

RESOLVING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR CME ACTIVITIES

Purpose: To resolve any conflicts of interests identified from the disclosure forms collected from individuals who are in a position to control the content of CME activities.

Per the Accreditation Council on Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) standards for commercial support, any identified conflicts of interest must be resolved prior to the CME activity. This requirement ensures that the CME activity is independent of any commercial interests and that its purpose and contents are aligned with the best interests of the public.

1. A conflict of interest occurs when an individual discloses that he/she (or an immediate family member) has (1) a relevant financial relationship with a company that occurred within the past 12 months and (2) **and the company and/or its products/services are related to the activity or presentation topic.**
2. Such conflicts must be resolved immediately and prior to the CME activity. Below are some ways to resolve the conflict:
 - (a) Select someone else to control the CME content. For example, if an invited speaker discloses a relevant financial relationship in relation to the CME contents, assign a different speaker who does not have a relevant financial relationship.
 - (b) Change the content of the individual's assignment. For an individual who discloses a relevant financial relationship in relation to the CME contents, change his/her role or assignment to prevent a conflict of interest.
 - (c) If the speaker discloses that he/she is employed by a commercial interest, this person is not permitted to have any role in a CME activity unless it can be demonstrated that he/she:
 - Will not control or present contents about products/services/business lines sold by the company with which they are employed.
 - Will not control of present contents related to the products/services/business lines of the company with which they are employed.
 - Will control or present contents about the science of discovery, physiology, methodology, or quality concepts but not the application of that science to patient care.
3. There are certainly other ways of resolving conflict(s) in addition to those listed above. The objective is to change or remove an individual's control over the CME contents (or change the CME contents) so that the conflict of interest is resolved prior to the activity taking place. **For further guidance and questions about identifying and resolving conflicts of interest, contact AACC's CME Officer (ldunay@aacc.org).**
4. Documentation that each identified conflict of interest was resolved must be included in in section 3.3D of the CME activity application or in a separate document submitted to the CME Officer. Documentation may consist of correspondence with speakers as evidence that the conflict of interest was resolved.
5. The CME Advisory Committee will review all documentation of how all identified conflicts of interest have been resolved before making a final decision on whether or not the activity meets ACCME criteria for CME.