

Why guidelines on transparency?

Collaboration between physicians and the healthcare industry is necessary to secure that new drugs, treatments, or medical devices are safe and efficient.

However, the physician's decision to prescribe a certain drug, to choose a certain treatment or to use a certain device, should not be influenced by commercial factors. Conflicts of interest can harm the independence of physicians and may limit patients' capacity to take an informed decision.

Notwithstanding national professional codes and legislations, and acknowledging physicians' responsibility vis-à-vis patients and society, the CPME transparency guidelines aim to establish an ethical framework which European doctors should always follow when entering a relationship with commercial companies.

Eighteen principles are defined and address the following issues: distribution of gifts; participation to meetings, conferences and CME/CPD activities; interactions between medical students and companies; participation in research activities and scientific publications; consultancy activities.

Gifts

The clinical independence of physicians should not be influenced by payments in cash, gifts or promotional material distributed by commercial companies. Gifts received by physicians should therefore always be financially insignificant and it is advised that free medical samples should not be accepted.

Meetings and conferences

Medical events and conferences sponsored by commercial companies are often attended by physicians. Before participating in such events, physicians should make sure that the purpose of the meeting is indeed scientific and professional, that hospitality stays reasonable and purpose limited, that sources of funding and relationships between organisers, sponsors and lecturers are publicly disclosed.

Continuous Medical Education / Continuous Professional Development (CME/CPD)

CME/CPD events are often sponsored by commercial companies. Regardless how they are organised, their content should be free from any undue influence. Physicians should make sure that these events are reviewed and certified, that sponsors have no influence on the content and material, and that all sources of funding are publicly disclosed.

Medical faculties and students

Interactions between medical students and commercial companies often take place in the context of their basic medical training. Medical faculties must therefore ensure that this training is not influenced by commercial companies.

Participation in research and scientific publications

Collaboration of physicians with industry in the area of clinical research is key to the development of innovative products and procedures. Physicians should participate in such research only if it complies with ethical and professional standards, the purpose is of medical and scientific nature, the compensation reflects the actual work provided, full transparency is ensured and all clinical trials results – whether positive, negative or inconclusive – are published.

Consultancy activities

Physicians are often solicited by commercial companies to provide specific medical expertise through consultancy services. Physicians' clinical autonomy and independence should not be compromised by such activities. Consultancy activities should be ruled through a contract, compensation reflect the work provided and full transparency be ensured.

Access the full CPME Guidelines on transparency here:



Who we are

- ✓ **The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME)** aims to promote the highest standards of medical training and medical practice in order to achieve the highest quality of health care for all patients in Europe.
- ✓ **CPME** represents the National Medical Associations of 34 countries in Europe, which includes observers and associated members. CPME also works closely with specialised European medical organisations.
- ✓ To achieve its goals, **CPME** cooperates proactively with the Institutions of the European Union. Policies are being set both in answer to developments in Europe as well as by taking the lead in matters regarding the profession and patient care.
- ✓ **CPME** offers broad expertise in matters related to medicine and the medical profession.



Standing Committee of European Doctors
Rue Guimard 15 | B-1040 Brussels | Belgium
Tel +32 (0)2 732 72 02 | Fax +32 (0) 732 73 44
E-mail secretariat@cpme.eu | Web www.cpme.eu



COMITÉ PERMANENT DES MÉDECINS EUROPÉENS
STANDING COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS



CPME Guidelines on the transparency of relationships between physicians and the healthcare industry



Follow us on Twitter
@ CPME_EUROPA