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Doctor's Life: "Social Media: A Brief Legal Framework"

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Legal Framework
Physicians live in a litigious and highly regulated professional environment. For that reason, any decision to use social media must be made against the backdrop of both state and federal law. This includes privacy laws, consumer laws, fraud and abuse laws, and other legal realities that arise from using or receiving social media. Some of those statutory and regulatory provisions are dealt with briefly in this article.

Privacy
The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act regulates patient privacy in numerous ways, many beyond the scope of this article. At the top of the list, however, is securing Protected Health Information, or PHI. Thus, in deciding whether or not to use social media in your practice, it is mandatory to be familiar with what PHI is, what the protections are, how these protections can be breached, and the potential consequences if there is a breach.

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