



# news release

## R&D biopharmaceutical industry embraces NEW Code of Practice to boost business integrity worldwide

- *The new Code of Practice in place from 1 January 2019, imposes a complete ban on gifts and promotional aids*
- *Industry moves beyond compliance and reaffirms its commitment to ensuring an ethical framework as a way to increase integrity and trust*
- *Industry presents new Code to patients and healthcare professionals*

**10 January 2019, Geneva** – The new [Code of Practice](#) of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) came into effect on 1 January 2019. The 2019 Code is marked by two important changes. First, it bans gifts and promotional aids (so-called “goodies”) for prescription medicines, wherever IFPMA member companies operate. Second, it introduces a shift from a rules-based approach to a values-based Code, which seeks to help better guide business behaviors and interactions between IFPMA members and the healthcare community.

Part of the ban on gifts are any exceptions based on the custom of gifts to mark significant national, cultural or religious events (for example, mooncakes or condolence payments) . This brings the rest of the world in line with current European and US guidelines. The ban reflects pharma industry’s commitment towards the general concern that the promotional items trivialize the important, professional relationship that must exist between medical representatives and healthcare professionals, and that has the patient’s interests at its core. This relationship is based on the concept that mutual exchange ensures that the patient benefits from all sides sharing expertise and scientific knowledge, enabling the development and effective use of new medicinal products and vaccines.

*“We are glad to see that the new pharma industry Code of Practice is value-based, this will lead to the right instinct to put the patient first. From a patient perspective, we support self-regulation for all healthcare professionals and industry. It is important that when they step into a doctor’s cabinet, patients know that they can trust that advice. We are happy to work with the Code and promote it”* said Kawaldip Sehmi, CEO of the International Alliance of Patients’ Organizations (IAPO).

Following months of internal preparation to get IFPMA member companies and associations ready for the 2019 Code, the updates were also presented to partners in the [Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration](#), including international organizations representing physicians, patients, nurses, and pharmacists ([WMA](#), [IAPO](#), [ICN](#), [FIP](#)).

*“Trust is the life-blood of our industry, it is the “north star” for our behaviors. It’s not just what pharmaceutical innovation achieves that matters, but also how the industry goes about achieving it. Implementing the new and revised Code in full is about walking the talk, about earning our license to operate. We encourage doctors, pharmacists, nurses and patients to become aware of the updated ethical standards. The better our stakeholders understand our standards and hold us to account, the easier it will be for us to live-up to our commitments”*, said Thomas Cueni, IFPMA Director-General.

While the 2019 Code still provides rules that drive compliance, IFPMA’s new [Ethos](#) aims to go beyond and seeks to instill a culture of ethics and integrity. Trust is at the center of the Ethos and the values of care, fairness, respect and honesty describe how the industry strives to achieve this trust. This new ethical framework will guide business behaviors and interactions between IFPMA members and the healthcare community, no matter how testing the circumstances.

Reflecting the unique role played by the research-based biopharmaceutical industry, the first international self-regulation mechanism in the biopharmaceutical industry was put in place in 1981, called the IFPMA Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practice. It preceded even the WHO Ethical Criteria on Medicinal Drug Promotion, which was issued in 1988. Since then, the Code has been revised five times, to ensure that the biopharmaceutical industry remains consistent with society’s changing needs and expectations. With the latest edition of IFPMA Code of Practice, the bar to meet expectations regarding compliance is set even higher.



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## **About IFPMA**

[IFPMA](#) represents the research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical industry's 2 million employees discover, develop, and deliver medicines and vaccines that improve the life of patients worldwide. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

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