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TO: Planners and Presenters for Accredited Continuing Education Activities

RE: Commercial Influence and Artificial Intelligence in Accredited Continuing Education Content

Commercial Influence

As accreditation guidance and standards become more stringent in the effort to clearly separate accredited education from product promotion, providers of continuing medical education are required to focus on planner and presenter relationships and avoidance of personal preferences or recommendations within their accredited presentations. Of particular concern to the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the national accrediting body, are the areas of commercial entity ownership or employment of planners and presenters, including stock ownership. Notably, owners or employees of a commercial entity are considered to have unresolvable financial relationships and must be excluded from participating as organizers or presenters and must not be allowed to influence or control any aspect of planning, delivery, or evaluation of accredited continuing education, except in limited circumstances*. CME providers have had to become more vigilant of these kinds of relationships in addition to regular disclosure of relationships as has been done for years.

To this end, we remind all planners and presenters of guidelines for CME presentations:

1. Disclose all relationships with companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients to the CME provider at the beginning of activity planning and to the learners prior to your presentation. If you are an owner or employee, you must inform planners and recuse or be reassigned to a topic unrelated to your company relationship.
2. When discussing medications or devices, refer to them using the generic name rather than the brand name. This applies to information on slides as well as spoken information and comments provided during accredited education. This also applies to any live demos with patients that may involve references to therapeutics or devices.
3. Do not show company logos, brand names, or company names in the CME content. When referencing medication and device names or technical applications used for patients, use generic names where possible. All medicines have an approved generic name. Generic names are widely accepted and not reserved for the exclusive use of a specific company. Use the trade name(s) with the generic combination only once (e.g. "Sertraline [Zoloft]"), and afterward, use the generic name only. If you need to list a trade name for educational purposes, use multiple trade names in the same class. Images of products that show brand names should be blurred, covered, or removed.
4. Discuss all medications or devices in a class equally, using generic names.
5. Do not advertise commercial entities' products or your own products, books, practice, etc. within the visual or verbal educational content.

UC CME staff, your activity's course director or designated reviewer and UC physician peer reviewers will be reviewing presentations and will contact you or your program coordinator regarding accreditation edits that are required in your presentation(s). As the accredited provider, the UC CME office bears the responsibility to ensure that activities that are certified for credit meet the criteria and standards of the ACCME. As such, we reserve the right to grant or withdraw final approval of educational materials used for CME activities, depending on compliance with the above guidelines.

***ACCME Exceptions for Excluding Employees:**

There are three exceptions to this exclusion—employees of ineligible (commercial) companies can participate as planners or faculty in these specific situations:

- a. When the content of the activity is not related to the business lines or products of their employer/company.
- b. When the content of the accredited activity is limited to basic science research, such as preclinical research and drug discovery, or the methodologies of research and they do not make patient care recommendations.
- c. When they are participating as technicians to teach the safe and proper use of medical devices, and do not recommend whether or when a device is used.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI tools can enrich educational effectiveness, foster learner engagement, and support data-informed planning and evaluation while maintaining alignment with accreditation standards. The ACCME has released guidance for accredited providers that we encourage you to review as well. They outline seven critical areas:

1. Safeguarding Independence and Mitigating Bias
2. Transparently Disclosing AI Use
3. Ensuring Human Oversight, Accuracy, and Accountability
4. Protecting Learner Identity and Sensitive Information
5. Limiting Prohibited or High-Risk Uses
6. Establishing Internal Governance and Continuous Improvement Practices
7. Securing Databases and AI Systems

Please review the complete document outlining this guidance here:

<https://accme.org/resource/guidance-on-ai/>.

We thank you for your dedication and professionalism as demonstrated by your participation in accredited continuing education.



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