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**Promotion of Medicines and Interaction with the  
Pharmaceutical Industry:  
The Role of Physicians and their Organizations**

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## **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The WMA runs several educational and humanitarian programs, which receive grants from industry and governments.

The speaker has no financial ties to any medical related industries or governments.

## **Topics**

What do we expect?

Who is good, who is bad?

Do we need to interact?

What helps?

Can we get along?

## **Expectations**

High quality efficient medicines,  
affordable for all people,  
marketed in an ethical manner

## **Who is good, who is bad?**

The paradigm of the evil industry is wrong

Corruption is a matter of choice - on all sides

“There is no such thing as a free meal”

But: To have interests is legitimate!

## Do we need to interact?

Health care is a highly cooperative and interdisciplinary effort

All participants and contributors must be able to interact and to cooperate

Coalitions are a legitimate right in a free society

## What helps?

Health is a matter of trust – this trust requires responsibility

**Responsibility** for professionalism, quality, safety, confidentiality, privacy and accountability

But also **transparency**  
when interests are **or may be** in conflict

**Independence** is the key for professional autonomy  
– autonomy to guaranty the best treatment possible

## Can we get along?

We have to!

Codes of ethics

Agreements

Penal codes

## Codes of Ethics

WMA

International Code of Medical Ethics

Declaration of Geneva

Declaration of Helsinki

## **WMA Policy**

### **WMA STATEMENT CONCERNING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

Adopted by the WMA General Assembly, Tokyo, Japan, October 2004  
and amended by the WMA General Assembly, New Delhi, India, October 2009

## **WMA Policy**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

PREAMBLE  
(excerpt)

Commercial considerations can affect the physician's objectivity, especially if the physician is in any way dependent on the enterprise.

[...] guidelines for such relationships. These guidelines must incorporate the key principles of disclosure, avoidance of obvious conflicts of interest and the physician's clinical autonomy to act in the best interests of patients.

## **WMA Policy**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

#### **MEDICAL CONFERENCES (excerpt)**

Hospitality [...] what is locally customary and generally acceptable

No direct payment to cover cost except expressly permitted

No payment for accompanying persons

Disclosures

Scientific accurate and complete information

Accreditation

No influence of the sponsor on the program

Only contributions to the whole event, not to parts or individuals

## **WMA Policy**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

#### **GIFTS (excerpt)**

No gifts for the personal benefit

No gifts with direct or indirect influence on the clinical practice

Cultural courtesy gifts may be received on an infrequent basis according to local standards if the gift is inexpensive and not related to the practice of medicine

## **WMA Policy**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

#### **RESEARCH (excerpt)**

Declaration of Helsinki (transparency (before consent!) and independence)

No pressure or limitations on research, results or publication

Adequate remuneration

## **WMA Policy**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

#### **AFFILIATIONS WITH COMMERCIAL ENTITIES (excerpt)**

No compromise of integrity

No conflict with the obligations to patients

Disclosure



## WMA Policy

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

#### WHAT IS NOT IN THIS POLICY

The challenges exist with all financial ties –  
not only with commercial companies

## Checks and Balances

All partners in health care must be able to cooperate

Clinical independence and professional autonomy  
must be preserved

**Best protection: No payments in private pockets**

Transparency on **all financial ties** allows judgment  
and preserves trust

*Caring,  
Ethics,  
Science*



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