



American Association of
NURSE PRACTITIONERS®

MEMBER GUIDE: ADDRESSING MISINFORMATION AND ATTACKS

For additional questions,
please contact
communications@aanp.org.

Before reacting to online negativity, take a step back and analyze the situation. This document is how to respond to attacks on the profession or NP-owned practices. Responding to patient reviews is beyond the scope of this document.



STEP 1: ASSESS THE SITUATION

- **Identify the source:** Look for clues about the reviewer's location, connection to your practice and tone of voice. This helps determine the potential motivations behind the review.
 - **Google Reviews:**
 - On the review itself, look for the location listed beneath the reviewer's name. This could be a city, state or even a general region.
 - If the reviewer has responded to other reviews or posted on Google Maps, their profile might reveal additional information like past visits to places like your practice.
 - **Yelp Reviews:**
 - Like Google, the reviewer's profile might show their location, past reviews and other details.
 - **Social Media Posts:**
 - Look for mentions of your practice or specific NPs in the reviewer's social media history.
 - Check for connections between the reviewer and your patients or staff on social media.
- **Analyze the content:** Is the review factual, a misunderstanding or targeted misinformation? Differentiating between genuine concerns and malicious attacks is crucial to determine what steps to take.



STEP 2: REPORT MISINFORMATION OR ATTACKS

- **Report false reviews:** Most platforms like Google My Business or Yelp offer reporting tools for demonstrably false or misleading reviews. Utilize these tools to flag harmful content.
- **Reporting on Google:**
 1. Go to your Google My Business page where you manage your practice information and locate the specific review you want to report.
 2. Click on the three dots (...): These dots appear beside the review and lead to a drop-down menu.
 3. Select "Flag as inappropriate": This opens a reporting window where you can choose the reason for reporting.
 4. Choose the appropriate reason: Select the option that best describes the issue with the review. Consider options like "Fake content," "Off topic," "Misleading information" or "Competitor."
 5. Provide additional details if needed: Briefly explain why you believe the review violates Google's policies. Include specific examples within the review itself. This could be the location of the person (e.g. out of state), or competitor (e.g. someone attacking the business model instead of the care provided)
 6. Submit the report: Once you've filled out the information, click "Submit" to send the report to Google.
 7. Encourage others to do the same.
- **Reporting on Yelp:**
 1. Locate the Review: Log in to your Yelp account and find the review you want to report.
 2. Click the three dots (...): These dots appear at the top-right of the review and lead to a drop-down menu.
 3. Click Report Review.
 4. Select the Reason for Review: "Posted by a competitor" or "Doesn't describe a personal consumer experience" are the best options (You cannot select "It contains false information," as this will not allow you to submit the review.)
 5. Provide Additional Details: Briefly explain why you believe the review violates Yelp's policies. Include specific examples within the review itself. This could be the location of the person (e.g. out of state), competitor (e.g. someone attacking the business model instead of the care provided).
 6. Submit the Report: Click "Send" to submit the report to Yelp.
 7. Encourage others to do the same.



STEP 3: REDUCE THE PROMINENCE OF THE REVIEW

- **Inspire positive engagement:** Encourage feedback from satisfied patients and ask them to share their experiences online.
- **Consider utilizing surveys:** Give patients the opportunity to express their feedback to you directly before they post online. This allows you to respond to concerns while encouraging patients to share their positive experience.
- **Highlight your team:** Feature your NPs prominently on your website and social media platforms. Share their bios, areas of expertise and patient testimonials to build familiarity and trust.
- **Highlight achievements:** Regularly share clinical successes and team updates. This demonstrates your commitment to quality care and proactively builds trust.
- **Engage with your community:** Participate in online forums and discussions related to health care and NPs. Share your expertise, answer questions and build positive relationships with potential patients. Prior to engaging in these conversations, be sure to read up on risk management, liability and malpractice guidance from [Proliability](#).
- **Maintain HIPAA Compliance:** Always ensure adherence to HIPAA regulations when engaging with online reviews and forums to protect privacy and confidentiality.
- **Consider an online reputation management tool:** Consider utilizing tools designed for managing your online reputation. Many tools offer capabilities such as real-time monitoring of brand mentions across various internet platforms, including social media and review sites.





STEP 4: USE AANP RESOURCES

AANP offers a comprehensive suite of educational materials that NPs can use to inform the public about the quality of NP health care services.

RESEARCH:

- **NP Infographic:** NPs have been providing primary, acute and specialty health care to patients of all ages and walks of life for nearly half a century. [Click here](#) to learn more.
- **Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care:** The education and certification of NPs ensure high standards of care, with most NPs educated in primary care to meet health care needs. [Click here](#) to learn more.
- **Quality of Nurse Practitioner Practice:** Research studies comparing NPs to physicians and physician assistants in primary care settings have found no significant differences in patient outcomes, including diabetes management and prescribing practices. [Click here](#) to learn more.
- **Nurse Practitioner Cost Effectiveness:** NPs have been shown to reduce health care costs through effective management of chronic diseases, reducing unnecessary hospitalizations, and improving health outcomes. [Click here](#) to learn more.

MEDIA:

- **We Choose NPs:** [Click here](#) to learn more.
- **AANP Media Campaigns:** [Click here](#) to learn more.