

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Office of Continuing Medical Education

POLICY on Commercial Support, Exhibits, Advertising, and Logos

Purpose

This policy is to ensure that all continuing medical education (CME) activities certified by the University of Colorado School of Medicine (CUSOM) are fully compliant with the Standards of Commercial Support of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). The purpose is to ensure that the Office of Continuing Medical Education (OCME) of CUSOM CME activities are free from commercial influence. This policy encompasses all learning formats of CME activities certified by the OCME of the CUSOM, whether held on or off campus.

Policy and Procedure

This Policy on Commercial Support, Exhibits, Advertising, and Logos will be distributed to all prospective course directors with the initial CME Activity Application.

Independence

- Employees of a commercial interest must not participate in the planning process nor be on planning committees.

Resolution of Conflict of Interest

- Everyone in a position to control content of an educational activity must adhere to OCME's *Policy for Disclosure and Identification and Resolution of Conflicts of Interest* to ensure transparency of financial relationships and eliminate commercial bias.

Appropriate Use of Commercial Support

- Commercial support is monetary or in-kind contributions given by a commercial interest to a CME provider that is used to pay all or part of the costs of a CME activity; the OCME as a CME provider adheres to ACCME processes when receiving and managing commercial support.
- Letters of Agreement must be acknowledged by the course director and OCME, signed by CUSOM legal representative, signed by joint provider (if any), and signed by the commercial interest prior to the start of any activity; course directors must notify OCME of all grant applications.
- All commercial support must be acknowledged by use of a written Acknowledgement posted at the activity registration desk or sign-in desk prior to the start of the activity.
- Funds from a commercial interest must be in the form of an education grant payable to the CUSOM or joint provider, as agreed upon with OCME.
- Corporate logos and/or slogans of commercial interests must not be used when acknowledging commercial support or anywhere within educational materials (website landing pages, brochures, agendas, programs, acknowledgements)
- Commercially supported social events at CME activities must not compete with, nor take precedence over, educational events.
- Funds from commercial support must not be used to pay for learner travel, lodging, personal expenses or honoraria.
- Upon completion of the activity, the course director must submit documentation of compliance and a financial summary of income and expenses to the OCME.

Managing Promotion

- Commercial exhibits and advertisements are promotional activities and not continuing medical education; funding paid by commercial interests for the promotional activities are *not* considered to be commercial support; promotional fees must be separate and distinct from educational grants.
- Commercial exhibits must not influence planning or interfere with the presentation of CME activities, nor can they be a condition of commercial support for CME activities; representatives of commercial supporters may attend the educational activity, but may not engage in sales or marketing activities while in the space/room where the educational activity occurs.
- Exhibits must be separated from the space/room where the education occurs.
- CME content must not be placed on the website of a commercial interest.

Content without Commercial Bias

- CME activities must promote improvements or quality in healthcare and not a specific proprietary business interest of a commercial interest; must give a balanced view of therapeutic options (use generic names where possible).

Disclosure

- Disclosure of relevant financial relationships for all teachers, authors, planners, reviewers and others who control content must be presented to the audience prior to the start of any activity.

Other

- Course directors must not apply for commercial support prior to CME Activity Application approval.
- Regularly scheduled series activities held on the Anschutz Medical Campus must adhere to the *Policy to Limit Conflicts of Interest Between Health Care Professionals and Industry Representatives* of The University of Colorado Denver.

ACCME definitions relative to this policy are:

Commercial interest: A commercial interest, as defined by the ACCME, is any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. The ACCME does not consider providers of clinical service directly to patients to be commercial interests. A commercial interest is not eligible for ACCME accreditation.

- **Commercial support:** Monetary or in-kind contributions given by an ACCME-defined commercial interest to a CME provider that is used to pay all or part of the costs of a CME activity. The ACCME Standards for Commercial SupportSM explains the rules CME providers must follow when receiving and managing commercial support. Revenues that CME providers receive from advertising and exhibits are *not* considered commercial support.
- **Conflict of interest:** The ACCME considers financial relationships to create conflicts of interest in CME when individuals have both a financial relationship with a commercial interest *and* the opportunity to affect the content of CME about the products or services of that commercial interest. The potential for maintaining or increasing the value of the financial relationship with the commercial interest creates an incentive to influence the content of the CME—an incentive to insert commercial bias.
- **Relevant financial relationships:** The ACCME requires anyone in control of CME content to disclose relevant financial relationships to the accredited provider. Individuals must also include in their disclosure the relevant financial relationships of a spouse or partner. The ACCME defines *relevant financial relationships* as financial relationships in any amount that create a conflict of interest and that occurred in the twelve-month period preceding the time that the individual was asked to assume a role controlling content of the CME activity. The ACCME has not set a minimal dollar amount—any amount, regardless of how small, creates the incentive to maintain or increase the value of the relationship. Financial relationships are those relationships in which the individual benefits by receiving a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria for promotional speakers' bureau, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds), or other financial benefit. Financial benefits are usually associated with roles such as employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research), consulting, speaking and teaching, membership on advisory committees or review panels, board membership, and other activities from which remuneration is received, or expected. See also *conflict of interest*.
- **Standards for Commercial Support: Standards to Ensure Independence in CME Activities:** ACCME requirements designed to ensure that CME activities are independent and free of commercial bias. The Standards comprise six standards: independence, resolution of personal conflicts of interest, appropriate use of commercial support, appropriate management of associated commercial promotion, content and format without commercial bias, and disclosures relevant to potential commercial bias.