

If Social Media Wants to Play Doctor, They Should Prepare for Malpractice Suits

Most people understand that the constitutional guarantee of free speech does not include falsely yelling “Fire!” in a crowded theater. A panicked mob can crush or trample weak and vulnerable people as the instinct to survive overtakes common decency. This maxim came to mind when *Breitbart* [announced](#) that Twitter and Facebook censored a press conference by actual doctors describing their life-saving lessons learned from treating actual COVID-19 patients.

Among the lessons discussed was the prophylactic use of a combination of hydroxychloroquine and other inexpensive therapies that seem to stop the dreaded disease from advancing to its deadly second phase. One doctor said she treated over 300 COVID-19 patients using the therapy. These patients included vulnerable patients with diabetes, heart conditions, and advanced age. She proudly announced she had not lost a single patient with the early intervention of this therapy. Additionally, COVID-19 failed to infect any member of her staff taking the therapy as a prophylactic measure. She warned that the misinformation about these therapies was causing people to die needlessly.

Another doctor spoke to the opening of schools. Young people, he said, are able to tolerate the virus very well. Opening schools poses little or no risk to children when compared to leaving them at home. Children are very unlikely to spread the disease to each other. And, astonishingly, a contact trace study revealed no example of a student infecting a teacher in the entire world.

A third doctor spoke to the public health effects of

lockdowns. "Our suicide hotlines are up 600 percent," he said. He cited spousal abuse and alcohol abuse as two additional public health effects that the lockdowns have exacerbated. He recommended following the Swedish model of cautious reopenings of businesses and schools which yielded better results than the United Kingdom approach of a draconian lockdown. More people die under the UK model, he said.

According to *Breitbart*, Facebook justified censoring these doctors as follows, "We've removed this video for sharing false information about cures and treatments for COVID-19," Youtube and Twitter followed suit for alleged violations of the platforms' "COVID-19 policies."

Social media censorship of medical opinions is far more dangerous than the usual censorship of conservative political opinion. By censoring doctors, they're offering their own medical opinion to the public – that these cures won't work – and suggesting that it's "dangerous" to let patients (or other doctors!) hear the advice.

Are these censorship decisions being reviewed and approved by actual physicians? Because they're tantamount to playing doctor to the public.

If what these doctors say is true, then it is conceivable that patients who could have been saved by the advice will die. If what these doctors say *isn't* true, then the correct response is a rebuttal from properly-licensed physicians relying on the latest and best science (not censorship.) Indeed, Twitter *expressly* told *Breitbart* that the site's entire account would be limited because the video, "may pose a risk to people's health, including content that goes directly against guidance from authoritative sources of global and local public health information."

So not only is Twitter, which is not a medical provider, claiming that these actual doctors are wrong, Twitter is

saying that patients following this advice could be at greater health risk. This is medical advice Twitter is offering to the general public. And if anyone dies as a result of this censorship, these social media giants will be responsible.

Social media should not be restricting legitimate medical policy debate on its platforms. It should not be permitting fearmongering while censoring advice from licensed doctors who actually have some demonstrated experience and claim success in fighting the disease.

A doctor who did this could be sued for malpractice. Why should these social media giants be immune from the same consequences?

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