THE FULLY BOOKED CLINIC

Module 1 of 4

Own Your Google Map Listing

Master your Google Business Profile — the listing patients see first

IN THIS MODULE

- Why your map listing wins more patients than your website
- Claim your profile and clean up duplicates
- Fill out every field like a pro
- Photos that build trust
- The review engine
- Reply to every review — including the bad ones
- Posts, updates, and the questions patients are already asking
- Read your numbers
- Stay safe, and the weekly 15-minute routine

A 4-part course on getting your clinic found, chosen, and booked

Module 1: Own Your Google Map Listing

> By the end of this module you will have a Google Business Profile that works like your hardest-working employee: claimed, verified, fully filled out, stocked with real photos, collecting a steady stream of genuine reviews, answering patient questions before they call, and showing you how many calls and visits it wins you every month. You will also have a simple weekly routine, taking about 15 minutes, that keeps it winning.

Lesson 1.1: Why your map listing wins more patients than your website

Here is a truth that surprises most clinic owners: for a local clinic, the little box that appears on Google Maps often brings in more new patients than your entire website.

Think about how a patient actually finds you. Someone's tooth starts aching on a Tuesday night. They pick up their phone and type "dentist near me" or "emergency dentist open now". Google does not send them to a list of websites first — it shows a map with three or four clinics pinned on it, each with a star rating, review count, photos, opening hours, a phone number, and often a "Book" button.

Most patients never scroll past that map. They compare the clinics in front of them, pick the one that looks most trustworthy, and tap "Call" — without visiting a single website. The same happens for "physio for back pain near me" or "vet open Saturday".

That map box is your Google Business Profile. It is free. And for most clinics it is the single highest-return piece of marketing they own, because it puts you in front of people at the exact moment they have a problem and money in hand to fix it.

Here is what patients see and judge in about five seconds:

- **Your star rating and how many reviews you have.** A 4.8 with 240 reviews beats a 5.0 with 6 reviews, because it feels more real.
- **Your photos.** A warm reception area and smiling team beats a grey map pin with no pictures.
- **Whether you are open right now.** Wrong hours lose patients instantly.
- **How easy you are to contact.** One tap to call, one tap for directions, one tap to book.

Now the money math. Imagine your profile brings you just two extra new patients a week. For a dental clinic, where an average patient is worth a few thousand dollars over the years they stay with you, that is serious revenue from a listing that costs nothing but attention. For a physiotherapy clinic, where a new patient books six to ten sessions, the picture is just as strong. The reverse is also true: an unclaimed, half-empty profile with a wrong phone number quietly hands those patients to the clinic down the street, every day, and you never see it happen.

One mindset shift before we start: this is not a "set it and forget it" listing like an old phone-book ad. Google rewards profiles that look alive — fresh photos, recent reviews, up-to-date hours. A cared-for profile tends to rise in the map results; a neglected one tends to sink. This module is about making yours the obvious choice in that little box.

(Your website still matters — it is where patients go to double-check you before booking bigger treatments. We cover that in Module 2. But the map listing is where the first impression happens, so we fix it first.)

Do this now (10 min): Take out your phone. Search Google for the thing a patient would type — "dentist near me" if you are a dentist, "physio near me" if you are a physio — while standing in your clinic. Look at the map results as a stranger would. Write down three honest answers: Do you appear? How does your star rating and review count compare to the clinics shown beside you? Whose photos look more inviting? This is your starting line.

Lesson 1.2: Claim your profile and clean up duplicates

Why it matters: an unclaimed profile is a door anyone can walk through. Google builds listings automatically from public information, so a listing for your clinic probably already exists — with details you did not write and cannot fix until you claim it. Unclaimed listings sometimes show a wrong phone number or an old address, and every wrong detail is a lost patient. Clinics have discovered their listing said "Permanently closed" for months — a full waiting room quietly evaporating.

Here is how to take control, step by step:

1. **Search for your clinic by name on Google Maps.** Try the exact name, then common misspellings, then your old name if you rebranded, then "your street + dentist" (or physio, vet, and so on). Note every listing you find for your location.
2. **Look for the words "Claim this business" or "Own this business?"** on your listing. If you see them, nobody controls the profile yet. Click and follow the steps while signed in to a Google account your clinic controls — not a staff member's personal account. If an employee leaves and the profile is tied to their personal login, you can lose access overnight. Use an account like admin@yourclinic.com that stays with the business.
3. **Verify that you really are the business.** Google needs proof before handing over the keys. For clinics this is often a short video walk-through on your phone: showing your signage, the street outside, your equipment, and that you can open staff-only areas. Sometimes it is a phone call or a mailed postcard with a code. Whatever method you are offered, do it promptly — until verification is complete, what you add will not show to patients and you cannot fully manage the listing.
4. **Hunt down duplicates.** Duplicates split your reviews and confuse Google about which listing to show. Common causes: an old address from before you moved, a previous owner's name, or a listing once made for an individual practitioner that looks like a second clinic. For each duplicate, open it and use "Suggest an edit" to report it as a duplicate or permanently closed, or claim it and close it from inside your account. If a duplicate holds valuable reviews, Google sometimes moves them to your main listing when it processes the report — it is not guaranteed, but it is one more reason to report rather than ignore.
5. **A note on practitioner listings.** Individual dentists, doctors and physios who see patients may have their own listing alongside the clinic's. That is allowed and can help — but it should use the person's real name, not a copy of the clinic name, and should not compete with the clinic listing under a slightly different address.

While you are in there, check who else has access: profile settings show every person and agency with manager access. Remove anyone you do not recognise — old marketing agencies are a common squatter.

Do this now (15 min): Search Google Maps for your clinic name, your old clinic name if any, and each of your practitioners' names. List every listing you find. Claim your main one if it is unclaimed. Report any duplicate using "Suggest an edit". Then check the list of people with access to your profile and remove anyone who should not be there.

Lesson 1.3: Fill out every field like a pro

Why it matters: Google decides which clinics to show on the map partly by how complete and accurate the profile is. A profile with every field filled out gives Google more reasons to show you, and gives patients more reasons to choose you. Every blank field is a question a patient cannot get answered — and an unanswered question usually means they call someone else.

Work through these fields in order:

Business name. Use your real-world name exactly as it appears on your signage. "Bright Smile Dental" — not "Bright Smile Dental | Best Dentist & Teeth Whitening Springfield". Stuffing extra descriptive words into your name is against Google's rules and is one of the fastest ways to get your listing suspended (more on that in Lesson 1.9). The clean name also simply looks more professional to patients.

Primary category. This is the single most important setting on your profile. It tells Google what searches you should appear for. Pick the most specific category that describes your main business: "Dentist" or "Dental clinic" for a dental practice, "Physical therapist" or "Physiotherapy center" for a physio clinic, "Veterinarian" for a vet. If you had to describe your clinic in two words to a stranger, that is your primary category.

Extra categories. You can add several more. Add every category you genuinely offer: a dental clinic might add "Cosmetic dentist", "Emergency dental service", "Dental implants provider" and "Pediatric dentist" if those are real services. A physio clinic might add "Sports medicine clinic" and "Massage therapist" if a massage therapist works there. Do not add categories you do not truly offer — it attracts the wrong callers and wastes your front desk's time.

Services list. Google lets you list individual services under your categories, each with a short description and, if you wish, a price range. Write these for patients, not professionals. Dental: "Check-up and clean — a full examination, X-rays if needed, and a professional clean. Most visits take under an hour." Physio: "First assessment — we listen to what is hurting, test your movement, and leave you with a clear plan and your first treatment on day one." Plain descriptions help Google match you to searches and calm nervous patients before they ever call.

Business description. You get a paragraph to say who you are. Lead with what matters to patients, not your founding year. Weak: "Established in 2009, Bright Smile Dental is committed to excellence in dentistry." Strong: "Bright Smile Dental helps families in Springfield keep their teeth healthy without stress. Gentle care for nervous patients, same-week appointments, easy parking behind the building, and payment plans for bigger treatments. Open Saturdays."

Hours — and holiday hours. Wrong hours are one of the most expensive small mistakes in local marketing: a patient who drives to a closed clinic does not come back, and sometimes leaves an angry review. Set your normal hours, then set special hours for every public holiday of the year in one sitting, so you never forget. If you close for lunch, show it.

Phone number. Use the number your front desk actually answers, and use the same number everywhere your clinic is listed online — your website, your social pages, other directories. Consistent details everywhere help Google trust that your listing is accurate, and they stop patients from calling a dead line.

Website link and booking link. Add your website. Then, separately, add your appointment link if you have online booking — this puts a "Book online" style button right on your profile, letting a patient go from "dentist near me" to a booked slot in under a minute, at 11 pm, without calling anyone. If you have online booking and this link is empty, you are leaving after-hours bookings on the table every night.

Attributes. These are the small labelled facts patients filter and decide by: wheelchair accessible entrance and toilet, free parking or street parking, languages spoken, whether you accept new patients. For a clinic these are not decorations — "wheelchair accessible" and "Spanish spoken" are the deciding factor for some patients. Tick every one that is true.

> **Do this now (25 min):** Open your profile and go field by field through the list above. Fix your name if it has extra words. Check your primary category. Add every real extra category. Write plain one-sentence descriptions for your top five services. Rewrite your business description to lead with what patients care about. Set holiday hours for the rest of the year. Confirm the phone number, add your booking link, and tick every true attribute.

Lesson 1.4: Photos that build trust

Why it matters: patients choosing between clinics are asking one silent question — "will I feel comfortable there?" Photos answer it faster than any text. Listings with plenty of real photos get noticeably more calls and direction requests than bare ones, because a clinic you can see feels safer than a clinic you cannot. For a nervous dental patient or a pet owner choosing a vet, that feeling is everything.

What to photograph, in priority order:

1. **The front of your building, from the street.** This is the most useful photo you will ever upload. Patients use it to find you — "the blue door next to the pharmacy" — and it proves you are a real place. Take it in daylight, from where a patient walking or parking would first see you.
2. **Reception and waiting area.** Clean, warm, tidy. This is the room patients imagine themselves sitting in.
3. **Your team.** Real people, smiling, in the clothes they actually work in. A photo of the dentist and hygienists together, or the physio team by the treatment tables, does more for trust than any award logo. Nervous patients scan these photos to decide whether you look kind.
4. **Treatment rooms.** A bright, tidy treatment room quietly says "modern and clean" — the two things patients silently worry about. For a physio, the gym or exercise area; for a vet, the consult room.
5. **Small touches that answer questions.** The parking area. The wheelchair ramp. The kids' corner. Each of these photos removes a reason to hesitate.

A hard privacy rule: never post a photo with a patient in it — even in the background, even blurry — without their written consent. Simply being visible in your waiting room can reveal that a person is a patient, and that is private health information. When in doubt, photograph empty rooms and your own staff; if a patient happily agrees to be featured, get it in writing and keep the form.

Why stock photos hurt you: patients can smell them. The too-perfect model in a white coat who also appears on four other clinic websites does not build trust — it signals you are hiding what your clinic really looks like. A slightly imperfect but genuine photo of your actual reception beats a flawless stock image every time.

How many, and how often: aim for 15 to 20 photos to start, covering the categories above, then add two or three new ones every month — new equipment, a team anniversary, seasonal decorations. Fresh photos keep the profile looking alive to patients and to Google. No professional photographer needed: a modern phone in good daylight is fine. Turn on the lights and tidy the counter first.

One more thing: patients can upload their own photos to your listing, and you cannot remove them just for being unflattering (only ones that break Google's rules). The best defence is offence — with 30 great photos of your own, one blurry parking-lot shot disappears in the crowd.

Do this now (20 min): Walk your clinic with your phone right now. Take: the front of the building from the street, reception, one treatment room, and one team photo (grab whoever is in today). Tidy each spot for 30 seconds first. Upload the best 8 to 10 to your profile before you sit back down.

Lesson 1.5: The review engine

Why it matters: reviews are the single biggest factor in which clinic a patient picks off the map. Star rating, review count, and how recent the reviews are — patients weigh all three, and so does Google when deciding whom to show. A clinic with a steady flow of fresh reviews can, over months, climb past a clinic with a bigger but older pile. Every review is also free advertising written by the one person patients trust more than you: another patient.

The good news: you do not have a review problem, you have an asking problem. Most happy patients will gladly leave a review — they just never think of it, and nobody asks. The clinics that dominate the map simply ask every patient, every day, in a way that takes ten seconds.

Build the engine like this:

Step 1 — Get your review link. Inside your Google Business Profile there is an option to get a short link that takes a patient straight to the "write a review" box. Copy it. This link is the engine's fuel line — every method below uses it.

Step 2 — The front desk script. The best moment to ask is at checkout, when the patient is standing in front of you feeling relieved and grateful. Word for word, for a dental clinic:

"I'm so glad today went well! Would you mind leaving us a quick Google review? It really helps other people find us. I can text you the link right now — it takes about a minute."

For a physio clinic, tie it to their result:

"You've made such great progress — that's wonderful to see. If you have a minute, a Google review would mean a lot to us. Reviews are how people with the same kind of pain find us. Can I text you the link?"

Notice the shape: warm comment, small ask, explain why it helps others, offer to make it instant. Never beg, never offer anything in return (that breaks the rules — Lesson 1.9), and never pressure. One ask, gracefully, and let it go.

Step 3 — The text message. Send it while they are still in the parking lot, from the front desk:

"Hi [Name], thanks for visiting Bright Smile Dental today! If you have a minute, we'd love a quick Google review — it helps neighbours find us: [link]. Thank you! — Maria at the front desk"

Step 4 — The email, for patients you cannot text. Subject: "A quick favour?" Body:

"Hi [Name], it was lovely to see you today. If you were happy with your visit, would you leave us a short Google review? It takes about a minute and genuinely helps other people choose a clinic they can trust: [link]. Thank you so much — the whole team at Riverside Physio."

Step 5 — The QR-code card at checkout. Print small cards with a QR code (a square barcode a phone camera scans) pointing at your review link, with one line: "Happy with your visit? A one-minute Google review helps others find us. Scan here." Keep a stack at the front desk and tape one by the card machine. Some patients prefer to scan quietly rather than be asked out loud.

Step 6 — Make it a daily habit, not a campaign. This is the part most clinics get wrong. Fifty reviews in one week followed by silence looks strange — to patients, and to Google, which can flag a sudden burst as suspicious. Two or three new reviews every week, forever, is far more powerful. So make asking part of checkout, the same way "would you like your next appointment?" is. Keep a tally sheet at the front desk — asks made today, reviews received this week — and mention it at your team huddle. When the front desk sees the number, the habit sticks.

Whom to ask: every patient, the same way. Do not pre-filter — not with a tool that surveys patients privately first and only sends the Google link to the happy ones, and not by asking only the patients you expect to be positive. That practice (called review gating) breaks Google's rules and can get reviews removed or the listing penalised. Ask everyone and trust your care.

> **Do this now (15 min):** Find your review link inside your profile and save it somewhere the whole front desk can reach. Put the text and email templates above into your phone or booking system as saved messages the front desk can send in one tap, with your clinic's name swapped in. Then tell today's front desk team: "From today, we ask every patient at checkout. Here's the exact sentence."

Lesson 1.6: Reply to every review — including the bad ones

Why it matters: patients reading your reviews are reading your replies too. A thoughtful reply to a five-star review shows warmth; a calm reply to a one-star review shows character — many patients say how a business handles a complaint tells them more than a hundred perfect ratings. Replies also show Google the profile is actively managed. An ignored review section, especially ignored complaints, quietly costs you the patients who read it.

Rule one: reply to every single review. Positive, negative, three words or three paragraphs. It takes under a minute each and it compounds.

Replying to positive reviews. Keep it short, warm and specific. Vary your wording — ten identical "Thank you for your kind words!" replies look robotic. Templates to rotate:

- "Thank you, [first name]! Comments like this make the whole team's day. See you next time."
- "We're so glad you had a good experience — thank you for taking the time to say so."
- "Thank you! We'll pass this on to the team — they'll be thrilled."

The privacy rule that overrides everything else — read this twice. In your public replies, never confirm that the reviewer is a patient, and never mention their visit, their treatment, their condition, or anything you know from their file. Health privacy laws treat even the fact that someone attended your clinic as protected information. The reviewer can say whatever they like about their visit; you cannot. So:

- Never write: "Thanks for coming in for your root canal on Tuesday!"
- Instead write: "Thank you for the kind words — our team works hard to make every visit comfortable."

Notice the safe version thanks them and speaks about your general standards, without confirming they were ever in your chair. Make this the iron rule for whoever writes replies, and put it in writing for your team. The same rule applies to any marketing use of patient stories or photos: you need the patient's written consent first, every time, no exceptions.

The 4-step playbook for negative reviews. First, breathe. Do not reply within the first hour — anger leaks into writing. Then:

1. **Thank and acknowledge, without confirming details.** "Thank you for sharing this feedback. We're sorry to read that this experience fell short of what we aim for."
2. **State your standard.** "We take comfort, punctuality and clear communication seriously, and we want every visit to reflect that."
3. **Take it offline.** "We'd genuinely like to understand what happened. Please call our practice manager, Sarah, on [number], or email [address], so we can look into this properly."
4. **Stop.** Do not argue, do not explain what "really" happened, do not respond to a reply-to-your-reply. Two or three calm sentences, once. Remember your real audience is not the angry reviewer — it is the

hundred future patients reading over their shoulder, deciding whether you seem trustworthy under pressure.

Full example reply to a one-star “waited 45 minutes, rude receptionist” review:

“Thank you for this feedback, and we’re sorry to read about this experience. Running on time and treating everyone with warmth are things we hold ourselves to, and we’d like to understand what happened here. Please contact our practice manager, Sarah, at [number] so we can look into it properly.”

Notice what it never does: it never says “at your appointment last Thursday” or “your treatment”. Safe, calm, human.

What about fake or unfair reviews? If a review is clearly not from a real patient — wrong city, services you do not offer, an ex-employee posing as a patient — report it to Google from the review itself and ask for removal under their policies. Removal is not guaranteed and takes time, so post the calm 4-step reply in the meantime. Never reply “you were never a patient here” — besides sounding defensive, discussing who is or is not a patient walks straight into the privacy problem.

> **Do this now (20 min):** Open your reviews. Reply to every unanswered positive review using the rotation templates above. If there is an unanswered negative review, use the 4-step playbook — and check your draft against the privacy rule before posting: does it confirm they were a patient or mention their visit? If yes, rewrite it.

Lesson 1.7: Posts, updates, and the questions patients are already asking

Why it matters: two smaller sections of your profile quietly shape whether patients pick you — the updates feed and the questions-and-answers (Q&A) section. A profile with a post from last week looks like a clinic that is open, busy and cared for; one whose last update is two years old plants a doubt: "Are they even still running?" And the Q&A section either answers a patient's question in five seconds or leaves them calling your competitor to ask it. Both take minutes to maintain, and most competitors ignore them — exactly why you should not.

Posts and updates. Your profile lets you publish short updates — a few sentences and a photo — that appear right on your listing. Think of it as a noticeboard in your window, except the street is Google. Post at least once or twice a month. Good clinic post ideas:

- **Offers:** "New patient check-up and clean for $149 this month at Bright Smile Dental. Call or book online."
- **New services or equipment:** "Riverside Physio now offers shockwave therapy for stubborn tendon pain. Ask us whether it could help you."
- **Team news:** "Welcome Dr. Chen to the Bright Smile team! She has a special interest in nervous patients and children."
- **Seasonal reminders:** "School holidays are coming — a great time for the kids' dental check-ups. We have extra morning slots this month." Or for the physio: "Starting a new year running plan? A quick movement check now prevents the injuries that stop you in March."
- **Practical notices:** holiday hours, parking changes, flu-season reminders.

Keep each post to two or three plain sentences, add a real photo (Lesson 1.4 gives you a stockpile), and say what you want the reader to do: "Call us", "Book online". Never include patient names, faces or stories without written consent — the privacy rule follows you here too.

The questions-and-answers (Q&A) section. On your listing, anyone can publicly ask a question — and, as most owners do not realise, anyone can answer, including strangers guessing wrongly about your prices or hours. Take control the simple, legitimate way: get in first yourself. You are allowed to post questions on your own listing and answer them from your business account. List the questions patients actually call to ask, then post and answer each one:

- "Do you accept [common insurance plans in your area]?" — "We work with most major plans, including [names]. Call us with your details and we'll check for you before your visit."
- "Is there parking?" — "Yes — free parking behind the building, entrance on Elm Street. Two disabled spaces by the door."
- "What happens at a first visit?" — For the physio: "Your first visit takes about 45 minutes. We listen to what's bothering you, assess your movement, explain what we find in plain language, and start

treatment the same day. Wear comfortable clothes."

- "Do you see children?" / "Do you treat nervous patients?" / "Can I be seen without a referral?"

Each answered question removes one reason to hesitate and one repetitive call from your front desk's day. Check the section weekly (Lesson 1.9): answer new questions within a day or two, and if a stranger posts a wrong answer, post the correct one from your business account — the official answer carries the weight.

> **Do this now (15 min):** Publish one post right now — a seasonal reminder or a new-patient note, two sentences plus a photo from Lesson 1.4. Then ask your front desk, "What are the five questions people call to ask most?" and post and answer all five in your Q&A section.

Lesson 1.8: Read your numbers

Why it matters: your profile tells you exactly what it earned you — how many people called, asked for directions, clicked your website, and booked. Most clinic owners never look, which is like never checking the till. Ten minutes a month tells you whether the effort is paying off, catches problems early (a broken phone number shows up as calls falling off a cliff), and connects this work directly to revenue — the only reason to do any of it.

Where to look: open your profile as the owner and find the performance or insights section — look for words like "Performance". There you will find, for a chosen period:

- **How many people saw your profile**, and roughly what they searched to find it — your clinic's name (people who already knew you) versus searches like "dentist near me" (brand-new patients, the ones this module wins you).
- **Calls** made by tapping your number.
- **Direction requests** — people navigating to your door.
- **Website clicks** and, if your online booking system is connected to Google, **bookings**.

How to use it, step by step:

1. **Pick one day a month** — say the first Monday — and put a 10-minute appointment in your calendar called "Profile numbers".
2. **Write four numbers into a simple sheet:** profile views, calls, direction requests, website clicks. One row per month.
3. **Compare month over month, and against the same month last year** where you can. Clinics are seasonal — January physio is not August physio — so last-January versus this-January is the fairer test.
4. **Look for the story, not decimal points.** Calls climbing since the front desk started asking for reviews? The engine works — tell the team. Views up but calls flat? Patients find you but do not choose you — compare your photos and rating against the clinics beside you on the map. Everything down suddenly? Something is broken: wrong hours, a suspended listing, a changed phone number.
5. **Close the loop at the front desk.** Have the front desk ask every new patient, "How did you hear about us?" and keep a tally. When "found you on Google Maps" is the biggest column, you know exactly what this module is worth in booked appointments — and the tally matters again in Module 4.

Do not check daily; weekly wiggles mean nothing. The monthly trend is the truth.

> **Do this now (10 min):** Open your profile's performance section. Write down this month's four numbers — views, calls, direction requests, website clicks — in a note or spreadsheet titled "Profile numbers". Add a repeating monthly calendar reminder for the first Monday. You have just built your dashboard.

Lesson 1.9: Stay safe, and the weekly 15-minute routine

Why it matters: everything you have built in this module can vanish in a day if the listing gets suspended — and suspensions happen to honest clinics that broke a rule they never knew existed. A suspended listing disappears from the map entirely: no calls, no directions, no bookings, sometimes for weeks while you appeal. Prevention costs nothing; a suspension can cost a month of new patients.

The rules that catch clinics most often:

- **Do not stuff extra keywords into your business name.** Keywords are the search words you hope patients will type — "teeth whitening", "best dentist" — and padding your name with them is against the rules. Your profile name must match your real-world name. "Bright Smile Dental" is fine; "Bright Smile Dental — Best Invisalign & Teeth Whitening Springfield" is a suspension waiting to happen, even though you will see competitors getting away with it. When Google's checks sweep through, the stuffed names get hit, and getting a listing switched back on is slow and uncertain.
- **Never buy, fake or trade reviews.** No purchased reviews, no staff or family posing as patients, no "leave a review, get a free whitening" (any reward for a review breaks the rules), no review-swapping with the pharmacy next door. Penalties range from deleted reviews to a suspended listing — and in many countries, paying for fake reviews is illegal, full stop.
- **Do not filter who gets asked.** As covered in Lesson 1.5, review gating — surveying patients first and inviting only the happy ones to Google — is against the rules. Ask every patient the same way.
- **Do not run duplicate listings on purpose,** and keep your details identical everywhere online. Conflicting addresses and phone numbers erode Google's confidence in the listing.
- **If your listing does get suspended:** do not create a new listing — that makes it worse. Fix whatever broke the rules (usually the name), then use Google's reinstatement process — their official way of asking for the listing back — with evidence you are a real clinic (photos of signage, utility bills). Appeals can take anywhere from days to several weeks — one more reason prevention beats cure.

When a competitor plays dirty. Sometimes the map around you fills with junk: fake "clinics" at addresses where no clinic actually exists, competitors with stuffed keyword names, a pin sitting on top of yours. You have real recourse: on any bogus listing, use "Suggest an edit" to report the wrong name or that the business does not exist at that address, and Google's help pages also offer a form for reporting these fake listings (Google calls them "map spam") in bulk. Report factually, never fabricate, and be patient — cleanups take time, but every fake competitor removed moves you up the map. What you should not do is retaliate in kind.

The weekly 15-minute routine. The whole maintenance plan, same day each week — many clinics pick Friday morning before opening:

1. **Reviews (5 min):** Reply to every new review — templates from Lesson 1.6, privacy rule always. Note the week's review count on the front-desk tally.
2. **Q&A (3 min):** Answer any new public questions; correct any wrong answers from strangers.

3. **Accuracy check (2 min):** Glance at your listing as a patient sees it — hours right? Upcoming holiday covered? Phone and booking link working? Tap the booking link once to be sure.
4. **Freshness (5 min):** Either publish one short post or upload one or two new photos, alternating weeks.

That is it. Fifteen minutes a week keeps your profile accurate, alive, responsive and safe — more than most clinics on your map will ever manage. Once this is a habit, you are ready for Module 2, where your website turns the clicks your profile sends into booked patients.

> **Do this now (10 min):** Read your business name on your profile — if it contains anything not on your signage, fix it today. Then pick your weekly slot, put a repeating 15-minute event in your calendar named “Google profile routine”, and paste the four steps above into the event notes.

Common mistakes that cost clinics patients

Leaving the profile unclaimed or tied to a former employee's personal account. You cannot fix wrong details on a listing you do not control, and losing the login when someone leaves means starting from zero.

Stuffing extra search words into the business name. It might lift you for a few weeks, then the suspension takes you off the map entirely — often in your busiest season.

Wrong or missing hours, especially holidays. A patient who drives to a locked door does not give you a second chance, and sometimes leaves a one-star review as a parting gift.

A one-time review blitz instead of a daily habit. Fifty reviews in a week then silence looks suspicious and fades; two or three a week forever compounds and wins.

Ignoring negative reviews — or arguing with them. Silence reads as guilt, arguing reads as unstable. Future patients judge you by the reply, not the complaint.

Breaking patient privacy in replies. "Thanks for coming in for your implant, John!" confirms John is a patient and reveals his treatment — a legal problem, not just bad manners.

Stock photos instead of real ones. Patients recognise them instantly, and the message is "we're hiding what our clinic really looks like."

Never checking the numbers. If you do not know how many calls the profile produced this month, you cannot tell what is working — or notice when something breaks.

Your Module 1 checklist

- [ ] Searched Google Maps for our clinic (and old names) and found every listing that exists
- [ ] Claimed and verified our profile under a business-owned Google account
- [ ] Reported or merged all duplicate listings
- [ ] Removed old agencies and ex-staff from profile access
- [ ] Business name matches our real signage exactly — no extra search words added
- [ ] Primary category is the most specific true fit; all genuine extra categories added
- [ ] Top services listed with plain, patient-friendly one-line descriptions
- [ ] Business description rewritten to lead with what patients care about
- [ ] Normal hours correct and holiday hours set for the rest of the year
- [ ] Phone number verified and identical everywhere we appear online
- [ ] Website link and online booking link added and tested
- [ ] All true attributes ticked (accessibility, parking, languages, new patients)
- [ ] At least 15 real photos uploaded: building front, reception, treatment rooms, team
- [ ] Review link saved where the whole front desk can reach it
- [ ] Front desk trained on the word-for-word review ask; text and email templates saved
- [ ] QR-code review cards printed and at the checkout desk
- [ ] Every existing review replied to — privacy rule followed in every reply
- [ ] Negative-review 4-step playbook shared with whoever writes replies
- [ ] First post published; top five patient questions posted and answered in our Q&A section
- [ ] “Profile numbers” sheet started with this month’s views, calls, directions, clicks
- [ ] Monthly numbers reminder and weekly 15-minute routine in the calendar

Your 30-day action plan

Week 1: Take control

Claim and verify the profile under a business-owned account. Hunt down and report duplicates. Remove anyone who should not have access. Fix the business name, primary category and phone number — the three details that cost the most when wrong. Do the “search like a patient” exercise from Lesson 1.1 and note how you compare to the two clinics beside you on the map; that comparison is your scoreboard.

Week 2: Fill it out and dress it up

Complete every field: extra categories, services with plain descriptions, the rewritten business description, hours including every holiday, the booking link, all true attributes. Then do the photo walk — building front, reception, treatment rooms, team — and upload 15 to 20 real photos. By the end of this week your profile should answer every question a patient would call to ask.

Week 3: Start the review engine

Get the review link, save the scripts and templates, print the QR cards, and train the front desk at a huddle — including the privacy rule for replies. Start the daily ask at checkout and the tally sheet. Reply to every existing review, positive and negative, using the templates and the 4-step playbook. Post and answer your top five patient questions in the Q&A section.

Week 4: Make it permanent

Publish your first post. Record your starting numbers — views, calls, direction requests, website clicks — in the “Profile numbers” sheet; every future month gets measured against them. Put the monthly numbers check and the weekly 15-minute routine in the calendar as repeating events, and run the routine once. Then tell the team what changed this month: reviews gained, calls received, what “found you on Google” looks like at the front desk. When the routine survives a busy week, Module 1 is done — and you are ready to make your website pull its weight in Module 2.