

NEW RULES • IN FORCE NOW

The NMC's new advertising rules for doctors and hospitals

What you can still post, what you can't, and what it
costs to get it wrong.

**6 Oct
2026**

Guidelines on Ethical Advertising and Public Communication,
National Medical Commission

Swipe →

Every channel. Doctors and hospitals. No grace period.

- 1** In force immediately from 6 October 2026
- 2** Covers TV, print, hoardings, websites, social media, WhatsApp, podcasts, influencers, sponsored posts and AI content
- 3** Applies to doctors and to hospitals or medical institutions
- 4** Your agency or influencer posted it? You are still responsible

Share facts patients can verify

- ✓ Name, location, contact details and timings
- ✓ Departments, facilities, equipment and emergency services
- ✓ Accreditation, stated with its source
- ✓ Charges, stated factually
Prices are fine. Offers are not.
- ✓ Hoardings with factual information on infrastructure

Educate, list and announce

- ✓ A doctor directory: name, recognised qualifications, specialty, registration details, availability
- ✓ Health awareness and educational content that doesn't promote a practice or solicit patients
- ✓ Factual announcements: new practice, new address, absence, resumption, consultation charges
- ✓ Public health talks in the doctor's own name, and case studies in medical journals

Use patients to promote

- × Ask for or share patient testimonials, recommendations or reviews for promotion
- × Post before-and-after photos, success stories or celebrity patients
- × Show identifiable patients: names, faces, records
- × Buy reviews, ratings, followers or search rankings

Patient consent does not make a testimonial permissible.

Promise outcomes or claim to be the best

- × "Guaranteed cure"
- × "100% success"
- × "Painless treatment"
- × "Best doctor", "No. 1" or any comparison you can't verify
- × Fear-based content that pushes unnecessary tests or procedures

Awards and rankings only if independently verifiable, with issuer, date and methodology disclosed.

Use money to pull patients in

- × Discounts and limited-period offers
- × Coupons, contests, gifts and cashbacks
- × Commissions or referral fees for patients
- × Agency or influencer fees tied to patients or leads delivered
- × Endorsing drugs, devices or products, paid or unpaid

AI is allowed to help. Not to sell.

- ✓ AI-assisted content that follows the rules, labelled as AI-generated or AI-assisted
- ✗ AI-generated promotional campaigns for commercial interest
- ✗ Synthetic patients: AI-made faces, voices, testimonials or outcomes
- ✗ Feeding patient data into AI tools without meeting privacy law

Same message, compliant

× BEFORE

"Best knee surgeon in the city. 100% success. Book now and get 20% off!"

✓ AFTER

"Knee replacement: who needs it, recovery in weeks, risks to discuss. Dr A. Sharma, MS (Ortho), Reg. No. on profile. Consultation charges listed."

× BEFORE

A patient video saying "I walked the next day."

✓ AFTER

The surgeon explaining what recovery usually looks like.

What it costs a doctor

1ST

Warning and ethics training

2ND

Censure and monetary penalty

3RD

Suspension, 3 to 6 months

SERIOUS

Suspension, 6 to 12 months

REPEATED

Off the register, 1 to 3 years

Enforced by State Medical Councils. Hospitals face action under the Clinical Establishments Act or state law.

The 5-point clean-up

- 1 Remove testimonials, review screenshots and before-and-afters
- 2 Pause review-request campaigns until legal signs off
- 3 Pull every discount and offer; keep factual prices
- 4 Rewrite "best", "No. 1" and "painless"
- 5 Label AI content; fix agency contracts paid per patient

**Full guide, penalties and pre-launch checklist:
gauravphogat.com/hospital-advertising-rules-nmc-asci-india**

A marketer's summary, not legal advice. Check the NMC notice for exact wording.