

Healthcare Advertising Compliance Checklist



MediRecords

Your practice website does more than help patients find your services. It shapes their expectations and influences decisions about care. That means the wording on your website, social media and marketing materials matters.

Section 133 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law sets out the requirements for advertising a regulated health service, and Ahpra and the National Boards publish guidelines explaining how they apply. This checklist walks you through six areas to review: patient reviews, before-and-after images, practitioner titles, offers and pricing, treatment claims, and your ongoing review process.

Use it to spot potential issues before they become a problem, and revisit it whenever your services, practitioners or promotions change.

General information only, not legal advice. Based on the Ahpra advertising guidelines dated December 2020. Check the Ahpra advertising hub for the current version.

1. Open your channels

Website, social media, Google profile, agency-run pages

2. Tick whats compliant

Leave unticked anything you're unsure about.

3. Fix, then diarise

Correct the gaps and set your next review date.

Practice: _____ Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

1. Patient reviews and testimonials

- ☐ No clinical testimonials appear on our website, social media or other channels we control (symptoms, diagnoses, treatments, outcomes).
- ☐ Reviews we display are limited to non-clinical feedback, such as booking, reception or communication.
- ☐ Reviews haven't been edited to drop negative comments and leave a misleading impression.
- ☐ Patient stories and case studies have been checked for testimonials and unrealistic outcomes.

Red flag

"My back pain disappeared after two sessions."

Safer approach

"Friendly reception team and easy to book."

2. Before-and-after images

- ☐ Images are genuine, not fabricated, enhanced or misleadingly edited.
- ☐ Lighting, angle, posture, makeup and framing are consistent between images.
- ☐ The result can reasonably be attributed to the treatment.
- ☐ Captions and surrounding text don't suggest the result is typical, guaranteed or assured.
- ☐ Consent, privacy and any extra rules for the procedure or profession are met (cosmetic procedures often have more).

Red flag

Caption: "Typical result after one treatment!"

Safer approach

A factual caption of what the image shows, with no suggestion it will be repeated for everyone.

3. Titles, qualifications and specialist claims

- ☐ Each profile has been checked against the practitioner's current registration.
- ☐ Protected titles are used only by practitioners registered in that profession.

- ☐ No one is called a specialist unless they hold specialist registration in a recognised specialty.
- ☐ Where “Dr” is used by someone who isn’t a registered medical practitioner, their profession is stated.
- ☐ The title “surgeon” is used only where the National Law allows it.
- ☐ Descriptions of extra training or experience don’t imply specialist registration.

Red flag

“Dr Lee” (an osteopath, with no profession shown)

Safer approach

“Dr Lee (Osteopath)”

4. Discounts, offers and pricing

- ☐ Every gift, discount or other inducement clearly states its terms and conditions.
- ☐ Offers say which service is covered, who is eligible, when they expire, and any exclusions or extra costs.
- ☐ Advertised prices are accurate and don’t mislead about the real cost of a service.
- ☐ Offers don’t encourage repeated or unnecessary treatment regardless of clinical need.
- ☐ Urgency messaging has been removed, or has a sound clinical basis.

Red flag

“Act now before it’s too late!”

Safer approach

“New patient consultation: \$X until [date].
Conditions apply: [list].”

5. Treatment claims and evidence

- ☐ No treatment is described as guaranteed, risk-free, pain-free or certain to work for everyone.
- ☐ Claims about effectiveness are accurate and backed by appropriate evidence for the service advertised.
- ☐ Descriptions acknowledge that results vary and, where relevant, mention risks and limitations.

Red flag

“Guarantees permanent, pain-free relief.”

Safer approach

A balanced description that reflects the evidence and promises no particular outcome.

6. Processes and ongoing review

- ☐ Marketing agencies and website developers understand the requirements for content published on our behalf.
- ☐ Content is checked before publication, and a named person signs it off.
- ☐ We review content regularly, and whenever services, practitioners or offers change.
- ☐ We've checked the Ahpra advertising hub for the current version of the guidelines.

Your scorecard

Ticks: ____ /27

Every box ticked? Note your next review date.

Unticked boxes? Fix those first, and ask your professional association, indemnity insurer or a health lawyer about anything borderline.

Next review date

Date: _____

Key Contacts and Resources

Rules and guidelines

Ahpra: 1300 419 495 (Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm local time) or [online enquiry](#).

Advertising hub: ahpra.gov.au/Resources/Advertising-hub

Advertising guidelines: [view guidelines](#)

National Law (section 133): [view legislation](#)

Other regulators

TGA (medicines and therapeutic goods): [advertising.guidance](#)

ACCC (Australian Consumer Law): [advertising.guidance](#)

General information only, not legal advice. Based on the Ahpra advertising guidelines dated December 2020. Check the Ahpra advertising hub for the current version.