

Conflict of Interest policy

The circumstances that create a conflict of interest are when an individual has an opportunity to affect CME content about the products or services of a commercial interest with which he/she has a financial relationship. Not every financial relationship creates a conflict of interest. The purpose for identifying and addressing potential conflicts of interest is to ensure proper balance, independence, objectivity and scientific rigor of the medical school's educational activities. Having a relationship with a commercial interest does not necessarily imply bias or decrease the value of the faculty member or planner's participation in CME activities, but the conflict of interest policy is a mechanism by which we ensure balance and educational value in our CME activities.

Mechanism to Resolve Conflict of Interest in CME Activities:

1. Submission and Review of Disclosure Forms

All faculty and planners for a CME activity are required to submit a "Disclosure of Relevant Financial Relationship & FDA Off-Label Use" form *prior* to the CME activity. CME staff review all completed forms for each activity to determine if any potential conflicts of interest exist. Failure to submit a disclosure in a timely manner will require a replacement be sought for the educational assignment or be dropped from the program. Faculty/planners are asked to complete the form as soon as they are identified for a CME activity.

2. Determination of Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

If a potential COI is identified, the information is forwarded to the activity medical director (AMD) for review. The AMD reviews the information and makes a decision about whether these COI are manageable based on the educational assignment. If AMD is the party with COI, or unable to resolve the COI, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will review for conflict of interest by reviewing slide presentations. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will make recommendations and/or seek additional content expert for recommendations.

3. Conflict of Interest Exists

The AMD can request additional information including:

- A guided interview to include a discussion between appropriate individuals (usually physician to physician though Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Director of CME will initiate conversation) to utilize a set of standard questions to form the basis for discussion and seek to identify levels of evidence for content. The outcome, and actions, if any, of the conversation will be documented.

- Copies of the slides from the faculty with the potential COI for review.

Faculty/planner can:

- Agree to make changes based on outcome of conversation/recommendation from AMD or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
- Withdraw from the CME activity.
- Discontinue their relationship with commercial entity

4. Non-resolvable Conflicts

If unable to resolve conflict of interest and/or changes proposed are not accepted by faculty, and they are unwilling to remove themselves from CME activity, Faculty/Planner can petition the LSUHSC Conflict of Interest Committee for review. The decision of the LSUHSC Conflict of Interest Review Committee is final.

5. Evaluation & Oversight

Activity overview sheets are distributed at each CME activity and detail the financial relationships any faculty/planner in the CME prior to the activity. All activity evaluations ask learners to evaluate whether any bias was present. If bias is detected, learners are asked to indicate specifics about bias so it can be addressed post-activity.