



THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

A Chapter of the College of Family Physicians of Canada
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Via Email: relationshipswithindustry@cpsso.on.ca

Attention: Policy Department
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
80 College Street
Toronto, Ontario
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To the CPSO Policy Department,

Feedback on *Physicians' Relationships with Industry: Practice, Education and Research*

The Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) has reviewed and is supportive of your draft policy on *Physicians' Relationships with Industry: Practice, Education and Research*.

The OCFP has recently been discussing disassociation from pharmaceutical funding and the Board of Directors made a decision in March 2014 to no longer accept funding from the pharmaceutical industry for exhibits or booths at the Annual Scientific Assembly (ASA), beginning this November 2014. The OCFP has further restricted the presentation of industry-funded scholarships and awards at its Honours and Awards Ceremony, coinciding with the ASA. Further discussion will follow about industry sponsorships and grants of education programs, and expanding 'industry' to include not only pharmaceutical companies but also other private healthcare companies, including medical devices, etc.

The OCFP is pleased to provide feedback on your specific questions:

1. Are there areas of concern related to physicians' relationships with industry that are not addressed in this draft policy? If so, what are they?
 - a. The OCFP does not have concerns with the draft policy, however it is not entirely clear how the policy will be monitored and whether there is a mechanism to report activities by the industry that do not support the terms within the policy. One area that is not specifically addressed is the complex relationships that exist between pharmacists/pharmacies and physicians. Pharmacies are private sector



entities but not mentioned as part of industry, and play a role in patient education and clinical practice. Additionally, will the CPSO be communicating and sharing the final policy with industry and their respective associations and asking for their commitment to make their members/employees aware of the policy.

2. Do you think the expectations for physicians are reasonable?
 - a. The expectations for physicians are well defined across a number of potential areas of interaction with industry and describe a minimum of acceptable and ethical behavior. Once the OCFP concludes its own review of industry interactions and makes a decision about sponsorship and grants, particularly of education events and programs, we will share our decisions with the CPSO.

3. Do you think the policy will adequately protect patients and the public?
 - a. Our patients expect that we are providing them with high-quality and evidence-based care, and that we are not acting with bias or influence from the industry. Patient and public interests will be protected if physicians self-monitor and adhere to the guidelines and policies.

The OCFP is pleased to support the CPSO's draft policy and will ensure it is communicated to its 12,300 members once the policy is final. The OCFP will also provide a summary of its own decisions about the disassociation from industry once the Board of Directors has reviewed forthcoming recommendations.