American Medical Students Association
PharmFree Project

In 2008, AMSA's first PharmFree Scorecard revealed that the pharmaceutical industry was having an undue influence on medical education and future physicians through unfettered financial relationships with drug companies. As a result of the PharmFree scorecard, medical schools across the country quickly adopted or rewrote conflict of interest policies and revised their curricula. Later iterations have been cited by media outlets across the country and in the halls of Congress. We are currently preparing the 2023 version of the PharmFree Scorecard, and this document briefly outlines the 14 domains being analyzed in this iteration. When applicable, model policies from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) are also listed.

Note that for the purpose of this scoring system, "industry" refers to both pharmaceutical and medical device companies that produce products or services that can be bought by or used within clinical facilities or medical education. Policies apply solely to faculty members at each medical school.

Definitions

1. **Industry-funded Gifts**
   Gifts are defined as any free item from industry other than meals, which are covered under domain #2, "Meals". Prohibited gifts include "educational gifts" for faculty and trainees, such as textbooks and journal articles or online subscriptions.

2. **Industry-funded Meals**
   Industry-funded meals include those provided at industry-funded accredited CME events or on-site as part of an indirect grant from industry.

3. **Industry-funded promotional speaking relationships**
   This domain assesses whether faculty members are prohibited or banned from being paid by industry to do promotional speaking or be on industry-funded speakers' bureaus.

4. **Industry-support of ACCME-accredited CME**
   As a safeguard against commercially biased courses, the ACCME requires that institutions follow their "Standards for Commercial Support". These standards require disclosure of industry funding, management of existing conflicts of interest (including, for example, review of presentations' content), and no industry involvement in creating course content or on the suggestion or selection of activities, topics, or speakers. However, the ACCME has limited ability to enforce compliance with such standards.

5. **Attendance of industry-sponsored promotional events**
   This category refers to passive attendees of industry-funded events that are not ACCME-accredited, and not to speakers at such events (which is covered under domain #3, "industry-funded promotional speaking relationships").

6. **Industry-Funded Scholarships and Awards**
   This domain is defined as industry financial support for academic and clinical scholarships, or other funding awards for attending bona fide academic events or

conferences. Competitive fellowships strictly for scientific research training managed by the institution (i.e. the institution decides who the recipients of these fellowships are and how these funds are earmarked) are allowed. This domain does *not* cover industry-supported fellowships for qualified trainees for the purpose of training in research.

7. **Ghostwriting and honorary authorship**
Ghostwriting is a practice where one individual or group writes on behalf of another individual or institution.

8. **Consulting and advising relationships**
This domain is defined as consulting or advisory relationships with for-profit entities, entered into by a physician outside of his or her duties as an employee of the school or hospital. For Scorecard purposes, consulting does not include promotional speaking (this is covered in domain 3).

9. **Access of pharmaceutical sales representatives**
Employees from pharmaceutical companies will have "access" to the medical school if they are permitted to discuss their products with any affiliates of the hospital, including students and attendings.

10. **Access of medical device representatives**
This section is distinct from the previous in that it applies specifically to medical device sales representatives. This section is similar to the prior Domain 9 ("Access of pharmaceutical sales representatives) but instead pertains to medical device representatives.

11. **Conflict of interest (COI) disclosure**
The nature of disclosure (internal and to trainees/attendees) will be assessed. Internal Disclosure refers to faculty submitting disclosure information to institutions. External/Public disclosure generally refers to a website with disclosure information.

12. **Existence of an adequate COI curriculum**
The five core competencies for medical students are: professionalism and conflict of interest; drug and device development; determining drug and device safety and efficacy; marketing and physician practice; continuing medical education. For complete grading, be sure to submit conflict of interest (COI) curriculum materials.

13. **Extension of COI funding policies to community affiliates**
This section aims to score the language surrounding the extension of COI policies regarding industry funding to affiliated clinical centers (including hospitals, off-site clinics, and community hospitals).

14. **Enforcement and Sanctions of Policies**
This section determines the level of oversight and enforcement of policies evaluated by the scorecard, as well as protocol for evaluating and penalizing poor compliance with policies.

Model Policies

Using the following link and page references, schools can access language related to the policies in each domain. This will guide schools in selecting policies to submit that accurately capture the domains that we want to obtain. Pages marked with roman numerals offer introductory definitions, and pages marked with numbers indicate examples of recommended policies and language AMSA is looking for in its analysis.

All references below are provided in relation to **the Association of American Medical College's "Industry Funding of Medical Education" [report](#).**

Domain 1: Industry-funded gifts
- Page VII, Section "Gifts to Individuals"
- Page VIII, Section "Participation in Industry-Sponsored Programs"
- Page 14, Section "Gifts to Individuals"

Domain 2: Industry-funded Meals
- Page IX, Section "Food"
- Page 21, Section "Food"

Domain 3: Industry-funded promotional speaking relationships
- Page VIII, Section "Participation in Industry-Sponsored Programs"
- Page 20, Section "Participation in Industry-Sponsored Programs"

Domain 4: Industry-support of ACCME-accredited CME
- Page VIII, Section "Continuing Medical Education (CME)"
- Page XI, Section "Content Validation of Continuing Medical Education"

Domain 5: Passive attendance of industry-sponsored promotional events
- Page VIII, Section "Participation in Industry-Sponsored Programs"
- Page 20, Section "Participation in Industry-Sponsored Programs"

Domain 6: Industry-Funded Scholarships and Awards
- Page 21, Section "Industry-Sponsored Scholarships and Other Educational Funds for Trainees"

Domain 7: Ghostwriting and honorary authorship
- Page IX, Section "Ghostwriting"
- Page 22, Section "Ghostwriting"

Domain 8: Consulting and advising relationships
- Page 23, Section "Boards of Directors, Advisory Boards, and Consulting"

Domain 9: Access of pharmaceutical sales representatives
- Page VII, Section "Site Access by Pharmaceutical Representatives"

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- Page 17, Section "Site Access by Pharmaceutical Representatives"

Domain 10: Access of medical device representatives
- Page VII, Section "Site Access by Device Manufacturer Representatives"
- Page 18, Section "Site Access by Device Manufacturer Representatives"

Domain 11: Conflict of interest (COI) disclosure
- Page VIII, Section "Participation in Industry-Sponsored Programs"
- Page 20, Section "Participation in Industry-Sponsored Programs"

Domain 12: Existence of an adequate COI curriculum
- Page IX, Section "The Educational Experience"

Domain 13: Extension of COI funding policies to community affiliates
- Not included in AAMC (refer to AMSA definitions)

Domain 14: Enforcement and Sanctions of Policies
- Not included in AAMC (refer to AMSA definitions)

For further information on domains and model policies, refer to the AAMC's "Industry Funding of Medical Education" [report](#).

If you have any questions, please reach out to the PharmFree coordinators Devika Shenoy (devika.shenoy@amsa.org) and Shamik Bhat (shamik.bhat@amsa.org).