

Policy for Interactions with Industry: Standard Operating Procedure

The following guidelines developed by the Department of Family Medicine (DFM) are to be used in conjunction with the guidelines developed by the [Canadian Medical Association Code of Ethics](#), and the [Postgraduate Medical Education Office McMaster University](#). They apply to the educational, scholarly, and other Department work of teachers, learners, researchers, staff and those who function as role models within the DFM at Department sponsored activities and at affiliated sites (persons affiliated with or attached to DFM affiliated sites), and relate to educational, research, events, activities or programs organized or hosted at all sites.

Conflict of Interest (CoI) has varying interpretations and perspectives. This document takes the perspective and context of the Department's role in the advancement of primary care for the benefit of patients embodied in the mission statement: *"strengthening the impact of family medicine on the health and well-being of all people and their communities"*. As a guiding principle for determining what constitutes CoI and inappropriate interactions we use this anchor:

The Department of Family Medicine is committed to education, research and other scholarly activity that will promote clinical and population health practice in the best interests of patients and the wider community.

Education

We believe that education should be based on the best available evidence for the public interest rather than advertising or promotion for commercial gain.

Therefore, we do not accept any funding for undergraduate or postgraduate education from pharmaceutical companies or other outside institutions or industry either directly or indirectly that may create a conflict of interest in our teaching. This includes meals or other promotional 'gifts' and hospitality.

Research and other scholarly work

We aim to conduct research which will provide sound evidence for rational clinical and population health practice. We believe it is important that such research should be, and be seen to be, impartial.

Our research and scholarly work is free of any funding which may prejudice these goals. We accept no funding or sponsorship for research we lead or participate in from pharmaceutical companies or other for-profit organisations either directly or indirectly as 'unrestricted educational grants' or fellowships) that may create a conflict of interest in our research.

Presentations

The Department of Family Medicine must ensure independence, objectivity and scientific rigor in all its education and scholarly activities.

Disclosure of affiliations, sponsorships, honoraria, monetary support and other potentially biasing factors must routinely be made to the participants by presenters, verbally at the start of the presentation and in writing in the slide presentation or printed materials. The speaker should indicate whether the relationship is ongoing and what steps are taken in the presentation to highlight and mitigate the Col.

Generic names of drugs must be used rather than trade names in the course of educational activities. Any agent or device discussed must be discussed within the context of the disease or condition and of the available therapeutic options. Presentations must not be product or promotion oriented, nor use industry materials or graphics in presentations.

Industry Sponsorship of Educational, Research or other Events

Industry support for educational, research or other events or programs organized or hosted at the central or other teaching sites should not be accepted. This includes but is not limited to hospitality and honoraria. The Department's name, logo, affiliations or other materials should not be used to imply endorsement of industry sponsored events or programs. Subsidies for hospitality and honoraria should not be accepted from industry for department educational, research or other events.

Gifts

Ample research demonstrates that acceptance of even small gifts creates an impulse to reciprocate and has an influence on behaviour. Gifts to educational programs or projects should not be accepted. This includes all gifts such as, but not limited to, meals, pens, notepads, equipment and travel funds. Faculty members and learners must not accept personal gifts even of minimal value from the pharmaceutical or other health related industries.

Detailing and Samples

The Department of Family Medicine will not facilitate access of representatives to its learners, faculty or staff for any purpose including detailing their products.

Policy Notes

Learners: The term “Learner” includes all health professional students and faculty who are receiving educational offerings. These guidelines pertain to those affiliated with the Department of Family Medicine and/or attached to the sites affiliated with that Department. Interactions between learners and industry must at a minimum abide by the [Postgraduate Medical Education Office Guidelines](#)

“Industry”: This policy refers to organisations whose profit is related to health care decisions for patient care (e.g. use of a particular drug or investigation). It does not include organisations where profit is related to health care provider personal decisions (e.g. financial planners, recruiting agencies)

Further reading about the evidence underpinning this policy can be found in

[Mintzes, B., Mangin, D., & Hayes, L. \(2011\). Understanding and responding to pharmaceutical promotion: a practical guide. World Health Organization and Health Action International](#)