

For Immediate Release

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Moorestown, NJ (September 20, 2018) – The Association of Medical Media today issued the following statement.

Statement of Principles Regarding Online Privacy for Physicians and Health Care Professionals From the Association of Medical Media and Member Publishers

All the headlines and Capitol Hill testimony around the controversy with Cambridge Analytica point to one key fact that has long been recognized by medical associations and professional journal brands: **the privacy and trust of our audience members are paramount.**

Not only does our audience trust us for the accuracy and objectivity of our medical content, they also trust that the personal and professional details they've entrusted to us will be kept private.

Medical professionals certainly welcome personalized experiences on websites and apps and appreciate seeing advertisements that are relevant to them. They also recognize that their data is used to achieve these degrees of personalization. But our members and non-member audiences also expect that their personal data will not make its way beyond the entities with whom they've entrusted it, into the hands of third parties to be used for purposes they might never have imagined and very likely to which they would not have knowingly agreed.

Perhaps just as important, when transgressions come to light it's not only the platform that shared the data that becomes a focus of controversy. The recent scandal crashed down not only on Facebook, which shared the data, but on Cambridge Analytica, which used the data. Technicalities such as opt-ins and terms of service are lost on those who feel violated.

Medical associations and professional journals have long recognized the following truths and actively worked to protect them:

1. Clinicians have at least the same sensitivities around their personal data as do consumers. Perhaps more.
2. Clinicians share their personal data in order to strengthen and improve their learning and professional experiences *with whom they've shared that data.*
3. Clinicians trust their professional associations and journal brands to protect their personally identifiable information at least as well as consumer sites do. Perhaps more.

Furthermore, as both GDPR and the recent Zuckerberg testimony on Capitol Hill reveal, consumers and legislators increasingly expect and demand complete transparency, in easy-to-understand opt-in language, about precisely how their data will be used with their explicit agreement. Associations have long understood that their members would never *knowingly* consent to their personal identity, details and website activity being provided to any number of 3rd parties for purposes that the publisher can no longer control.

And now that the headlines reveal that even Facebook was unable to protect user data once it left the platform, consumers (and physicians) will be even less likely to provide any such permission.

“Trust takes a long time to acquire, but only a moment to lose.”

Even without the use of any third party “ad tech,” ads in professional medical journals are already highly targeted because the journals’ members and readers are qualified professionals who trust these journals for the specific medical content that they need to treat their patients. They trust us for the content. They trust us with their data. They trust us with their identity.

It’s this trust that directly benefits advertisers. Without it, nobody wins.

To conclude, it is highly probable that U.S. and state legislators will eventually codify into law the kind of protections that associations and medical journal publishers already afford to our members, subscribers and readers. In the meantime, we firmly stand by these principles as not only just the right thing to do, but the best way to serve both readers and advertisers.

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The Association of Medical Media (AMM) is a non-profit organization, whose name reflects its membership: medical publishing firms, content providers and associated companies in the medical communications field. The members of AMM share a commitment to editorial integrity, professional sales standards, and the promotional value of medical advertising — both print and online.

AMM is dedicated to fulfilling our clients’ integrated needs through programs designed to show publishers and advertisers the synergies, efficiencies and strategies for print and online marketing. Through regular networking opportunities and our unique industry partnerships, we aim to be the leader in the future development of medical media.