and in 2025 I released Physicians Edge, the first of its kind CME accredited online business education for physicians.

My passion is to increase financial and business literacy for Physicians. Episode 176, Social Media, Friend or Foe for Your Practice. Hello everyone and welcome back to Medical Money Matters.

Today we're talking about something that tends to bring up a mix of reactions for physicians and practice leaders and that is social media. For some of you this feels like something you know you should be doing more with but it keeps getting pushed down the list.

For others, it feels like noise or distraction, and you're not convinced it really matters. And for a few of you, you've probably seen enough examples to feel a little cautious, maybe even concerned, about the risks.

Why Your Online Presence Matters

Honestly, all of those reactions are valid. Because social media, especially in healthcare, really is a bit of a double-edged sword. Done well, it can become one of your most effective tools for communication, visibility, and tris building.

Then poorly, or simply ignored, It can quietly work against you in ways that are easy to miss. So today I want to walk through how to think about social media as a medical practice in a way that is practical and grounded.

We'll talk about what role it actually plays, how do you approach the different platforms without feeling overwhelmed, what to post, and how you avoid the two biggest mistakes I see over and over again, ignoring it entirely, or treating it too casually.

Let's start with a mindset shift, because this is where most practices get stuck. A lot of physicians will say, we're really not on social media. But the reality is your practice already has a presence, whether you are actively managing it or not.

Patients are Googling you, they are reading your reviews, They are clicking on whatever profiles exist, even if those profiles were created years ago and haven't been touched since.

And they're forming impressions before they even call your office. For many patients, your social media presence has effectively become your first waiting room.

It's where they decide whether your practice feels professional, whether it feels trustworthy, and whether feels like a place that will take good care of them.

And if what they see is outdated, inconsistent, or simply empty, that doesn't come across as neutral. It often comes across neglected, and that has an impact, even if it's a subtle one.

From there, it's helpful to think about social media not as marketing, but as your practice's voice. It's how your practices sounds to the outside world.

Every post, every image, and every update is sending a signal about who you are.

Choosing the Right Platforms

If you think about how intentional you are inside your practice—how your front desk greets patients, how your space looks, and how you team communicates—social media is simply the digital extension of that experience.

Ideally, those two things should align. If your in-person experience is thoughtful and high quality, your online presence should reflect that same level of care.

Now, when it comes to platforms, one of the biggest sources of overwhelm is the feeling that you need to be everywhere. And the truth is, you don't. What you needs is intention, not ubiquity.

Facebook, for example, is still very relevant for healthcare. This is where many of your patients, especially families and local community members, are already spending time.

It's an excellent place for clear, practical communication. Things like announcing flu shots, sports physicals, updated office hours, or community events work very well here.

This isn't about being flashy, this is about useful and visible. Instagram, on the other hand, is more visual and more personal. It gives patients a sense of your environment, your team, and your culture.

A few photos of staff, office, or even small behind-the-scenes moments can go a long way in building familiarity and comfort. LinkedIn serves a different purpose.

It's more professional and more strategic, particularly for larger groups, specialists, or physician leaders. This is where you build credibility, share insights, and even support recruiting efforts.

it's less about patient-facing communication, more about positioning and influence within the business community. That's who's on LinkedIn. And then there's your Google Business Profile, which isn't technically social media, but in many ways it is the most important digital asset you have.

This is where reviews live, where patients check basic information, and where many first impressions are formed. If you do nothing else, managing this well is critical.

There are also newer platforms like TikTok or short form video through Instagram Reels, which can be very powerful when used intentionally. They can great for short educational content or myth busting, but they also require a level of thoughtfulness because if they are done casually or without a clear strategy, they can undermine credibility very quickly.

So the goal is not to be everywhere. The goal to choose a few platforms that make sense for your practice and show up there consistently and intentionally.

That brings us to the next question, which is what to actually post.

What to Post Consistently

And this is where I like to simplify things as much as possible. You're listening to Medical Money Matters, a weekly podcast brought to you by Healthy Practices, A health care consulting and revenue cycle company dedicated to

keeping our clients independent.

If you're looking for more ways to strengthen your business skills, check out Physicians Edge, the first of its kind CME accredited online business education for physicians.

It's a mini MBA online course designed to help you master the financial side of your practice. You can find that and more about how we support practices like yours at HealthEPS.com.

That's www.healtheps. com. And don't forget to follow or subscribe so you never miss a new episode. You don' t need to be endlessly creative. you just need be useful and consistent.

Some of the most effective content is also the simplest. Clinical updates, for example, are incredibly valuable. Letting patients know that vaccines are available, that sports physicals are being scheduled, or that you have expanded hours, these are things patients care about and they act on.

Patient education is another strong category. This might include preventive care reminders, seasonal health topics, or answers to common questions. The key here is to keep it simple and accessible, not overly technical or clinical.

Practice updates are also important. Introducing new providers, sharing that you've expanded your services, or announcing a new location all reinforce growth and stability.

It reassures patients that your practice is active and evolving. Community presence is another powerful area. When you share involvement in local events, schools or organizations, you are reinforcing that you're not just a business, but part of the community.

That matters to patients. And finally, sharing elements of your team and your culture. Staff highlights, anniversaries, small behind the scenes moments, helps humanize your practice.

Patients don't just choose physicians, they choose environments. And this gives them a sense of what that environment feels like. Now, even with all of that, where I see practices run into trouble is not usually in what they post but in how they approach it overall.

There are two major mistakes that come up again and again. The first is simply ignoring social media.

Common Social Media Mistakes

This often looks like outdated pages, no recent posts, and no response to comments or reviews. The assumption is that if you're not active, it doesn't matter.

But it does, because an inactive presence doesn't feel neutral, it feels abandoned. And in healthcare, that can create subtle but real doubt. The second mistake is the opposite, which is treating social media too casually.

This is where things become inconsistent, where tone varies from post to post, or staff may be posting without clear guidelines, Or where humor or informality doesn' quite land the way it was intended.

Occasionally, this can even cross into areas that feel unprofessional or raise compliance concerns. The key point here is that social media is not just marketing.

It is an extension of your professional reputation, and it needs to be treated that way. So what does doing this well actually look like? It doesn't require complexity, but it does require intention.

First, there needs to be clear ownership. One person or a defined team should be responsible. It shouldn't be something that is loosely assigned or handled, quote, when someone has time.

Second, there should be basic guidelines. You don't need a long, complicated document, but you do need clarity

around tone, appropriate topics, and what fits your practice's identity.

Third, consistency matters more than volume. you don' t need to post every day. For most practices, two to four times per week is more that enough. What matters is that your presence feels active and reliable.

Fourth, you need to monitor and respond. That includes reviews, comments, and messages. This is now part of the patient experience, whether we like it or not.

And finally, and this is where I see the biggest gap, your social media needs to align with your operations. If you are posting about vaccine availability, you need to actually have vaccines available.

if you're promoting access, patients need be able to get appointments.

How to Manage Social Media Well

Your digital presence should reflect reality, not aspiration. When all of this comes together, the impact is significant. You increase visibility, which supports patient acquisition.

you stay top of mind, which supports retention. You strengthen your reputation, Which supports trust. And you create a window into your culture, Which helps with recruiting.

And perhaps most importantly, you differentiate yourself. Because the reality is, many practices are still not doing this well. Which means that doing it well is still a meaningful advantage.

So when we come back to the original question, social media, friend or foe, the answer is actually very simple. It depends on how you use it. It becomes a friend when it is intentional, consistent, and aligned with who you are as a practice.

It become a foe when ignored, inconsistent, or overly casual. So I'll leave you with this. Your practice already has a voice. Patients are already forming impressions.

Social media simply determines whether that voice is clear or confusing. If this conversation has you thinking about how your practice is showing up, that's a great place to start.

If you haven't already, I'd encourage you to explore more episodes of Medical Money Matters and visit healtheps.com for additional resources. And if you're looking at this and realizing that your communication, your systems, and your operations all need to work together more effectively, that's exactly the kind of work we focus on every day with practices across the country.

You don't need be everywhere, you just need intentional in the places that matter. Until next time. You can find more information online at medicalmoneymatterspodcast.

Closing Thoughts and Resources

com, and you can sign up to be notified when enrollment opens for the Medical Money Matters eLearning program for a mini-MBA physician style, which will carry CME credits and will be released in upcoming months.

In that, we'll do an even deeper dive so you can understand dynamic budgeting strategies, cash flow forecasting, and other more esoteric financial concepts.

We've included those links in the show notes. As I like to close out these podcasts, congratulations on taking the next step in your professional development and for making the commitment to learn about the financial and business aspects of your practice.

I look forward to being on this journey with you and send you my heartfelt gratitude for all that you do for your

patients all day, every day.