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Medical Website Audit Checklist

50 audit points covering technical SEO, HIPAA compliance, ADA accessibility, on-page SEO, user experience, and trust signals — with a scoring guide and priority action plan.

50	6	1	1
AUDIT POINTS	CATEGORIES	SCORING GUIDE	ACTION PLAN

Use this checklist to evaluate any medical practice website quarterly. Download the PDF, share with your web team, and flag every item that needs attention.

Not medical or legal advice. Consult a qualified HIPAA compliance officer for specific guidance.

How to Use This Checklist

Work through each of the 6 categories in order. For every item, mark: ✓ **Pass** / ✗ **Fail** / ■ **Needs Improvement**. Count your fails per category and use the Score Box at the end of each section. More than 3 fails in any category = critical gap. Use the Priority Action Plan on the final page to build your fix list.

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01

Technical SEO & Performance

10 points

The foundation — invisible issues that block rankings and patient discovery

Technical issues are silent killers. A website can look perfect to human eyes while Google's crawlers find dozens of problems. Resolve all fails in this category before investing in content or ads.

- ☐ 1.1
- Page load speed under 3 seconds on mobile (test with Google PageSpeed Insights)
Target: LCP < 2.5s · CLS < 0.1 · INP < 200ms — all Core Web Vitals
- ☐ 1.2
- Website passes Google Mobile-Friendly Test on all key pages
Check: text readable without zoom, tap targets ≥ 44×44px, no horizontal scroll
- ☐ 1.3
- SSL certificate active — all pages load via HTTPS with no mixed content
Use Why-No-Padlock.com to identify any mixed HTTP/HTTPS content
- ☐ 1.4
- XML sitemap submitted and error-free in Google Search Console
Confirm all key pages are indexed — no submitted URLs returning 4xx/5xx errors
- ☐ 1.5
- No broken links (404 errors) on any page
Use Screaming Frog (free up to 500 URLs) or Ahrefs Site Audit to crawl
- ☐ 1.6
- Canonical tags correctly set on all pages (no duplicate content)
Check with browser SEO extension — every page should have exactly one canonical
- ☐ 1.7
- Structured data (Schema Markup) implemented sitewide
Minimum: Organization, LocalBusiness, FAQPage, BreadcrumbList — test with Rich Results Test
- ☐ 1.8
- Google Analytics 4 (GA4) installed and tracking conversions correctly
HIPAA warning: Do NOT use default GA4 config on patient portal or booking pages
- ☐ 1.9
- Robots.txt is not blocking any key service or content pages from Google
Check yourdomain.com/robots.txt — confirm no Disallow for /services/ or /blog/
- ☐ 1.10
- 301 redirects in place for all old/changed URLs
Every updated slug must redirect — missing redirects waste accumulated ranking signals

CATEGORY SCORE: ____ / 10
8–10: Strong | 5–7: Needs Attention | Below 5: Critical — Fix First

02

HIPAA Compliance

8 points

Legal requirements for any website associated with a HIPAA-covered entity

\$1.93M fine (2023): Novant Health violated HIPAA by using Meta Pixel on their patient portal, transmitting PHI to Facebook without a BAA. This is now precedent for all healthcare websites using third-party tracking on patient-facing pages.

- ☐ 2.1
- No third-party tracking pixels on patient-facing pages (booking, portal, forms)
Google Analytics, Meta Pixel, LinkedIn Tag — all must be absent from pages where patients enter PHI
- ☐ 2.2
- Contact and appointment forms use encrypted, HIPAA-compliant submission
Standard WP form plugins store data unencrypted by default — verify your form tool has a signed BAA
- ☐ 2.3
- Business Associate Agreement (BAA) signed with ALL vendors who may access PHI
Includes: hosting, CDN, form plugin, analytics, live chat, email platform, EHR, payment processor
- ☐ 2.4
- Privacy policy includes HIPAA-specific language (PHI use, patient rights, HHS complaint process)
A generic privacy policy is NOT sufficient — must specifically address health information handling
- ☐ 2.5
- Patient portal login requires multi-factor authentication (MFA)
Explicit HIPAA Security Rule requirement under access controls — verify with your EHR/portal vendor
- ☐ 2.6
- Online booking tool is HIPAA-compliant if patients enter health information
Generic tools (Calendly, etc.) are not HIPAA-compliant — use Acuity, SimplePractice, or similar with BAA

- ☐ 2.7 Website hosting is HIPAA-compliant with BAA from host
Standard shared hosting (GoDaddy, Bluehost) is NOT compliant — use AWS/Azure/Google Cloud or HIPAA Vault
- ☐ 2.8 Breach notification procedure documented for website security incidents
Must notify HHS + affected patients within 60 days of any suspected breach — is this procedure written?

CATEGORY SCORE: ____ / 8
7–8: Compliant | 5–6: At Risk | Below 5: Active Legal/Compliance Risk

03

ADA Accessibility — WCAG 2.1 Level AA

Federal compliance deadline: May 11, 2026 (15+ employee practices accepting Medicare/Medicaid)

8 points

May 2026 HHS Section 504 Deadline — Already In Effect

As of May 11, 2026, all healthcare organizations with 15+ employees accepting Medicare or Medicaid must comply with WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Non-compliance risks loss of federal funding and ADA lawsuits settling at \$25K–\$100K+. Organizations with fewer than 15 employees have until May 10, 2027.

- ☐ 3.1
- Text has sufficient color contrast (minimum 4.5:1 ratio for normal text)
Test with WebAIM Contrast Checker — most common violation: light grey text on white background
- ☐ 3.2
- All website functions operable by keyboard alone (no mouse required)
Tab through your entire site — can you reach and activate every link, button, and form field?
- ☐ 3.3
- All meaningful images have descriptive alt text
Every doctor photo, procedure image, and infographic needs a description a screen reader can read
- ☐ 3.4
- All form fields have visible, programmatic labels
Placeholder text alone does NOT count as a label — each field needs a <label> element in the code
- ☐ 3.5
- Videos have captions; audio content has transcripts
Patient testimonial videos, procedure explainers, and any audio must be captioned for hearing-impaired
- ☐ 3.6
- Page heading structure is logical (H1 → H2 → H3 — no skipping levels)
Use HeadingsMap Chrome extension to check — screen readers navigate by headings
- ☐ 3.7
- Focus indicators visible on all interactive elements when using keyboard navigation
When tabbing through the site, a visible outline or highlight must show which element is focused
- ☐ 3.8
- No content flashes more than 3 times per second (seizure risk)
Animated banners, sliders, and scroll effects — check none exceed the flashing threshold

Free testing tools: WAVE (wave.webaim.org) · axe DevTools (Chrome extension) · Google Lighthouse (Chrome DevTools) · Color Contrast Analyzer (desktop app). Note: automated tools catch ~30–40% of accessibility issues — manual testing with a screen reader (NVDA on Windows, VoiceOver on Mac) is required for full validation.

CATEGORY SCORE:

 / 8
7–8: Compliant | 5–6: At Risk | Below 5: Active Legal/Compliance Risk

04

On-Page SEO & Content

What Google reads to decide whether your pages deserve to rank

10 points

On-page SEO for healthcare websites must account for both standard ranking signals AND E-E-A-T (Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trust) — Google's framework for evaluating medical content. Both sets of requirements are covered below.

- ☐ 4.1
- Every page has a unique, keyword-optimized title tag under 60 characters
Format: Primary Keyword | Secondary Keyword | Brand Name — not "Home" or "Services"
- ☐ 4.2
- Every page has a unique meta description under 160 characters with a clear benefit/CTA
While not a direct ranking factor, CTR improvement from good meta descriptions boosts rankings indirectly
- ☐ 4.3
- Each page has exactly one H1 tag containing the primary keyword
No page should have zero H1s or multiple H1s — check with Screaming Frog or browser extension
- ☐ 4.4
- H2/H3 subheadings structure content logically and include secondary keywords naturally
Headings help Google understand page sections — keyword-rich headings without stuffing
- ☐ 4.5
- Service pages have at least 600–800 words of substantive, original content
Thin pages (under 400 words) rarely rank for competitive healthcare queries — expand or consolidate

- ☐ 4.6 All medical/clinical content has a named author with credentials (MD, DO, DDS, etc.)
Publishing clinical content without a named clinician author causes it to stagnate on page 4+ regardless of op
- ☐ 4.7 Internal links connect service pages to relevant specialty pages and blog posts
Every service page should link to 3–5 related pages — orphan pages (no internal links in) rarely rank
- ☐ 4.8 Images are compressed, use descriptive filenames, and have ALT text with keywords
Filename: "dermatologist-website-design-example.webp" not "IMG_0032.jpg"
- ☐ 4.9 Google Business Profile is claimed, complete, and has recent posts
GBP is a separate ranking signal for local results — incomplete profiles lose to competitors with complete one
- ☐ 4.10 Local SEO: NAP (Name, Address, Phone) is consistent across website, GBP, and all directories
Inconsistent NAP across citations is a significant local ranking factor — audit with BrightLocal or Moz Local

CATEGORY SCORE: ____ / 10

8–10: Strong | 5–7: Needs Attention | Below 5: Critical — Fix First

05

User Experience & Conversion

8 points

How effectively the website turns visitors into appointment requests

94% of first impressions about a healthcare provider's credibility are based on website design (Stanford Web Credibility Research). 77% of patients visit a provider's website before booking an appointment (Google/Ipsos). Your website is your highest-volume front desk.

- ☐ 5.1 Clear, visible call-to-action (CTA) on every page — above the fold on desktop AND mobile
"Book Appointment", "Call Us", or "Request a Consultation" must be visible without scrolling
- ☐ 5.2 Phone number is clickable (tel: link) on mobile and visible in the site header
Patients on mobile expect to tap a number and call — a non-clickable phone number loses calls
- ☐ 5.3 Appointment booking or contact form is accessible within 2 clicks from any page
Count: Homepage → Service Page → Contact = 2 clicks is the maximum acceptable path depth
- ☐ 5.4 Contact forms have 5 or fewer fields (name, email/phone, message, specialty if needed)
Every additional form field reduces completion rates by 10–20% — shorter forms = more leads
- ☐ 5.5 Site navigation is simple — visitors can find any main service within 3 seconds
Test: Ask someone unfamiliar with the site to find your most important service — time how long it takes
- ☐ 5.6 Patient testimonials or reviews are displayed on the homepage and key service pages
First-party testimonials on service pages increase conversion rates by 20–30% for healthcare
- ☐ 5.7 404 error page has a helpful design (links back to homepage and key services)
A dead-end 404 page loses the visitor entirely — at minimum link to homepage and contact
- ☐ 5.8 Page design is consistent, professional, and reflects the practice's specialty
A cardiology practice website should not look identical to a general e-commerce template

CATEGORY SCORE: / 8
7–8: Compliant | 5–6: At Risk | Below 5: Active Legal/Compliance Risk

06

Trust Signals & Online Reputation

6 points

What convinces a sceptical patient to choose your practice over the competition

Patients evaluating healthcare providers apply a higher trust threshold than consumers in most other industries. These 6 trust signals are the difference between a visitor who reads and leaves versus one who books.

- ☐ 6.1 Doctor/provider profiles include photo, credentials, education, and specializations
"About Dr. X" pages with credentials rank well AND convert significantly better than pages without
- ☐ 6.2 Google Reviews or Healthgrades rating is displayed (and you have 10+ reviews with 4.0+ rating)
Online reviews influence 72% of patients when choosing a new healthcare provider (Software Advice)
- ☐ 6.3 Insurance accepted and fees/payment options are clearly listed
One of the top 5 questions patients search for about a practice — answer it on the website, not just by phone
- ☐ 6.4 Security and compliance badges visible (SSL, HIPAA, ADA compliance)
Visual trust signals — especially HIPAA compliance — are particularly persuasive for healthcare patients
- ☐ 6.5 Physical address and map embed on the Contact page (or service area statement for remote provid
A missing address is the #1 trust destroyer for patients trying to verify a practice is real and local
- ☐ 6.6 Website has been updated with new content within the past 6 months
"Last updated 3 years ago" blog, outdated staff photos, or 2022 copyright year signals a neglected practice

CATEGORY SCORE: / 6
Target: 6/6 | Below 3: Significant Gaps

Scoring Guide

Record your category scores below and calculate your overall audit score out of 50.

Category	Points	Your Score	Rating
01 — Technical SEO & Performance	10	_____	
02 — HIPAA Compliance	8	_____	
03 — ADA Accessibility (WCAG 2.1)	8	_____	
04 — On-Page SEO & Content	10	_____	
05 — User Experience & Conversion	8	_____	
06 — Trust Signals & Reputation	6	_____	
TOTAL	50	_____	

Overall Score Interpretation

Score	Rating	What It Means	Recommended Action
45–50	Excellent	Best-in-class healthcare website	Maintain. Run audit again in 6 months.
38–44	Good	Strong foundation with minor gaps	Fix fails in 30 days. Focus on conversion.
28–37	Needs Work	Significant issues limiting growth	Prioritize HIPAA + Technical. 60-day plan.
18–27	Poor	Multiple categories underperforming	Professional audit recommended. Consider redesign.
Below 18	Critical	Active compliance + SEO risk	Engage a healthcare web specialist immediately.

Priority Action Plan

Use the table below to record your top fails and assign them to the correct fix priority. Address items in the order shown — technical issues block the value of everything above them.

Priority	Fix This First	Category	Item #	Assigned To	Due Date
■ Critical	HIPAA tracking pixel violations	Cat. 02	2.1		
■ Critical	HIPAA — missing BAAs with vendors	Cat. 02	2.3		
■ Critical	ADA WCAG 2.1 compliance gaps (May 2026 deadline)	Cat. 03	3.1–3.8		
■ Critical	SSL/HTTPS issues or mixed content	Cat. 01	1.3		
■ High	Page speed under 3 seconds on mobile	Cat. 01	1.1		

■ High	Schema markup missing sitewide	Cat. 01	1.7		
■ High	Thin service page content (under 600 words)	Cat. 04	4.5		
■ Medium	Missing/duplicate title tags and meta descriptions	Cat. 04	4.1–4.2		
■ Medium	No patient testimonials on service pages	Cat. 05	5.6		
■ Medium	Doctor profile pages missing credentials	Cat. 06	6.1		
■ Low	Internal linking gaps	Cat. 04	4.7		
■ Low	Image optimization (filenames + compression)	Cat. 04	4.8		

Quick Reference: 5 Common Questions

Q: How often should I run this audit?

Annually at minimum. Quarterly for practices actively growing or running paid ads. Every time you add a new third-party tool (analytics, chat, booking) — re-check Category 2 (HIPAA).

Q: What is the most common issue found in medical website audits?

Tracking pixels on patient-facing pages — specifically Google Analytics or Meta Pixel running on appointment booking pages, creating HIPAA exposure the practice doesn't know about.

Q: Does my website need to be ADA compliant?

Yes. As of May 11, 2026, any healthcare organization with 15+ employees accepting Medicare/Medicaid must meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA under the HHS Section 504 rule. Separate ADA Title III lawsuits are filed year-round against non-compliant healthcare websites.

Q: Is an SSL certificate enough for HIPAA compliance?

No. SSL encrypts data in transit only. HIPAA also requires encryption at rest, access controls, audit logs, BAAs with all vendors, and administrative safeguards — far beyond what SSL alone provides.

Q: What should I do after completing this audit?

Address critical (red) items first — HIPAA and ADA violations carry legal risk. Then technical, then SEO, then conversion. If you have 15+ fails, a professional healthcare web audit is likely more efficient than patching incrementally. See devrivo.com/get-a-quote for a free audit offer.

Not sure what to fix first?

Devrivo specializes in HIPAA-compliant medical website design for doctors, clinics, dental practices, and healthcare organizations across the US, UK, and Canada. We'll review your site against all 50 audit points and give you a prioritized fix plan — at no charge.

Get Your Free Medical Website Audit → devrivo.com/get-a-quote

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