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European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education

GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL SUPPORT OF CME/CPD EVENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (UEMS-EACCME) recognises the important contribution of the healthcare industry to continuing medical education (CME). In recent years, however, the impact of promotional information on the content of CME activities has received increasing attention and concern.

UEMS-EACCME believes that it is necessary to adopt a principled but balanced approach that will guarantee unbiased CME/CPD as well as promote and enhance cooperation with the healthcare industry for the benefit of physicians, and in turn their patients.

Although the objective of UEMS-EACCME is to preserve the integrity of the medical profession in relation to CME and Continuing Professional Development (CPD), it also recognises the rights of the pharmaceutical and equipment/device industries as business entities to represent their own interests. UEMS-EACCME wishes to avoid conflicts of interest between the medical profession and the industry.

UEMS-EACCME believes in the ethical conduct of those involved in organising medical education, and the following guidelines are meant to be a formal expression of the principles already well known to and accepted by the above mentioned parties.

GUIDELINES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ▶ **A CME/CPD activity has a scientific and educational purpose only. Promotion of specific industry products during the training sessions is not permitted.**

If this principle is not respected, UEMS-EACCME may refuse further accreditation of subsequent events from the same the Provider.

- ▶ **The Provider has the exclusive right to design and to execute the CME/CPD activity. This includes the definition of the scientific programme, choice of speakers, and the content of the course.**
- ▶ **The industry partner granting financial support will have no interference whatsoever with the educational programme.**
- ▶ **In any CME/CPD activity a balanced presentation of the topic must be given.**
- ▶ **The supporting company will be acknowledged on CME/CPD materials as having provided the sponsorship.**
- ▶ **The supporting company must not use the UEMS-EACCME logo or its name in any of its own promotional activities. The company's support is acknowledged directly on the sponsored CME/CPD activity materials. The CME/CPD course materials are supposed to serve specific educational purposes and cannot serve for promotional activities of the supporting company.**
- ▶ **Satellite Symposia will not receive accreditation or CME points**

Disclosure

- ▶ **Speakers have to disclose at the start of their presentation, as well in the abstract book, any existing financial arrangements with any commercial company in the field of Medicine.**

The Disclosure Form has to be signed by Speakers and Organising/Scientific Committee members, be archived by the Provider, and shown to UEMS-EACCME monitors on request (the form can be downloaded from the UEMS-EACCME website)

Exhibits and promotion

- ▶ **If commercial exhibits are planned such arrangements shall not influence planning or interfere with the presentation of the CME/CPD activity.**
- ▶ **Promotional activities must not be held in the CME/CPD course room. The only form of promotion permitted is the acknowledgement, in the programme, that the company has contributed to the educational activity by way of a grant.**
- ▶ **Exhibition area: the companies at the exhibition area must focus on distribution of scientific information and educational material and not on entertainment activities.**

Commercially organised satellite sessions and social events

- ▶ **The accredited CME/CPD event/activity must be clearly distinguished from commercially organised sessions, known as “satellite sessions”.**

These and accompanying social events should not run parallel with the accredited CME/CPD sessions.

Doctors may only claim CME/CPD credits corresponding to the accredited sessions they actually attended.

Financial - Management of funds from commercial supporters

An **unrestricted educational grant** is recommended.

This grant should preferably be paid to the Provider directly without additional conditions. The Providers are independent in their use of contributed funds. In this situation, they receive funds from the commercial company and then pay all expenses, including the honoraria of the faculty.

- ▶ **A written agreement must be made between the supporting company and the Provider of the CME/CPD Programme**, stating that the activity is educational and non-promotional, and that the company will play no role in the design or conduct of the programme.
- ▶ **Transparency** – the Provider must be accountable and, upon request, be able to report information concerning the expenditure of funds received from the supporting industry.

Acknowledgement

- ▶ Educational support can be acknowledged in the CME/CPD activity's promotional brochures, syllabus, final programme and other CME/CPD course materials.

- ▶ Reference in promotional materials to specific products using trade names must be avoided.

Documentation

UEMS-EACCME requires access to the following documentation concerning commercially supported CME/CPD activities:

- ▶ A **basic letter of agreement** between the Provider and the industry sponsor(s) specifying the conditions of acceptance of the educational grant (and the details of the support provided in case of restricted grants) and a clear statement of provider responsibility and independence for planning, content, and execution of the educational activity;
- ▶ The **disclosure of conflict of interest forms**, signed by the speakers and the providers;
- ▶ Any letters and follow-up documents concerning a problem or complaint related to the industry commercial support of the accredited CME/CPD activity.

Independence of the evaluator

- ▶ CME/CPD credits can be granted only by an independent expert without professional or personal relationship to the applicant.
- ▶ The evaluator must confirm that they have no financial conflicts of interest which may relate to their evaluation of the event or attribution of credits.