

6 Tips for Successful Healthcare 2.0

A June 2009 *Pew Research Center Publications* report entitled “The Shared Search for Health Information on the Internet” states that, “61% of adults look online for health information”. Healthcare organizations are utilizing new ways to directly connect with their audiences; they are using Twitter from operating rooms, showing surgery on YouTube and patients are active on social sites and blogs.

Here are 6 tips for successful healthcare 2.0:

1. Increase patient accessibility on your website

Create a patient portal that allows users to make appointments and store health information. By allowing patients to track their medical history, maintain a health profile, and share information with family and physicians, you’re creating an online community and providing a secure space for patients. Increased involvement = more visitors.

2. Utilize social outlets

Niche healthcare social networks such as DailyStrength.org and OrganizedWisdom.com encourage users to share their experiences with procedures, doctors, and a variety of other topics. Many hospitals are popping up on mainstream outlets such as Facebook and Twitter as well. As a result, start tweeting health tips and sending your Facebook fans an update on events and fundraisers. Engage your users!

3. Demonstrate expertise

Blogs are an excellent way for physicians and health professionals to establish authority for a specific subject, such as men’s health or breast cancer. By allowing users to comment on a post, blogs can generate conversation.

4. Create a platform for discussion

Give people an opportunity to communicate (in real time) with doctors and engage in a critical open discussion about health topics. Generate a forum or a discussion board, which can be used for asking specific health questions and for posting either user or physician generated content.

5. Provide useful calculators/tools

Provide tool to save and track personal data as users complete assessments and calculate figures. Generate a health assessment for diabetes risk or include a cost comparison tools that displays the price ranges for a medical procedure.

6. Promote viral messages

Online video can demonstrate authority and promote user-interaction. Physicians and health professionals can be resources for informational videos, just post them to your website, blog, YouTube channel, etc. They are easy to do, informal, and un-scripted. Expensive video productions are a thing of the past.