

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO RELATIONS WITH INDUSTRY MODULE

Introduction:

Janine is a new faculty member attending her departmental orientation. She is learning about the University of Toronto’s standards on relations with industry; these standards are required for accreditation of the university.

To see the Relationships with Industry and the Educational Environment in Undergraduate and Postgraduate Medical Education, click here:

<http://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/brochures/Relations-with-Industry.pdf>

Janine is wondering why this is relevant to her, as a clinician teacher, who doesn’t plan to do any pharmaceutical-based research. She recognizes that as faculty, we have a duty to model professional behaviour, and that we must avoid inappropriate influence on our prescribing.

But she also knows that there can be valuable relationships with the medical establishment and private-sector entities, so she wants to know how to achieve the right balance; in particular, she wants to know what constitutes a conflict of interest, and how can she manage conflicts of interest.


1. What is a “conflict of interest”?
2. Her next question is: *to whom do the standards apply?* (click on all that apply)

- All University of Toronto faculty
- All learners
- On site and off site
- On hours and off hours

Let’s join Janine as she learns about different potential types of conflict, and how to best manage them.

Click on one of the following icons to learn more about each potential relation with industry:

Gifts	Drug detailer	Samples	Conferences	Residency program	Consulting for pharma	Disclosure
						

1.  **GIFTS** I understand that accepting something worth a lot of money will result the receiver being indebted to the giver. But what do we mean by a gift, and is it really going to make a difference to how I prescribe? I follow evidence-based literature!

Which of the following is considered a gift?

- A pen
- A coffee
- A bottle of wine at the holiday season
- Pharma-sponsored breakfast at rounds
- A meal at a pharma-sponsored, non-accredited event

What is the universities standard regarding gifts? We must not accept gifts, which includes food and entertainment. If you chose to attend a pharma sponsored event, the meal should be at your own expense

What evidence supports this? “A gift is a gift”



2. DRUG DETAILING *My administrative assistant recently booked an appointment for Kristi from Pharma to see me to discuss her company’s latest statin, Supracol. What are the pros and cons of meeting with her?*

Reasons doctors meet with pharma reps:	Concerns with those reasons:
Get an update on the literature	Meetings are to sell drugs → consider the educational value in meeting. You won’t be presented with a balanced description re: costs, harms
Get samples, or other access to expensive drugs	The use of samples has its own pros and cons, and it is not necessary to participate in drug detailing with the rep to get samples
Efficient way to learn about an instrument	Make sure you learn about all of them to have a balanced understanding
Residents need to have effective role modelling about how to do this, since they will likely decide to meet them in their future practice	Don’t assume residents will meet with reps in the future. Any meetings that do occur with residents need to follow Standards rules

What is the universities standard regarding meeting with drug representative?

Caveat meetings are not recommended

If meeting faculty, an appointment is required and patients should not be present, unless the rep is required to demonstrate their product. When they are required for patient care, both patients and the hospital should be informed, and the rep should have a hospital badge ideally that identifies their role clearly

If with meeting residents, there rep should be clearly identified, any discussion should be balanced, with faculty present. No literature or gifts should be provided and residents' contact information should not be provided.



3. **SAMPLES**

My patients sometimes cannot afford the latest medication, Supracol, that I think would benefit them. Doesn't using samples provide them with the best care?

Consider ramifications of using samples: they are often more expensive than other older but equally effective options, and this does not provide a long term option for the patient. It is best done with central distribution by the hospital pharmacy.

Can I use the samples for myself or my family?

No! This would be considered a gift, and would be self-prescribing.

If I do decide to dispense samples to my patients, what monitoring do I need to do?

Keep samples in a locked area

Discard samples after expiry date

Keep record of the dispensing (Name, date, drug name, lot #, amount, anything else?)

Beware of drug interactions and ensure that the patient's regular pharmacist knows about the sample

Thinking ahead, if I develop relationships with industry, does that affect my ability to be involved in the institutional selection of drugs?

Yes! Any potential conflicts will need to be disclosed to your hospital and this may affect your ability to be on the committee that chooses medication for the hospital.



4. **CONFERENCES**

I received an invitation from Kristi about attending an evening with colleagues to hear a presentation by Dr Smith, the prior President of the American Heart Association, to learn more about the evidence around using Supracol. I would love to learn about preventing cardiac events with the new medication, but I am worried about the quality of the evidence that will be provided. How can I tell if this will be biased or not?

Does the conference follow rules for CME accreditation?

Which of the following are requirements for accreditation, as outlined by the University of Toronto Standards (True/False)

- Planned

- Hands off (content, invites/registration, speakers cheques), multiple donors ideally,
- Commercial displays in a different room
- Disclosure must happen
- Food at events must be appropriate

[Provide link to sponsorship policy](#)

Does this invitation conform to accreditation standards?

No, because of the direct invitation by Kristi (we don't know anything more about it).

If I go, what are the concerns?

- Is the evidence presentation reliable?
- Are you accepting a gift? Yes, you should be paying for your own meal if you attend.



5. **RESIDENCY PROGRAMS**

Robert is a new program director at the University of Toronto, and he wants to make sure his program is in compliance with the University of Toronto Standards. He has some questions in his new role.

What do I need to know about to ensure the program follows the standards?

Resident contact information should not be given to industry.

Residents must be formally educated about appropriate relations with industry.

If you use funding from industry, there are rules that must be followed: ideally there would be multiple, sources of funding, all sources must be acknowledged, there must be no quid pro quo for the company

Is pharma-sponsored food at rounds acceptable?

Ideally this won't happen (see "Gifts"), if it does, representatives must not be present, the food must be modest, and the source of the funding must be acknowledged.



6. **CONSULTING FOR PHARMA**

Robert has been approached by industry to provide his clinical expertise.

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

You might want to do it for the financial implications, and some physicians think it gives them expert status. However, working for industry has implications. It can influence your prescribing and can affect how others view what you say, because you will need to declare that you have potential conflicts of interest afterwards. Robert may want to avoid any relations with industry so as to have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Am I allowed to participate in scientific education sessions to improve the knowledge of company personnel?

Yes, but make sure that it isn't actually a marketing session where you are being sold a product. You would need to declare a conflict of interest for any income generated from this.

Am I allowed to participate in industry-funded public education not related to a specific brand product, such as for public advocacy or health promotion?

Yes, but you would need to declare a conflict of interest.

Am I permitted to speak at other types of industry-sponsored meetings run by the company?

In general, no. The principle is that you are not supposed to be endorsing a product.

Evidence that this is happening include any of the following:

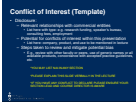
- If the company selects or influences the talk
- If the company selects the topic
- If the company selects the content
- If the company selects the members of the audience.

These are called "speakers bureaus".

When the event uses industry funding, but runs in "hands off", you can participate as a speaker. None of the above stipulations could apply and you would have to have control of the topic, use your own slides, and receive an honorarium from the university running the conference, not industry. You would not have to declare a conflict of interest from this activity.

Are there any other activities that are not permitted?

Faculty are not allowed to ghost-write (claim authorship on papers written by industry writers).



7. DISCLOSURE

What exactly do I have to disclose?

You will need to disclose potential conflicts of interest, which include work you do consulting for industry, financial investments for you and first degree relatives, gifts. You have received from industry. Basically, if you receive any funding from pharmacy, it should be disclosed.

You do not have to disclose very small gifts (pens, coffee, meals at a conference), although they may in fact influence your prescribing.

What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest may arise when a staff member's personal or other interests are in actual, potential, or perceived conflict with duties or responsibilities to patient care, the University, their hospital, or hospital research institute. Mere existence of a conflict of interest does not imply wrongdoing: conflicts of interest can arise naturally from an individual's engagement with the world outside the University. When conflicts of interest do arise, however, they must be recognized, disclosed, and properly managed. For purposes of this document, relevant potential conflicts will be those arising from relationships or Financial Interests existing within the last five years.

When would I have to disclose potential conflicts of interest?

At talks- You will need to disclose current and prior potential conflicts. In your talk, you are expected to use generic drugs names, and acknowledge any industry slides you use.

Teaching – Any formal teaching situation when you have slides, you should include a conflict of interest slide. **Guidelines/journals** – you must disclose when you are participating in guidelines and when you are publishing medical articles.

University/Hospital, as part of your annual appointment process (amounts of \$5000 or more)

Test your understanding of Relations with Industry University of Toronto Standards by answering the following questions:

1. Which of the following is considered a gift:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

3. Pharmaceutical companies influence physicians in which ways:
4. Concerns about using drug samples include which of the following:
5. Which of the following is allowed in Residency programs:
6. Which of the following activities would I need to declare a conflict of interest for:
7. Which of these activities could influence my drug prescribing inappropriately?
8. Which of the following do I need to declare:
9. It is worth entering a relationship with industry when

Reference list