

**Policies and Procedures**

<b>Title: Commercial Support</b> <i>Policy Number 7144.1</i>	<b>Administrative Approval:</b> Norton Healthcare System CME Committee
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**Statement of Purpose**

As a provider of continuing medical education accredited by the Kentucky Medical Association (KMA) and adhering to the guidelines set forth by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), Norton Healthcare is committed to providing high quality education programs that are independent and free of commercial bias and adhere to the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support.

The ACCME defines commercial support as financial or in-kind contributions given by a commercial interest which are used to pay all or part of the costs of a CME activity. Exhibits and advertisements by commercial entities are not considered commercial support but promotional activities. Please refer to the '*Commercial Promotion and Participation*' policy.

As good stewards of resources, when appropriate commercial support is sometimes received to help offset the expenses associated with the implementation of educational programs. In adherence to ACCME guidelines, all components of educational activities must be independent of all commercial interests and biases.

This policy outlines the requirements and procedures for commercial support when it is provided for continuing medical education activities that are accredited by the Norton Healthcare Office of Continuing Medical Education.

**Overall**

The Office of CME must have full knowledge and approve any commercial support associated with a CME activity. Norton Healthcare must ensure that the following decisions are made independent of commercial interest:

- a) Identification of continuing medical education needs;
- b) Determination of educational objectives;
- c) Selection and presentation of content;
- d) Selection of individuals or organizations in the position to control the content of the CME, including faculty, authors or participants;
- e) Selection of educational methods; and
- f) Evaluation of the activity.

**Agreement**

A Letter of Agreement (LOA) is required between the commercial supporter, CME provider and if applicable the educational partner(s). If support will be given directly to the educational partner(s) or joint provider, the LOA must still include the Office of CME.

The purpose of the LOA is to outline the terms, conditions and purposes of the commercial support. This written agreement must:

- Be signed by the commercial interest and the Office of CME *prior* to the activity taking place;
- Be signed by the joint provider or educational partner (if applicable);
- Specify the commercial interest that is the source of commercial support; and
- Specify the type of commercial support provided; including in-kind if applicable.

An LOA can be written by the commercial supporter but it must describe the terms, conditions and purposes of the commercial support grant and be signed by the commercial supporter, the Office of CME, and if applicable the educational partner(s) or joint provider.

## **Independence**

All aspects of the education program are determined by the Office of CME and/or designated activity planning committee.

- The commercial interest will not require the Office of CME to accept advice or services concerning teachers, authors, or participants or other education matters, including content, as conditions of receiving commercial support.
- The Office of CME and/or designated activity planning committee is responsible for all decisions regarding the identification of educational needs, determination of educational objectives, selection and presentation of content, selection of all persons and organizations that will be in a position to control the content of the CME, selection of education methods, and the evaluation of the activity.
- Educational activities are for scientific and educational purposes only and will not promote any specific proprietary business interest of the commercial interest.
- Representatives of commercial interests are prohibited from engaging in sales or promotional activities while in the space or place of the CME activity.
- Representatives of commercial interests are prohibited from being a member of any activity planning committee.

## **Financial**

The Office of CME will make all decisions regarding the disposition and disbursement of funds received from the commercial interest. The Office of CME will document all receipts and expenses as related to the commercial support.

- The Office of CME will upon request, furnish the commercial interest documentation detailing the receipt and expenditure of the commercial support.
- All commercial support associated with an activity must be approved by the Office of CME.
- No payments are to be given to the director of the activity, planning committee members, teachers or authors, joint sponsor, or any others involved with the supported activity other than those approved by the Office of CME and/or educational partner(s).
- Commercial support can be used to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria, or personal expenses for bona fide employees and volunteers of the provider, joint provider or educational partner.
- Commercial support cannot be used to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria, or personal expenses for non-teacher or non-author participants of a CME activity.

*Note: All expense reimbursement and honorarium payments are to follow the 'Honoraria and Expense Reimbursement' policy.*

## **Notification / Disclosure**

The Office of CME will ensure that the source of support from the commercial interest(s), either direct or in-kind, is disclosed to the participants at the time of the activity.

- Notification of commercial support includes both financial and in-kind. If the support is in-kind, the nature of the support is also to be disclosed to learners.
- Disclosure will not include the logo, the use of a trade name or a product-group message/tag-line of the commercial supporter(s).
- Notification of commercial supporter(s) will be disclosed to learners prior to the activity. Notification may include, but not be limited to information provided via a brochure/flier, Power Point slide prior to the event, etc.

*Note: If a representative from the commercial interest attends the activity, they must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the 'Commercial Promotion and Participation' policy.*