



Caring.com

*#1 for senior living and
senior care reviews online*

**CONSUMER
FUSION**

*An industry leader in online
reputation management*

Online Reviews & HIPAA Compliance: What You Need to Know

Presented: September 17, 2020

Welcome to Our Webinar



This presentation will be shared within a few business days.

Please ask questions – we'll have Q&A at the end.

2020



Caring.com: #1 for Reviews of Senior Services

Founded in 2007, with a Social Mission

Among 1st to host senior living and senior care reviews – reviews from 2008 to now

250,000+ consumer reviews – thousands added monthly, across rating scale & service categories

1st to offer service excellence award based on consumer reviews – Caring Stars (2012 to current)

1st to measure reviews influence in our industry - leading insights about consumers' review use

High-integrity consumer reviews program, managed by senior care experts

(800) 973-1540 Caring.com Sign in

Assisted Living Home Care Memory Care All Senior Living All Senior Care For Caregivers

Caring for an Aging Loved One? We're here to help.

Caring.com exists to help family caregivers like you make better decisions, save time and money and feel less alone.

Which of the following do you need?

Expert Guidance Senior Living & Care Options

Find Senior Care & Senior Living Options Near You

Looking for senior care can be stressful and confusing, and you may be unsure where to start. Whether you're looking for a senior living community or help with in-home care, we're here to help you understand your options, learn about financing and guide you through the process.

Choose care type Search by address, city, zip, state Search

Detailed Cost Info and Photos Thousands of Listings Seasoned Family Advisors Reviews from Families

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Today's Presenter: Mark Spencer

- Mark is Consumer Fusion's Chief Operating Officer
- Mark & his wife, Brynn (CEO), started the concept of Consumer Fusion 13 years ago by helping his step-father dispute and successfully remove reviews for his dental practice that were written by an ex-employee.
- Consumer Fusion is the only All-in-One Reputation Management Solution that specializes in removing inappropriate and illegitimate negative reviews & photos. We've removed over 50,000 negative reviews for businesses all across the web, in every major industry!



MARK SPENCER

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What We'll Cover Today



- What is HIPAA & How It Affects Healthcare Reviews
- Review Platforms & Policies
- Responding to Reviews: What to Do & What Not to Do
- How to Monitor Your Reviews
- Caring Reminders: Caring Stars & Review Response
- Q&A and Key Takeaways





What is HIPAA & How It Affects Healthcare Reviews



WHAT IS HIPAA?

- HIPAA is the acronym for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act that was passed by Congress in 1996.
- HIPAA prevents healthcare providers from disclosing personal health information which can add extra complications for healthcare providers who are trying to respond to their online reviews.
- This discourages many healthcare providers from responding to negative reviews even though 80% of providers* are concerned about the damage these reviews can cause.



WHAT TYPES OF BUSINESS ARE AFFECTED?

- Any business that works closely with personal health data including:
 - Senior Living Facilities
 - In-Home Care Providers
 - Skilled Nursing Facilities
 - Home Health Agencies
 - Companion Care
 - Assisted Living
 - Memory Care
 - Hospice Providers





Review Platforms & Policies



**84% OF CONSUMERS TURN
TO REVIEW SITES TO FIND A
HEALTHCARE PROVIDER**

2020



REVIEW PLATFORMS & POLICIES

Google

facebook

yelp

Caring.com

- Each review site has their own terms & conditions regarding the content of online reviews.
- Review sites like Google, Facebook, and Yelp don't automatically screen new reviews to see if the reviewer violated HIPAA in their comments.
- Caring.com understands the importance of adhering to HIPAA and thus screens reviews for any possible privacy issues.





Responding to Reviews: What to Do & What Not to Do



**94% OF PEOPLE SAY AN
ONLINE REVIEW HAS
CONVINCED THEM TO
AVOID A BUSINESS**



89% OF CONSUMERS READ THE BUSINESS' RESPONSE TO ONLINE REVIEWS

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RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

- Considering how many people rely on online reviews to make purchasing decisions, it's important to implement an online review strategy for responding to both negative & positive online reviews.
- Most healthcare providers fail to address negative reviews properly, if at all.



COMMON MYTHS ABOUT ONLINE REVIEWS

Myth 1: A patient's review is an authorization for the provider or practice to disclose information regarding that patient.

FALSE. If the patient chooses to post a positive or negative review about a healthcare organization or provider, they haven't provided the right or authorization to release any patient-specific information in response.

Best Practice: Healthcare organizations and providers should make sure they are not writing comments that would confirm that the patient actually received any healthcare services, or any specific comments regarding the patient's healthcare services.



COMMON MYTHS ABOUT ONLINE REVIEWS

Myth 2: If the patient posts private information about a provider or a healthcare organization online, then the healthcare organization or provider has the right to respond to the individual who posted the review in the same format.

FALSE. When a patient provides detailed and specific information about an experience with a provider or healthcare organization, they still have not provided authorization to the provider or healthcare organization to respond back with specific patient information and details.

Best Practice: Just like with Myth 1, comments should not confirm that the patient actually received any healthcare services with the organization or practice. Information gained through the course of a patient's care should never be shared on a public site without proper patient authorization.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

- Healthcare organizations and providers are not allowed to use or disclose patient information in their review response. Including:
 - Patient's Name
 - Geographic subdivisions smaller than state (address, city, county, zip)
 - All elements of DATES (except year) including DOB, admission, discharge, death, ages over 89, dates indicative of age
 - Admission type
 - Medical Record, Account, or Health Plan Number
 - Patient's Email Address or Phone Number
 - Any other unique identifying information



Examples of What To Do & What Not To Do



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

1) Don't use language that indicates the patient even visited your local business premises.

Review Example:

A patient writes "I had a great experience seeing [doctor's name]."

What Not to Do:

"Thank you, [patient name] for coming into our office yesterday."

This review response is not compliant because it confirms the patient visited the healthcare provider and is a violation of the patient's personal privacy.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

1) Don't use language that indicates the patient even visited your local business premises.

Review Example:

A patient writes "I had a great experience seeing [doctor's name]."

What To Do:

"It is our policy to provide the best care to patients. Thank you."

This is a response that doesn't provide any specific patient information or confirm that the reviewer was a patient. Instead, it focuses on the policy of the organization and provides a polite thank you.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

2) Don't use any details or specifics, even if the patient mentions them in their own review.

Review Example:

A patient writes “My migraines are feeling much better thanks to [doctor’s name].”

What Not to Do:

“We’re so glad! Remember to keep taking your [prescription name] twice a day!”

This review response is not compliant because it reveals medical history of the patient and shares detailed information online.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

2) Don't use any details or specifics, even if the patient mentions them in their own review.

Review Example:

A patient writes “My migraines are feeling much better thanks to [doctor’s name].”

What to Do:

“Our location aims to deliver the highest quality patient care. We love to hear about positive experiences. Thanks for sharing this feedback with us!”

This is a good response. It states that the healthcare facility aims to provide the best care possible. The responder does not confirm that the reviewer was an actual patient. It is vague, and specific to the policy of the organization. In no way does this violate HIPAA or state laws.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

3) Don't argue with negative reviews or egg on further public online discussion.

Review Example:

A patient writes "The receptionist was rude. I'm never coming back."

What Not to Do:

"Sorry to hear this. Could you elaborate on the behavior of the receptionist?"

This review response is not compliant because it confirms the patient visited the location and will open up further public online discussion about their visit.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

3) Don't argue with negative reviews or egg on further online discussion.

Review Example:

A patient writes "The receptionist was rude. I'm never coming back."

What to Do:

"We are committed to providing the best patient care experience. It's our policy to resolve issues offline. Please feel free to contact us at [contact information]."

Remember: Keep the response brief, general, and try to move the conversation offline.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

Yelp Bonus Tip:

- If you receive a negative review on Yelp, use a brief, general public response to the review. However, use Yelp's private messaging feature to continue the conversation with the patient and try to resolve their issue offline.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

Is this review response considered HIPAA Compliant?



[Redacted Name]

Local Guide · 12 reviews · 7 photos

★★★★★ 2 weeks ago

Dr. [Redacted Name] is amazing! I would recommend her to anyone. Clean facility, the wait was not long, professional staff. Thank you Dr. [Redacted Name] for your healing hands and expertise.

Like


Response from the owner a week ago

Thank you for your kind review, [Redacted Name]! We'll make sure to pass along your words to Dr. [Redacted Name] so she knows it doesn't go unnoticed.



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

Is this review response considered HIPAA Compliant?

 **Local Guide** · 12 reviews · 7 photos
★★★★★ 2 weeks ago
Dr. [REDACTED] is amazing! I would recommend her to anyone. Clean facility, the wait was not long, professional staff. Thank you Dr. [REDACTED] for your healing hands and expertise.
 Like

Response from the owner a week ago
Thank you for your kind review, [REDACTED]! We'll make sure to pass along your words to Dr. [REDACTED] so she knows it doesn't go unnoticed.

NO – It includes both the name of the patient and the name of the doctor in the review response.

HIPAA Compliant Response:

Thank you for your kind review! We strive to provide the best possible service at [Business Name].



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

Is this review response considered HIPAA Compliant?

B [redacted]
4 reviews

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ a week ago

I called this facility after my son got a facial injury playing with a dog. I described to them over the phone exactly where the wound was, how big, and how old my son is and asked them if they would be able to treat him. They told me yes ... [More](#)

 Like

Response from the owner a week ago

Hi [redacted], we are so sorry to hear about the experience you had during your visit with us. We would like to learn more details so we can determine exactly what happened and the staff members involved. Can you please email us to confirm your son's information so we can pull up his chart? Thanks -
[redacted].com.




RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

Is this review response considered HIPAA Compliant?

B [redacted]
4 reviews

★★★★★ a week ago

I called this facility after my son got a facial injury playing with a dog. I described to them over the phone exactly where the wound was, how big, and how old my son is and asked them if they would be able to treat him. They told me yes ... [More](#)

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NO – It includes the name of the patient.

HIPAA Compliant Response:

We are sorry about your experience at our location. We are committed to providing the best patient care experience. Please feel free to contact us at [contact information].



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

Is this review response considered HIPAA Compliant?



2 reviews

★★★★★ 4 weeks ago

Possibly the nicest staff!

I found them to be professional, helpful, courteous, and caring!



Like

Response from the owner 3 weeks ago

Thank you so much for taking the time to share your experience with us! We hope you're feeling much better now!



RESPONDING TO ONLINE REVIEWS

Is this review response considered HIPAA Compliant?



2 reviews

★★★★★ 4 weeks ago

Possibly the nicest staff!

I found them to be professional, helpful, courteous, and caring!



Like

Response from the owner 3 weeks ago

Thank you so much for taking the time to share your experience with us! We hope you're feeling much better now!

YES – the response is generic enough that it doesn't expose any patient information.

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Monitoring Online Reviews



MONITORING ONLINE REVIEWS






- It can be overwhelming to manually track all of your business' online reviews.
- Reputation Tools like Consumer Fusion can help you keep track of incoming reviews with automated review alerts and allows you to set up HIPAA compliant review responses to automatically respond within 24-48 hours of a new review.
- This allows your staff to spend more time with your patients vs. spending time on marketing tasks like responding to reviews.



Reputation

Summary Real Time Reviews Review Requests Feedback Forms Removed Reviews

Directory: Merchant Circle Star Rating: Not Recommended

Directory	Review Date	Star Rating	Review User	Review Text	
	22 Feb 2018	★★★★★ 5.0	Troy Huffaker	Great correspondence and they did as promised. I would recommend this business for any business needing help; honest and upfront. Thank you Consumer Fusion.	<input type="button" value="View Reply"/>
	27 Mar 2018	★★★★★ 5.0	Karen Wise	I called Consumer Fusion in a panic because I received a negative review online, they quickly responded and have been a tremendous help to my small counseling practice. They tried numerous times to see if they could get Google to remove the review, but haven't been able to do so yet. However, they h... see more	<input type="button" value="Reply"/>
	27 Mar 2018	★★★★★ 5.0	Luella Ingram	Brynn at Consumer Fusion has helped us improve our ranking on Google and Yelp. Their system has made it easy for clients to provide reviews. We have received a lot of business due to our high ranking. It has been worth every penny.	<input type="button" value="Reply"/>
	27 Mar 2018	★★★★★ 5.0	Samuel Franklin	Thank you Linette. Ever since you started managing our online presence we have consistently increased our customer base. Customer satisfaction has also gone up considerably and noticeably. From the entire team here at Tunes, Lubes, & Smogs we want to thank you for an awesome job!	<input type="button" value="Reply"/>
	27 Mar 2018	★★★★★ 5.0	Isabel Gonzales	This company is my saving grace. I own a property management company and I have been in business for over twenty years. In that time, I have been faced with	<input type="button" value="Reply"/>

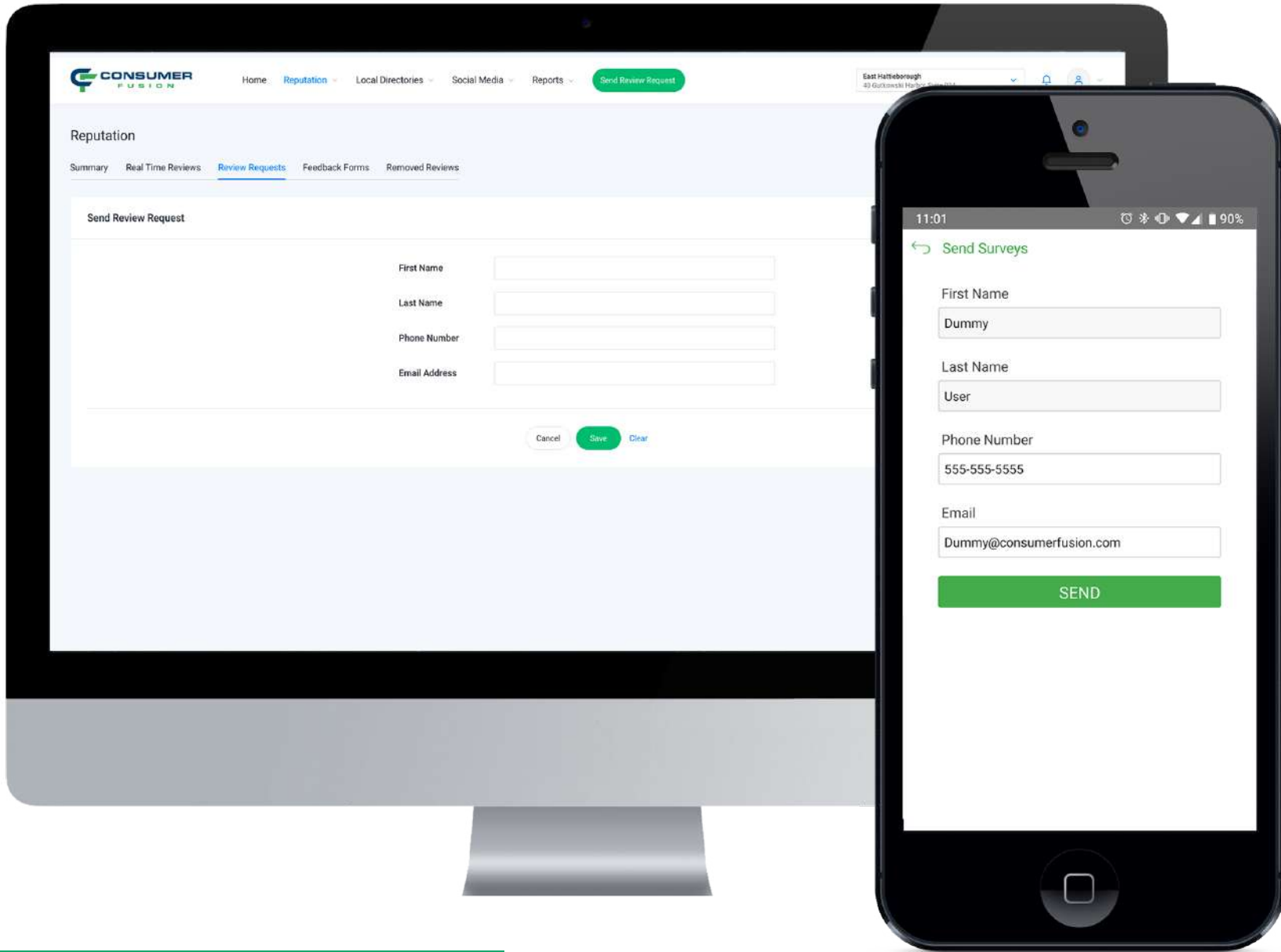
MONITORING ONLINE REVIEWS

- 71.3% of healthcare organizations receive reviews from 5% or fewer of their patients.
- Utilizing review request tools like those from Consumer Fusion allows your staff to easily request reviews from patients.

Note: It's important to receive authorization from patients before sending them a review request via email or text message.

- Consumer Fusion can also remove negative reviews that violate the review site's terms & conditions.





REVIEW REMOVAL PROCESS

- It's not a myth, negative reviews and photos can be removed from major review sites like Google, Yelp, and Facebook.
- Reviews that violate the terms and conditions of the review site can be disputed and removed from the internet.
- This also applies to photos, Yelp Tips, and Google Questions.



REVIEW REMOVAL PROCESS

- Just about every major online review site has a code of conduct in place for its reviewers. While every individual directory may differ in terms of what's considered inappropriate, the majority of reviews that contain the following content have a high rate of removal:
 - Spam or promotional material
 - Personal rant from a former employee
 - Reviews written by a competitor
 - Reviews for the wrong location



REPUTATION MANAGEMENT PILOT

Consumer Fusion is offering a 2-Month Free Reputation Management Pilot for up to two (2) locations.

Includes:

- Negative Review Removal
- Review Monitoring
- Review Responses
- Review Generation





Caring.com Reminders

Caring Stars & Review Responses



Reviews Lead to Caring Stars Award



Recognizes excellence based on consumer reviews

- **1st of its kind** in the senior living industry; high bar to qualify
- Generates **positive buzz** in media coverage and on social networks; supports sales, recruiting and retention
- Announced in November/December: **celebrated year-round**

2020

**Caring Stars Winners Average
Twice as Many Inquiries & Move-Ins!**



Countdown to Caring Stars 2021

It's Time to Get Great Reviews & Respond to Negative Reviews



What You Should Do:

- Get a total of **at least 10 great consumer reviews** on your Caring.com listing by **October 15, 2020**
 - Make sure your Caring.com listing has **at least 3 new reviews published since 10/15/19** – with at least **one that is a 5-star review**, and at least **one that is published in 2020**
 - Aim for an **overall average rating of 4.5 stars** or higher
- Rapidly **respond to all 1-star or 2-star negative reviews** by 10/15/20
 - **Home Care Pulse agencies:** Monitor closely through November 5th

2020



How to Respond to Reviews on Caring

Are You a Referral or Advertising Partner?



Use the **New Review Alert** sent via email instantly after review is published on listing

Convenient, automated “Take Action Now” links to request removal or publish public response

Handled in highest priority, fastest-processing queue

Not in Caring’s Partner Network?

Lost New Review Alert?

Responding to Old Reviews?



Email **reviews@caring.com** to request removal or publish public response

2020



Q & A



Key Takeaways



Responding to both negative and positive reviews is important for your business' online presence.



Keep review responses polite but generic so that personal patient information isn't disclosed.



Consumer Fusion can help your business stay on top of review generation, review monitoring and responses, and negative review removal.



The deadline to qualify for Caring Stars 2021 is October 15, 2020 — Get and respond to reviews now!

2020



How to Contact Consumer Fusion



MARK SPENCER

Mark@consumerfusion.com

858-201-4732

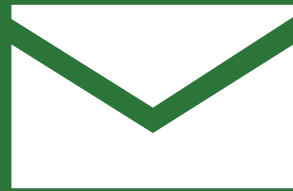
www.consumerfusion.com/pilot

Thank You!

We Welcome Your Feedback and Suggestions



(650) 762-8190



reviews@caring.co
m



company/caring-com



@SrCareReviews

More Resources on Our Industry Blog:

<http://partners.caring.com>

