

Policy on Conflicts of Interest

College of Human Medicine

Scope of Policy

The University's Faculty Conflict of Interest Policy sets forth the process for reporting and managing faculty conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest occurs when an individual's personal, professional, commercial, or other interests or activities outside of the University affect, appear to affect, or have the potential to affect their professional judgment or obligation to the University. Generally, MSU faculty and academic staff must disclose any significant financial interest in, relationship with, and/or managerial control over an external entity. In some instances, primarily related to federal awards, MSU faculty and academic staff must also disclose the financial interest of their spouse and dependent children.

Financial interests may include receipt of payments, ownership, equity, gifts, etc. These interests must be reported for each entity or organization in which they are held or which provides the financial interest (e.g., a company, trust, non-profit organization, non-U.S. University, etc.).

The following College of Human Medicine (CHM) policy applies to individuals appointed through the academic personnel system for whom the CHM is their lead college, all CHM students, and all residents affiliated with CHM. Throughout this policy, the term "individual(s)" pertains to faculty (which includes fellows and residents), academic specialists, staff and students.

This policy is intended to complement existing University, College, and Affiliated Institution conflict of interest policies. For information on "what to disclose" please see here:

<https://coi.msu.edu/disclosure/what.html>.

For all education and research related conflict of interest policies, the university policy must be followed. The most current info can be found on the Conflict of Interest at MSU website <https://coi.msu.edu/>.

Conflicts of Interest Related to Clinical Service

A conflict of interest in the clinical setting occurs whenever the physician or clinic has entered into a relationship that might reasonably be thought to threaten the capacity to make good judgments concerning a primary obligation of the health professions, such as the duty to protect the welfare and rights of patients. A conflict of interest can exist even if the physician's actual performance of their obligations has been exemplary. The conflict of interest still raises an ethical question that must be addressed because of the *risk* it creates to the physician's exercise of their best clinical or ethical judgment. The question is whether that risk is ethically warranted by some greater good that the relationship makes possible. When the risk is not outweighed by a greater good, then the relationship is not ethically permissible, and the conflict of interest must either be eliminated altogether or managed to reduce the risk to a level warranted by the benefits of the relationship. The conflicting interest need not be pecuniary; and its effect on the physician's judgment may be indirect, rather than the result of a conscious or deliberate calculation on the physician's part. Well-meaning physicians who would never deliberately act contrary to their obligations may nevertheless be involved in ethically troubling conflicts of interest.

1. Interactions with Industry (pharmaceutical representatives and device manufacturers)
 - 1.1. Individuals may not use or display industry promotional materials (pens, penlights, paper or prescription pads, etc.) when seeing patients.

- 1.2. Individuals may not accept personal gifts of any nature from industry vendors or representatives, regardless of value.
- 1.3. Individuals may meet with industry (pharmaceutical and device manufacturer) representatives by invitation in non-clinical areas to discuss industry products, but must keep such visits to a minimum conducted in a way that does not interfere with the provision of patient care, and be for non-marketing purposes (e.g. training).
- 1.4. Individuals may not accept food or beverages supplied by industry representatives or vendors, unless part of ACCME accredited activity.
- 1.5. Individuals may not accept or dispense sample medications and/or devices except in accordance with written policy of the health care system or practice and in compliance with state and federal regulations.
2. Display of Industry Promotional Materials
 - 2.1. Individuals and clinics under the control of CHM faculty may not display or distribute industry promotional materials of any kind.
3. Direct Sale of Health-Related Goods or Services
 - 3.1. Individuals may sell health-related goods or services directly to patients only in accordance with an approved conflict of interest management plan.
4. Ownership or Financial Interests in Ancillary Services or Facilities
 - 4.1. Individuals may have ownership or other financial interests in services or facilities to which their patients are referred only in accordance with an approved conflict of interest management plan.

Procedures for Addressing Conflicts of Interest and Management Plans

All individuals (including MSU and no-pay MSU personnel) shall report their conflicts of interest [here](#). University Conflict Disclosure and Management office will then follow-up with respective individuals if they determine a conflict exists and if a management plan is required.

When Are Disclosures Made?

Annually: All MSU faculty, and academic staff with research, teaching, service and outreach responsibilities must submit an annual disclosure of all significant financial interests related to their MSU responsibilities.

Project based: Some federal regulations and policies require that each institution and investigator applying for, receiving, or being supported by those agency's funds be compliant with rules regarding training and disclosure prior to applying for funds and the establishment of conflict of interest management plans prior to the expenditure of funds. See [MSU Conflict Disclosures and Management](#) for further information.

Revising Disclosures: Disclosures must be updated within 30 days of acquiring or discovering any new significant financial interest.

Revision History

November 21, 2016: Policy and procedures revised and approved by CAC.

February 8, 2021: Links in the policy reviewed and updated.

February 20, 2023: Policy and procedures revised and approved by CAC.

- Removed college-specific policy and procedure for conflict of interest in research and teaching and replaced with university policy and procedure.

March 13, 2023: Formatting updated by Office of Faculty Affairs.

- Implemented heading styles for enhanced accessibility.
- Moved “When Are Disclosures Made?” information from middle of Scope of Policy section to end of Procedures section.