The Student Doctor Network®

A nonprofit educational organization

Frequently Asked Questions
October 2011

Q. What is Student Doctor Network?
A. Student Doctor Network, known as SDN, is an organized community of health professionals and students from across the United States and around the world. Founded in 1999, SDN operates a website www.studentdoctor.net moderated by volunteer health professionals who are dedicated to providing students, residents and practitioners with free and unbiased information.

Q. What is the mission of SDN?
A. The mission of SDN is to assist and encourage all students through the challenging and complicated healthcare education process.

Q. How is SDN different from websites or blogs that simply provide a forum for anxious students to spread misleading or inaccurate information?
A. More than 100 volunteer professionals regularly scan and moderate SDN forums to ensure the information and topics comply with memberships standards and that the information is professional and ethical.

Q. How long has SDN operated and who participates?
A. In operation since early 1993, SDN was organized formally as a non-profit entity in 1999. Currently there are more than 320,000 registered members composed of students, residents and practicing professionals from a spectrum of healthcare fields including: audiology, dental, medical, optometry, pharmacy, podiatry, psychology, rehabilitation and veterinary practices.

Q. How do you provide balance between corporate advertising and unbiased, educational information?
A. SDN maintains an independent editorial board and advertising committee.

Q. How do you measure the success of the SDN organization?
A. We measure the number of visitors to the website, number of members, number of posts to the forums, news article comments, and number of people viewing, interacting and discussing.

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Q. How active is the community that participates on SDN?
A. Almost 60,000 members have been active on the forum within the last 90 days. At any moment, thousands of registered members and guests are participating on the site by viewing and responding to posts.

Q. What privacy controls or policies to you have in place to protect members?
A. SDN takes member privacy concerns very seriously. SDN is a TRUSTe certified site, meaning that SDN meets or exceeds industry standard privacy requirements as verified by TRUSTe. SDN also complies with the Health on the Net code of conduct, HONcode. Both the TRUSTe and HONcode certifications are reviewed and renewed annually.

All volunteers and staff sign a non-disclosure agreement to ensure they do not inappropriately use or release member information.

To enhance member privacy, the Member ID Number replaces member names on the Forums when viewed by un-registered users, bots and spiders. We also have privacy controls that allow members to choose what they want to display on their profiles.

Q. How do you ensure protection for copyrights, testing and schools?
A. Any member may report a post that violates the terms of service, including copyright violations. SDN follows the standards set out in the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Additionally, we maintain relationships with testing organizations to eliminate copyright violations as they arise. Our moderator staff often addresses issues within minutes of posting. We also provide methods to allow inappropriate comments within our Interview Feedback and School Feedback systems to be reported and removed as needed.

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