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| Policy: | Conflict of Interest | |
| Policy Owner: | Coordinator, CSTAR | |
| Department: | CSTAR | |
| Approval By: | Director, CSTAR | Approval Date: 2018-11-22 |
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BACKGROUND

Canadian Surgical Technologies & Advanced Robotics ([CSTAR](#)) values its relationships with [Industry and their Representatives](#). These individuals introduce our staff and [affiliates](#) to new technologies and equipment, as well as provide additional education and training with respect to their products. Education and research will promote objectivity and avoid any perceived [conflict of interest](#).

POLICY

All staff and [affiliates](#) are required to disclose any Conflict of Interest as required by the Canadian Medical Association ([CMA](#)) Guideline: [Guidelines for Physician in Interactions with Industry](#).

Conflicts of interest represent circumstances in which professional judgments or actions regarding a primary interest, such as the responsibilities of a medical researcher, staff or a physician, may be at risk of being unduly influenced by a secondary interest, such as financial gain. Effective means of identifying and managing conflicts are an important element in also managing reputational risk as well to both the individual and the organization, both directly and indirectly.

The intent of this disclosure requirement is not to prohibit speakers from presenting, but rather to inform the audience of any bias that speakers may have and to be transparent and forthcoming. It remains for the audience to determine whether the speaker's outside interests may reflect a possible bias in the information presented.

Failure to disclose, or false disclosure, may require the Planning Committee to replace the speaker for the remainder of the program and will require that all participants are made aware of the conflict when it is identified.

PROCEDURE

1. Industry and Industry Representatives

1.1. Maintain Privacy and [Confidentiality](#) of the following:

- 1.1.1. Learner,
- 1.1.2. Staff and affiliate,
- 1.1.3. Standardized patients,
- 1.1.4. Simulation scenarios.

1.2. Adhere to Corporate policies for personnel safety and infection control

1.3. Participate in courses only to assist in the education of the equipment or product.

1.4. Wear appropriate identification i.e.) name badge, Industry attire

1.5. Any financial donations to the centre must adhere to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada's criteria for accreditation.

2. Staff and Affiliates

2.1. Disclose any potential conflict of interest including:

- 2.1.1. Financial or “in-kind” relationships i.e. Membership on the Organization’s Advisory Board or similar committee, current or recent participation in a clinical trial sponsored by the Organization, holding a patent for a product referred to in the CME/CPD activity or that is marketed by a commercial organization, stock ownership in the Organization, other relationships that may not involve direct transfer of funds, personal connections that might have indirect financial impact/benefit.
- 2.1.2. Complete the CSTAR Conflict of interest form ([Appendix A](#)), located on the CSTAR website, and bring the signed document on the day of the course.
- 2.1.3. Disclosure to participants must be verbal and displayed in writing on a slide at the beginning of a presentation.
- 2.2. Will not meet with Industry Representatives unless accompanied by an instructor.
- 2.3. Will not accept gifts from Industry Representatives.

3. **Strategies for managing and resolving identified conflicts**

- 3.1. When a conflict of interest is declared, the Planning Committee will determine the appropriate strategy to balance or minimize bias. The following is a list of potential strategies for consideration by the Planning Committee:
 - 3.1.1. The speaker could be required to alter the focus of the talk to limit the areas where conflict of interest is significant.
 - 3.1.2. The topic selected could be changed, but the same speaker be used.
 - 3.1.3. The planning committee could ask for a peer review of the content to ensure that the principles of scientific integrity, objectivity and balance have been respected.
 - 3.1.4. Both topic and speaker could be eliminated. This would be a last resort if a significant conflict of interest cannot be otherwise managed.

DEFINITIONS

Affiliates – Individuals who are not employed by the organization but perform specific tasks at or for the organization, including:

- Credentialed Professional Staff with a hospital appointment (e.g. physicians, midwives, dentists),
- Students,
- Volunteers,
- Contractors or contracted workers who may be members of a third party contract or under direct contract with the organization, and
- Individuals working at the organization but funded through an external source

Confidentiality – The obligation upon an organization or person to protect information that has been entrusted to its care for a specific purpose and to ensure that information is only accessible to those authorized to have access.

Industry Representative – A representative of a health care industry (medical, surgical or pharmaceutical) who provides information on hospital equipment, instrumentation or supplies used in the provision of clinical patient care.

Conflict of Interest – any real, perceived or potential situation where the personal and professional interests of individuals may have actual, potential or apparent influence over their judgment and actions.

REFERENCES

[Policy and Guidelines for Interactions between Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry and Pharmaceutical, Biotech, Medical Device, Medical/Dental Supply, and Research Equipment Supplies Industry](#)

[Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry](#)

LHSC Corporate Policies

[Fragrance Free Environment Policy](#)

[Safety Footwear Policy](#)

[Security Policy](#)

[Infection Safety and Personal Attire Policy](#)

[Industry Representatives](#)

[Photography, Video and Sound Recording](#)

[Confidentiality](#)

[Pharmaceuticals \(Drug\) Samples](#)

[Standards for Business Conduct](#)

[Use of Cellular Phones and Other Wireless Technologies](#)

[Observer \(Medical and Non-Medical\)](#)

[Hand Hygiene](#)

[Routine Practices](#)

[Food and Beverage](#)

[Reporting and Investigating of Adverse Events and Near Misses Involving Patients, Visitors, Affiliates and Property](#)

CSTAR Departmental Policies

[Dress Code](#)

APPENDICES

Appendix A – [CSTAR Conflict of Interest Form](#)