

Kudos to the ADEA and to Dr. Lily T. Garcia

Previous editorials in the JOPR have addressed the issue of Continuing Dental Education (CDE), as well as the relationship between industry-sponsored versus university-sponsored CDE. As you should be aware, the American Dental Association's Continuing Education Recognition Program (CERP) committee has proposed sweeping changes to its guidelines that will, if passed this year, preclude "commercial entities" (i.e., commercial manufacturers) from being CERP providers of educational programming. This will not prohibit them from offering CE, or from providing CDE credit in other ways (e.g., as an AGD PACE provider), but will bring the CERP program closer in line with what our medical colleagues currently do with their continuing medical education programs.

Along these same lines, the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) has just released its "ADEA Guidelines for Academia-Industry Interactions," which makes recommendations on how academic dental schools deal with conflicts of interest with industry-sponsored events. If you do not think this is a major problem, look at what has happened in medicine (and dentistry) in Massachusetts. And, we can thank our very own ACP President, Dr. Lily T. Garcia, as she chaired the ADEA Task Force that developed these guidelines. I received my copy of the recommendations this week and have read them with great interest. The guidelines are ADEA's attempt to define when potential conflicts of interest, and conflicts of commitment, can occur between dental institutions and corporate entities, and to provide guidance on how to be more transparent, and more ethical, in our working relationships with our corporate partners. The complete guidelines can be found at www.adea.org/InteractionGuidelines for your review—please take a few minutes and review these guidelines, and think about the how the ACP might adopt similar guidelines.

The ADEA guidelines cover ten areas of potential conflicts that may occur between industry and academic faculty, staff, and students, as follows:

- Educational grants and trainee (student and resident) scholarships: addresses industry support for scholarships, grants for educational activities, and funds to allow travel to attend conferences.
- Consulting (by faculty) and speaking arrangements: addresses faculty serving as experts, serving on advisory committees, participating as a lecturer at industry-sponsored events, or being paid as a promotional speaker for the manufacturer.
- Authorship and attribution of joint articles, publications, and presentations: addresses publications or presentations

that may officially be credited to someone other than the author (using a faculty member's name on a publication to provide credibility).

- Attendance at industry-sponsored conferences: addresses attendance at industry-sponsored educational meetings, lectures, and conferences for which industry support is prominently disclosed.
- Complimentary samples and/or educational items: addresses product samples provided for patient use or education, or for educating students, staff, dentists, or other health care professionals.
- Industry support for educational conferences and meetings: addresses how industry can best support professional programs without conflict of interest.
- Social events: addresses how gifts, entertainment, recreating, and meals provided by industry colleagues should be managed.
- Site access by industry representatives: addresses lunch-and-learn sessions and whether industry representatives can have access to patient care areas or to students.
- Industry-led training and education: addresses attendance at industry-sponsored training sessions that often include a hands-on component for a specific piece of equipment or for specific product lines.
- All other industry support or contributions: addresses industry-sponsored research grants, capital improvement funding, involvement in educational programs, etc.

As you can see, the guidelines impacting those of us in academics do not apply to those in private practice, who work for and with our corporate colleagues. Fair? Perhaps not. Realistic? Absolutely, as the guidelines are defined for us by both state and federal regulations as well as our local institutional schools; industry guidelines are also being developed to address state and federal mandates. And, while these conflict of interest and conflict of commitment guidelines make working with our corporate partners challenging, I believe them to be a reasonable method for protecting the transparency that should exist between academics and industry. Also, I believe the College should take a careful look at adopting some form of these policies before we are mandated to do so by some outside entity. Simply put, this is coming, whether we like it or not!

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