HMS
HEALTHCARE MARKETING STRATEGY

Doctor Personal Brand Playbook

How to be known, trusted and found for your expertise, in 90 days, without breaking the NMC advertising rules.

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Days from a bare profile to a brand patients and peers can trust.

Inside this playbook

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How to read it

Do this. Allowed by the NMC guidelines of 6 October 2026, or good practice.

Avoid this. The guidelines restrict it.

Grey area. The guidelines do not settle it. Take the cautious reading.

Tags such as **Para 8.2(iii)** point to the paragraph of the NMC text. Each chapter ends with an **HMS Prescription**: one action for this week.

A personal brand is trust, not advertising.

It is the picture patients and peers hold of you: your field, your approach and your credibility. You build it by being clear and useful. The moment a post tries to win patients, it stops being brand building.

Official text | **Para 5.1** | **Para 8.1** | **Para 8.2** | **Para 3.2, Expl. III**

Brand building

Educational content on conditions, myths and prevention
Paras 5.1, 8.2(iv)

Public-health talks and lectures in your own name
Para 8.2(iii)

Factual profile: name, qualifications, registration
Para 3.2, Expl. III

Announcements of address, timings and fees
Paras 8.2(ii), 9.3

Promotion

Soliciting patients, directly or indirectly
Para 8.1(ii)

Testimonials, success claims, guarantees
Paras 8.1(iii), (xi)

Before-and-after images
Para 8.1(v)

Offers, discounts, “best” or “No. 1”
Paras 8.1(ix), (x)

The brand you can safely build is the one a stranger can verify.

If a patient or peer can check your credentials, read your explanations and hear you teach, you have a brand. None of it needs a claim about results.

Rx

HMS Prescription

Open your own Instagram, Google profile and website. Mark every item that sits in the right-hand column. Those go first.

Building block 1

Your brand in one sentence.

Say what you do and for whom, in plain words. Facts only. This sentence goes in your bio, your website heading and every introduction.

> **I am a [specialty] who treats [conditions] in [patients, e.g. adults or children], in [city].**
>
> Fill the brackets with facts you can prove. Nothing else goes in.

Factual or not?

Factual	Not allowed or unverifiable
"Paediatric cardiologist treating heart conditions in children, Vadodara."	"Best heart doctor in the city." Para 8.1(ix)
"Orthopaedic surgeon. Knee and hip conditions, sports injuries."	"Painless knee replacement, 100% success." Para 8.1(iii)
"Diabetologist. Diabetes care and prevention for adults."	"Reverse diabetes in 90 days." Para 8.1(vi)
"Dermatologist. Skin, hair and nail conditions."	"Most trusted skin clinic." Para 8.1(ix)

Test your sentence

Could a stranger check every word of it?

Does it say what you do, not how good you are?

Would it still be true in five years?

Rx

HMS Prescription

Write your sentence today. Put it in one place only first: your Google Business Profile or your website home page. Then copy it everywhere else.

Building block 2

Credentials on every profile.

Every electronic post and profile should show who you are and that you are registered. This is the most checkable part of your brand, and the NMC asks for it.

Official text | **Para 3.2, Expl. III** | **Expl. IV**

Your disclosure block

Dr [Full name], [MBBS, MD (Specialty)]
Registered with [State Medical Council or NMC]
Registration No. [number]

Where it must appear

Place	What to show
Website	Doctor page and footer: full name, qualifications, registration status and number. Same wording as every other profile.
Google profile	Name, specialty, address, timings. Qualifications in the description. No superlatives.
Instagram and Facebook	Bio line with name and qualifications. Disclosure block at the end of each caption.
LinkedIn	Headline with specialty. Registration in the About section and Licences section.
YouTube	Channel About page and every video description. Registration also in the video end-card.

? Stories, Reels and Shorts. The guidelines do not say how to show details in short formats. Put them on screen and in the caption.

Expl. III

Rx

HMS Prescription

Write your disclosure block once. Paste it into all five places in one sitting. Check that name, degrees and number match everywhere.

Building block 2, continued

Bio, photo and handle.

Official text | **Para 8.1(ix)** | **Paras 6.1 to 6.4**

Write it like this

- Specialty and conditions you treat, in plain words
- Qualifications, institution, and years of practice, if you can prove them
- Clinic or hospital, city, consultation timings
- Registration number and council
- One line on what you share: "I explain heart health in simple words"

Not like this

- "Best", "No. 1", "top", "leading" — Para 8.1(ix)
- Patient counts or success rates — Para 8.1(iii)
- "Painless", "guaranteed", "miracle" — Para 8.1(iii)
- A handle such as @bestheartdoctor
- Offers and "book now" banners

A bio that fits (Instagram, 150 characters)

Dr [Name] | [Specialty], [City]
[MBBS, MD] | Reg. No. [number]
I explain [topic] in simple words. Educational content only.

Photo

Use one clear, dignified, professional photo, the same on every profile. A consistent face builds recognition faster than any slogan. Never use a photo that identifies a patient (Paras 6.1 to 6.4).

HMS Prescription

Replace any superlative in your bio and handle today. If you have to change your handle, set a redirect from the old one and announce it factually.

Building block 3

Four content pillars.

Pick four themes and stay with them. A brand becomes recognisable when people know what you will talk about. All four are educational.

Official text | **Para 5.1** | **Para 8.2(iv)** | **Para 8.2(iii)**

1. Explain

What a condition is, how it is diagnosed, what options exist. **Example:** "What is a stent, in 60 seconds."

2. Bust myths

Correct common misinformation calmly, with evidence. **Example:** "Does cracking knuckles cause arthritis?"

3. Prevent

Screening, lifestyle and when to see a doctor. **Example:** "Five warning signs of high blood pressure."

4. Teach

Talks, case-based learning for peers, public-health sessions. **Example:** a clip from a CME lecture.

Check before you post

- ✓ It helps a stranger understand something, without asking them to book.
  Para 5.1
- ✓ It carries your disclosure block.
  Expl. III
- ✗ It ends with an offer, a result or a testimonial.
  Paras 8.1(x), (iii), (xi)
- ? A personal story about why you chose your specialty. The guidelines do not mention it. Keep it about you and your values, with no patient story and no claim.
  Para 8.1(ii)

Rx

HMS Prescription

Write your four pillars on one line. Pin them above your desk. Every post must belong to one.

30 post prompts you can use this month.

Replace the brackets with your specialty. Each prompt is educational and ends with your disclosure block.

Explain

- What is [condition] in simple words?
- How do I know if I need [test]?
- What happens during a [procedure], step by step?
- What do the numbers on my [report] mean?
- Which questions should I ask my doctor about [condition]?
- What is the difference between [A] and [B]?
- How does [treatment] work?
- What does recovery after [procedure] usually look like?

Bust myths

- 5 myths about [condition]
- Is [common belief] true?
- What social media gets wrong about [topic]
- Does [home remedy] work? What the evidence says
- Myth versus fact: [medicine or test]
- Why you should not stop [medicine] on your own
- What a forwarded WhatsApp message got wrong

Prevent

- Five habits that protect your [organ]
- When to get screened for [condition]
- Warning signs you should not ignore
- A seasonal checklist: monsoon, winter, summer
- What to eat, what to avoid, for [condition]
- How to read a food label
- Questions to ask at your annual check-up
- How much exercise is enough?

Teach

- A 3-minute clip from your last public talk
- A short summary of a new study, in plain words
- A case-based lesson for junior doctors (anonymised, educational)
- A patient handout you share at the clinic
- A guide for caregivers of [condition]
- A short answer to a question from a comment
- Highlights from a conference you attended

Rx

HMS Prescription

Choose eight prompts. Draft them in one 60-minute session. That is a month of two posts a week.

Building block 4

Video and AI search.

Patients now search on Google, watch on Instagram and YouTube, and ask AI tools. HMS's view of how to be found, inside the NMC rules.

Official text | **Para 7.2** | **Para 3.2**

Short video

- Under 60 seconds, one idea
- Face the camera, plain words
- Name, qualifications and registration on screen and in the caption
- No patient in frame unless consent is documented and the content is purely educational (Para 6.2 cautions that consent does not make a promotional story allowed)

Long video

- 5 to 10 minutes: one question, answered fully
- Chapters and a written summary in the description
- Re-cut long talks into short clips (Para 8.2(iii))
- Pin one video that explains who you are and what you treat

Be found by AI tools

- **Keep one home base:** a website page about you with credentials, specialty and educational articles. AI tools read facts they can verify.
  HMS view
- **Use identical details everywhere:** name, qualifications, registration, clinic address and phone.
  HMS view
- **Answer real questions:** write pages as a patient would ask, with short, direct answers.
  HMS view
- **AI-generated promotion:** AI-made patients, testimonials, or promotional campaigns for commercial interest.
  Para 7.2
- **AI-assisted drafts you rewrite and check.** Not banned, but they count as advertising if promotional. Label AI origin where it matters.
  Para 3.2

Rx **HMS Prescription**

Record one 60-second video this week, on one question patients ask you most. Add the disclosure block in the caption.

Building block 5

Talks, lectures and authority.

Teaching is the strongest brand signal the NMC allows. A talk puts your name next to your expertise, and the guidelines permit it.

Official text | **Para 8.2(iii)** | **Para 8.2(i)** | **Para 5.1**

- ✓ Public-health talks and awareness sessions, in your own name and designation, without promoting your employer.
  Para 8.2(iii)
- ✓ Academic discussions, CME sessions, conference presentations.
  Para 5.1
- ✓ Case studies published in reputed medical journals.
  Para 8.2(i)
- ✓ Short clips from these talks, shared with a factual caption and your disclosure block.
  Paras 8.2(iii), 3.2
- ✗ A talk that ends with a pitch for your clinic, or a discount for attendees.
  Paras 8.1(ii), (x)
- ? Posting photos of the stage, certificates and awards. The guidelines are silent. Keep it factual and low-key, with no superiority claim.
  Para 8.1(ix)

How to get invited

1. Publish a short list of three topics you can speak on, on your website.

2. Write to your medical association, hospital CME team and local schools or colleges.

3. Record every talk. Cut one clip. Share it with the disclosure block.

Rx

HMS Prescription

Offer one public talk this quarter: a school, a society, a community group. Choose the topic from your four pillars.

The safe version of every tactic.

Most brand tactics have a version the NMC allows. Swap, do not stop.

Tactic	Safer version	Basis
Patient stories	Educational posts on the same condition. Do not reshare patient praise.	8.1(xi)
Before-and-after	Diagrams or generic illustrations of the procedure.	8.1(v), 6.1 to 6.4
Reviews	Do not request or share them on social media for promotion. Use feedback privately.	Expl. V
“Best doctor” bio	Specialty, qualifications, registration, factual years of practice.	3.2, 8.1(ix)
Festive offer	A greeting only, with no offer or discount.	8.2(v), 8.1(x)
Result numbers	Years of practice, if you can prove them. No patient counts or success rates.	8.1(iii)
Clinic news	Announce a new address, timings or fees factually.	8.2(ii), 9.3
Free camp post	Educational awareness content, no inducement, no promotion of your practice. A grey area; take the cautious reading.	5.1, 8.1(x)
Agency posting	You approve every post. You stay responsible.	4.4
Paying per lead	Do not. Any payment linked to individual patients is barred.	8.1(vii), (viii)

Rx

HMS Prescription

Find the three tactics you use most. Replace each with its safer version before your next post.

Patient stories, photos and privacy.

> **Consent does not make a banned post legal.**
>
> Para 6.2: patient consent cannot, by itself, make permissible a testimonial, promotional patient story, before-and-after depiction or success claim that is otherwise prohibited.

Official text | **Paras 6.1 to 6.4** | **Para 7.4** | **Para 8.1(v)**

✗ Patient names, faces, anomalies or other identifying details in public.
Para 7.4

✗ Promotional cases, personal success stories, celebrity patients.
Para 8.1(v)

✓ A case used strictly for scientific or educational purposes, with anonymised patient consent.
Para 8.1(v)

✓ Research-based case studies in reputed journals.
Para 8.2(i)

? Educational case discussion on social media. “Educational” is not defined. Anonymise fully and remove any call to book.
Para 8.1(v)

Replace the patient story with this

Instead of “Meet Mrs A, who walked again after surgery”

Post “What recovery after knee surgery usually looks like, week by week.” Educational, anonymous, no result claim.

Rx **HMS Prescription**

Archive any post that shows a patient, a thank-you message or a result. Keep patient feedback in a private folder, for service improvement only.

Working with a team or agency.

Handing your online presence to someone else does not hand them your responsibility.

Official text | Para 4.4 | Para 8.1(ii) | Paras 8.1(vii), (viii) | Para 8.1(xi)

You → **Your staff** → **Agency or freelancer** → **Platform**

You stay responsible for what you authorised, commissioned, sponsored or knowingly permitted.

✕ Any payment tied to procuring or referring individual patients, including per-lead fees.
Paras 8.1(vii), (viii)

✕ Using a third party to do indirectly what you cannot do directly.
Para 8.1(xi)

✓ Writing your own posts and having staff handle scheduling, design and formatting, with your sign-off on every post.
Para 4.4

? A doctor engaging help with marketing. Para 8.1(ii) bars an RMP from engaging a third party to market medical services but does not define where marketing ends and education or strategy support begin. Take written legal advice on your own arrangement.
Para 8.1(ii)

Ask anyone who posts for you

Do you charge or pay per patient lead? Who approves each post? Do you use testimonials, before-and-after images or offers? Do you buy followers or reviews? Do you label AI content?

Rx **HMS Prescription**

Set one rule in writing: nothing goes live without your sign-off against the 12-point check on page 17.

Your weekly rhythm.

About two hours a week. Two educational posts, a few replies, and a monthly planning hour.

Day Mon — **Plan**
Pick the week's two topics from your four pillars.

Day Tue — **Draft**
Write both posts or record both videos in one 30-minute session.

Day Wed — **Check**
Run the 3-point check. Add your disclosure block. Schedule.

Day Thu — **Publish**
Post the first piece. Reply to comments within 24 to 48 hours.

Day Fri — **Engage**
Answer five comments or questions. Note repeated questions for next topics.

Day Sat — **Publish**
Post the second piece.

Day Sun — **Rest**
Nothing. A sustainable habit beats a burst of effort.

Once a month: the batch hour.

Choose eight prompts from page 8. Draft them together. Schedule four weeks. Keep a folder of unused ideas.

Rx **HMS Prescription**

Block the two weekly sessions in your calendar now. Treat them as a patient appointment.

The 30-60-90 day plan.

30	**Days 1 to 30: Foundation** Audit your profiles against the notice. Fix bios, remove testimonials and results. Write your one-sentence positioning. Add your disclosure block everywhere.
60	**Days 31 to 60: Content** Publish two educational posts a week from your four pillars. Set up one factual home base: a website page or profile. Record your first video.
90	**Days 61 to 90: Authority** Give one public talk or publish one article. Share a clip or link. Review which topics drew the most questions.

Your milestones

	By day 30
☐	Disclosure block on every profile and every new post
☐	No testimonials, results, offers or superlatives left online
☐	One-sentence positioning written and used
	By day 60
☐	16 educational posts published
☐	One factual home base live
	By day 90
☐	One talk given or one article published
☐	Private metrics reviewed (page 16)

Rx

HMS Prescription

Write today's date and the day-90 date at the top of this page. Your first task is the day-30 list.

Measure it without patient counts.

You cannot publish patient numbers or success claims, so measure privately. Keep these numbers for your own decisions. Do not post them as proof of your practice.

Official text | **Para 8.1(iii)**

Signal	Where to see it	Check
Profile and website visits	Instagram insights, Google profile, website analytics	Monthly
Searches for your name	Google Search Console, Google profile	Monthly
Quality of enquiries	Your front desk: do patients arrive informed?	Weekly note
Referrals from colleagues	Your own log	Monthly
Talk, writing and panel invitations	Your inbox	Quarterly
Repeated questions on one topic	Comments, DMs, clinic questions	Weekly note

Monthly review: three questions

1. Which post drew the most questions? Write more on that topic.

2. Which post drew none? Drop that format or topic.

3. What did patients ask in the clinic that you have not yet explained online?

Rx

HMS Prescription

Create a one-page note called “Brand numbers”. Fill it on the first of each month. Never publish it.

The 12-point brand check.

Score each line. **0** if you fail it, **1** if it is partly fixed, **2** if it is fully done. Total out of 24.

	Check	Score
1	One-sentence positioning, factual, used on every profile Para 3.2	0 1 2
2	Name, qualifications and registration on every profile Para Expl. III	0 1 2
3	Disclosure block on every post and video Para Expl. III	0 1 2
4	No superlatives in bio, handle or posts Para 8.1(ix)	0 1 2
5	No testimonials, review screenshots or patient praise shared Para Expl. V; 8.1(xi)	0 1 2
6	No before-and-after images or success stories Para 8.1(v)	0 1 2
7	No patient identifiable in public Para 6.1 to 6.4; 7.4	0 1 2
8	No offers, discounts or free-procedure posts Para 8.1(x)	0 1 2
9	Four content pillars defined; two educational posts a week Para 5.1	0 1 2
10	You approve every post before it goes live Para 4.4	0 1 2
11	AI content labelled; no AI patients or testimonials Para 7.2	0 1 2
12	One talk, article or clip shared in the last 90 days Para 8.2(iii)	0 1 2

20 to 24
Strong. Keep a dated record.

13 to 19
Fix the zeros this week.

Below 13
Start with the 30-day list on page 15.

A self-check, not a legal opinion. Review it every quarter.

Get a second pair of eyes

Want us to check your profile first?

The HMS NMC Compliance Audit reviews your website and social profiles against the guidelines and gives you a written fix list. HMS Doctor Branding helps you build the brand once the foundation is clean.

Doctor Branding	**hmsconsultants.in/services/doctor-branding**
Call or WhatsApp	**+91 81550 04010**
Email	**info@hmsconsultants.in**
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About the author

Akhil Dave is an ethical healthcare marketing strategist, consultant and mentor with 25+ years in healthcare marketing, including senior hospital roles. He is the founder of HMS Consultants, and is known as The White Shirt Man.

HMS Consultants is a healthcare marketing consultancy, not a law firm. The audit and the brand check are not legal advice.

Knowing is Knowing, Doing is Doing™

Sources and disclaimer.

Primary text

NMC Ethics and Medical Registration Board, Public Notice No. R-13014/01/2024-Ethics, 6 October 2026: *Guidelines on Ethical Advertising and Public Communication by Hospitals/Medical Institutions and Registered Medical Practitioners*. All paragraph numbers in this playbook refer to it. The text was read from the copy published by Medical Dialogues.
medicaldialogues.in/pdf_upload/2026/10/07/nmc-guidelines-on-ethical-advertising-and-public-communication-478642.pdf

Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002, as amended.

Related HMS guides

NMC Compliance Guide for Doctors (HMS eBook). How to Build a Doctor Personal Brand Without Breaking NMC Rules. Personal Branding for Doctors: The 2026 Playbook. hmsconsultants.in/blog

How to use this playbook

Paraphrases are in plain language to help you understand the guidelines. Where the wording matters, read the official text. Items marked “HMS view” or “grey area” are HMS’s practical advice where the guidelines are silent. They are not NMC positions.

> ## Disclaimer
>
> This playbook is general information for doctors. It is not legal advice, and HMS Consultants is not a law firm. The NMC may issue clarifications, and the examples are illustrations, not endorsements of any specialty claim. Take legal advice on your specific content and arrangements. Edition 1, 13 November 2026.

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