Ethical Standards in Healthcare promotion
National Department of Health Perceptive

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Background

- Ethical standards refer to a set of values and principles used in decision making.

- Why is this so important in health care
  - Information asymmetry
    - One party to a transaction has relevant information whereas the other(s) do not
    - Can result in adverse selection

Background (2)

- It is unethical to advertise products or services with claims that are:
  - Not evidence based,
  - Inflate the effect size, or
  - omit information, such as important safety information.

Background (3)

- In order to implement an ethical marketing campaign, any healthcare institution or provider should answer the following questions.
  - What is the purpose of the marketing campaign?
  - How much does it benefit the community as a whole?
  - Is the information provided in the campaign completely truthful, or is it biased or misleading?
  - Can the amount of money spent on the campaign be justified as against its use for treatment for those who cannot afford it?

Current perspective

National Drug Policy (NDP)

- 1996 **Advertising and marketing of drugs**
- Objective ensure that advertising and marketing is in compliance with
  - National regulations
  - Voluntary industry standards.
- All promotion-making claims shall be reliable,
  - accurate,
  - truthful,
  - informative, balanced,
  - up-to-date,
  - capable of substantiation and
  - in good taste.

National Drug Policy (NDP) - 2

- Promotion should **not**:
  - Contain misleading or unverifiable statements or omissions.
  - Be designed to disguise its real nature.
  - Offer financial or material benefits.

  that are likely to induce medically unjustifiable drug use or to give rise to undue risks
- International benchmarking
  - Ethical Criteria for Medicinal Drug Promotion adopted by the World Health Assembly (WHA) and
  - Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PMA) Codes of Marketing
- Health care professional should receive training on:
  - Issues related to pharmaceutical promotion and
  - comparative independent sources of drug information

Door has been shut in the USA

- IOM 2009 report “Conflict of Interest in Medical Research, Education, and Practice”
- Physician Payments Sunshine Act
  - From 1st quarter in 2008 supplies must disclose all payments over $25 in value made to "to a physician, or to an entity that a physician is employed by, has tenure with, or has an ownership interest in."
  - Penalties range from range from $10,000 to $100,000 for each violation, and can go up to $1 million.

Rising tide of Comment in the literature

- BMJ
  - June 2008 article exposed the role that Key opinion Leaders or KOLs play in the development and marketing of medicines - *R Moynihan et al BMJ 2008(336)*.
  - 2011 article reviewed STG development for hyperlipidaemia or diabetes
    - 5 of 14 STGs published between 2000 and 2010 did not have disclosure.
    - 52% of panel members had declared conflict of interests and 12 of those members who had not declared interests were identified as having such.
    - Government sponsored guidelines were less likely to have conflict of interest concerns that non-government sources.
  - *J Neuman, D Korenstein, JS Ross, and S Keyhani. Prevalence of financial conflicts of interest among panel members producing clinical practice guidelines in Canada and United States: cross sectional study. BMJ 2011;343:d5621*

Rising tide of Comment in the literature (2)

- PloS 2011 review on conflict of interest in clinical guideline development identified that reporting had improved however finical conflicts had a high prevalence among guideline developers . *Norris SL, Holmer HK, Ogden LA, Burda BU (2011) Conflict of Interest in Clinical Practice Guideline Development: A Systematic Review. PLoS ONE 6(10): e25153. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0025153*

Rising tide of Comment in the literature (3)

- JAMA - Interest: A Policy Proposal for Academic Medical Health Industry Practices That Create Conflicts of Centers. *Troyen A. Brennan; David J. Rothman; Linda Blank; et al. JAMA. 2006;295(4):429-433 (doi:10.1001/jama.295.4.429).*
- More stringent regulation is necessary, including the elimination or modification of
  - small gifts,
  - pharmaceutical samples,
  - continuing medical education,
  - funds for physician travel,
  - speakers bureaus,
  - ghostwriting, and
  - consulting and research contracts

Leaving the emerging markets vulnerable

- IMS 2005 Pharmerging concept
  - Little growth in OECD countries.
  - Emerging markets were predicted to grow from 12% of the global market in 2005 to 28% by 2015.
  - South Africa is classified as a tier 3 country