

Pharmaceutical Industry Involvement in Medical Education

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Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Industries

- ◆ For profit corporations
 - Primary duty to shareholders
 - Maximize shareholder value
- ◆ Value of specific product
 - Pricing
 - Utilization
 - ❖ Indications
 - ❖ Market share

Clinical Medicine

- ◆ Duty to individual patient
 - Maximizing medical benefit
 - Avoiding harm
- ◆ Duty to society
 - Judicious use of limited resources
 - Less emphasized in US care structure

Industry/Clinician Interactions

- ◆ Historically
 - Personal relationships between rep/physician
 - ❖ Trinkets, gifts, meals and travel
 - ❖ Detailing
 - “Consulting” fees, “focus group” participation
- ◆ Quite effective in changing physician behavior.

Industry/Clinician Interactions

- ◆ Historical practices under scrutiny
 - Public backlash
 - ❖ Related in part to drug costs
 - Professional organizations
 - ❖ American Medical Student Association
 - Academic institutions/Practice groups
 - ❖ Conflict of interest policies
 - PHARMA Guidelines
 - IOM report

Industry and Continuing Medical Education

- ◆ With constraints upon marketing, industry redefining role as one of “medical education.”
- ◆ Role of pharma rep as medical educator (with narrow range of expertise).
- ◆ Increased reliance upon (selected) published research in detailing.

Industry and Continuing Medical Education

- ◆ Industry sponsorship/underwriting of CME activities rising rapidly.
 - >\$1.1 billion investment in 2005.
 - Represents 2/3 of total CME expenditures
- ◆ Virtually all physicians, many other clinicians statutorily required to accrue CME hours for relicensure.
 - Ensures market for and attendance at CME

Continuing Medical Education

- ◆ Providers of CME must be accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)
- ◆ ACCME has certified numerous private, for-profit medical education and communication companies (MECCs)
 - May present accredited CME programs.
 - Almost all underwritten by industry.

Continuing Medical Education

- ◆ Relationship between industry and MECCs allows for topic, content, speakers of a CME activity to be dictated by industry.
- ◆ Rules established by ACCME require nominal independence from industry
 - “Unrestricted” educational grants
 - Disclosure of speaker relationships with industry

Clinical Practice Guidelines

- ◆ Guideline development
 - Potential to drive change in practice
- ◆ May be underwritten by industry
 - Conflicts of interest of developers very common
 - May be expected to produce guidelines that increase use of a particular product
 - ❖ ACCP guidelines on DVT/PE (LMWH makers)
 - ❖ Surviving Sepsis Campaign (Eli Lilly)

Ethical Issues in Industry Supported CME

- ◆ Contribution of industry to CME not necessarily unethical.
- ◆ Pharma benefits from clinical practice, contribution to CME could be seen as an obligation or, at least, morally defensible.
- ◆ Ethical conflict arises when industry uses CME to shape physician practice in a way more likely to benefit the industry than the individual patient.

Effects of Industry-sponsored CME

- ◆ Support limits topics presented
 - Focus on new interventions
 - Few discussions of generic therapies, non-pharmaceutical options
- ◆ Alters subsequent physician behavior in manner consistent with sponsor's interest

Katz HP; J Contin Educ Health Prof 2002

Bowman MA; J Contin Educ Health Prof 1988

Continuing Medical Marketing

- ◆ Marketing vs. Medical education
 - Industry participation in CME blurs this distinction.
 - Call for absolute ban
 - ❖ Industry participation makes CME marketing
 - ❖ Physicians should bear cost of own CME
 - Call for tighter regulation
 - ❖ Truly make CME grants unrestricted.

The Future of CME

- ◆ United States Senate
 - Proposed hearing regarding commercial influence in CME
 - Has requested and received information from ACCME
 - Hearing has been delayed due to other more pressing considerations
- ◆ Grassley/Kohl bill to require disclosure of all physician payments from industry, including honoraria for CME.

The Future of CME

- ◆ ACCME Board of Directors (March, 09)
 - Will take no action on call to eliminate industry support of CME
 - Will consider allowing designations of
 - ◆ “Commercial Support Free”™
 - ◆ “Promotional Teacher and Author Free”™
 - Will consider creation of a central repository for industry contributions to CME

The Future of CME

- ◆ Institute of Medicine Report on Conflicts of Interest in Medical Research, Education and Practice. Recommends:
 - “broad-based consensus process to develop a new system for funding high-quality accredited continuing medical education that is free of industry influence.”
 - Notes higher costs for physicians.