

Facebook Strengthens Advertisement Policies Regarding Telehealth

New policy requires pre-approval and certification that telehealth providers and online pharmacies are legitimate - by Amanda Tjan

CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, August 31, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Facebook is not only a longstanding social media platform but is also widely used to promote products and services to a mass audience. As telemedicine continues to penetrate the healthcare industry, it is not surprising that pharmaceutical companies use Facebook as a means of advertising. In 2019, pharmaceutical companies spent over \$1 billion on Facebook ads alone. While the proliferation of telehealth poses new challenges for the multibillion-dollar company, Facebook is strengthening its advertisement policies centered around telemedicine.

In Facebook's existing policy, online pharmacies are required to undergo a certification process before advertising on the platform. In addition, the company prohibits the sale or trading of all prescription drugs. Facebook also bans ads that advocate or promote the consumption of illegal substances and unsafe supplements. Ads promoting drug-related paraphernalia are also prohibited.

Facebook's new policy, effective August 25th, 2021, will require pre-approval for telehealth providers, online pharmacies, and pharmaceutical manufacturers using LegitScript, a third-party health regulation service. LegitScript combines data to ensure that companies are operating safely and legally. Only certified advertisers that fall into one of these three categories will be allowed to promote prescription drugs on the platform. Advertisements may not promote prescription drugs without prior written permission. In addition, Facebook maintains that ads cannot target minors and will only be available in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand.



Edward Kafterian, CEO Orbit Health
Telepsychiatry

Doctor Edward Kaftarian, CEO of telepsychiatry provider [Orbit Health](#) and telehealth training provider [Orbit University](#), notes that LegitScript certification is also required for advertising similar services on Google. According to Dr. Kaftarian, Orbit Health sees LegitScript as a marker of quality that recognizes Orbit Health and Orbit University for their quality education and public outreach about telepsychiatry and telemental health



services. “LegitScript now certifies telehealth providers,” says Dr. Kaftarian, “which will be needed if providers wish to promote their services to new customers.”

Orbit Health has used Facebook ads in the past to increase awareness among potential clients, but Dr. Kaftarian cautions that first-time users might be overwhelmed by the sheer number of options when it comes to scheduling ads anywhere from a few times a day to several times a week, plus choosing the locations and age brackets of consumers to target.

“

Facebook can be very useful to allow reputable companies to educate the public and provide high-quality medical information.”

*Dr. Edward Kaftarian, CEO,
Orbit Health*

In Facebook’s announcement of the new policy, the company states that the purpose of strengthening its regulation of health advertisements stems from the intention of prohibiting illegal and unsafe substances. In 2018, Facebook cracked down on the sale of illicit drugs on

the platform as a response to the growing opioid crisis. In 2017, there were an estimated 30,000 deaths due to overdose from opioids. Many of these drugs were bought online from social media platforms like Facebook.

Since then, Facebook has banned searches for words like “fentanyl” and “Xanax” to make it significantly harder for buyers to connect with sellers. In addition, Facebook has since added a feature that prompts users to the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration helpline when they use the site to search for illicit drugs.

While this is a step forward, targeted advertising still raises the question about privacy for consumers. In the 2016 lawsuit filed against Facebook, the plaintiffs claimed that the company invaded users’ privacy by tracking their visits to health-related websites. The privacy suit was later dismissed as internet searches are not deemed to be sensitive medical information and users agree to Facebook’s terms of service when creating an account. In addition, Facebook is not necessarily obligated to conceal the health information of its users as the Health Insurance

Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) only applies to entities that directly deal with patient information.

Facebook recognizes that businesses in the medical industry want to raise awareness for pharmaceuticals and other health-related treatments. However, Facebook is also aware that the company must change its policies in order to adhere to the changing landscape of digital marketing. Doctor Kaftarian of Orbit Health recognizes that Facebook ads can be very useful to allow reputable companies to educate the public and provide high-quality medical information. "Facebook is a communication channel that allows companies to promote their brand to new and existing customers," he says. Meanwhile, Facebook's paid ads "can be helpful in increasing traffic, boosting retention, and expanding customer bases for existing Facebook pages."

"Facebook advertising is a great way for small businesses to reach out to their customers and expand their reach," concludes Dr. Kaftarian. This latest move by Facebook to require pre-approval for ads from telehealth providers and others using LegitScript is seen as a positive step toward enhancing public trust and confidence in healthcare information while cracking down on the sale of illicit drugs and misinformation when it comes to vital issues of public health.

Edward Kaftarian

Orbit Health

+1 844-672-4863

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/550228030>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2021 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.