



COMITÉ PERMANENT DES MÉDECINS EUROPÉENS
STANDING COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS



No Tolerance to Corruption

Transparency-based Medicine – what does it mean for Doctors ?

AEMH conference 2016

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Transparency-based Medicine

- ◆ Transparency is an important issue to be tackled...
 - ... because ... do you think doctors are immune to influence ? They are not!
- ◆ It's not only about evident, classical corruption, receiving money or sunny holidays:
 - ... it's also about "normal" influence by industry.
- ◆ We must be aware of this, because this threatens treatments and quality, and also clinical and ethical autonomy.



Transparency – clinical independence

- ◆ We are not immune – nobody – never !
- ◆ Gifts and invitations or grants are not philanthropical actions ...
- ◆ How can we prove this:

Special Article

CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN THE DEBATE OVER CALCIUM-CHANNEL ANTAGONISTS

HENRY THOMAS STELFOX, M.D., GRACE CHUA, M.D., KEITH O'ROURKE, M.B.A., AND ALLAN S. DETSKY, M.D., PH.D.

[H Th Stelfox, MD, G. Chua, MD, K O'Rourke, MBA, A. Detsky, MD, PhD. Conflict of interest in the debate over calcium-channel antagonists. NEJM 1998; 338: 101-105]



Transparency – clinical independence

- ◆ Controversy about safety of calcium-channel inhibitors
 - Articles supportive, neutral or critical about use of inhibitors
 - Financial relationships with manufacturers
- ◆ Articles during 18 months
- ◆ Authors:
 - travel expenses for a symposium
 - honorarium to speak at a symposium
 - support for education, research
 - employment, consultation



Transparency – clinical independence

◆ Results:

- 70 articles – 30 supportive, 17 neutral, 23 critical
- 83% of authors responded
69% of supportive, 91% of critical, $p = 0.02$
- Financial relationship with manufacturers of inhibitors:
96% of supportive, 37% of critical, $p < 0.001$
- Financial relationship with other manufacturers:
100% of supportive, 43% of critical, $p < 0.001$
- Consistent with all types of interaction



Transparency – clinical independence

- ◆ Strong association between opinion and financial relationships.
- ◆ Financial relationships are a reality; they must be disclosed.
- ◆ It is a doctor's duty to remain independent and/or to know his/her limitations.
- ◆ It is a doctor's duty to strive for the best quality.
- ◆ It's the patients right to know what influences his/her doctor.



Transparency and autonomy

- ◆ We can't afford to be naive: the lack of transparency threatens our credibility !
- ◆ In other words: we must be completely clean to be credible.
- ◆ Without credibility, there is no autonomy:
 - clinical
 - political
 - ethical



Transparency and autonomy

◆ Clinical autonomy:

- Therapeutic liberty is essential for our medicine.
- It nourishes the patient-doctor relationship.
- Guidelines must remain guidelines, not more.
- To defend autonomy and remain free, we have to show that we deserve it !
- Transparency is the only way to be convincing !



Transparency and autonomy

- ◆ Credibility and autonomy in the political field:
 - Medicine has a special place in society – it is not just some ordinary economic sector !
 - Medicine needs special consideration in the society and in politics.
 - Requesting respect of these specificities requires being clean, standing to our responsibilities, and actively supporting transparency.



Transparency and autonomy

- ◆ Autonomy in ethics and deontology
 - This facet of our autonomy is also threatened nowadays.
 - Having or establishing our own regulations is important because it guarantees adequate rules that preserve our independence.
 - It is also a patients' right to have independent doctors.
 - Here again, transparency is the only tool we have to defend our autonomy.



CPME Policy on Transparency

- ♦ « The relationship established between a patient and his/her physician is based on mutual trust »
- ♦ The physicians decisions in prescribing or using devices and diagnostic tools may in no way be induced by commercial factors.
- ♦ Collaboration between the medical profession and commercial companies is important and necessary.
- ♦ Transparency of relationships between physicians and the healthcare industry is required, and conflicts of interest are to be avoided.



CPME Policy on Transparency

◆ Gifts:

- Clinical practice and prescribing behavior should not be influenced by payments, gifts or promotional material.
- Physicians may not accept gifts or other benefits from commercial companies unless they are financially insignificant and do not impair their clinical independence.
- Physicians are strongly advised not to accept free medical samples.



CPME Policy on Transparency

- ◆ Meetings and conferences sponsored by commercial companies:
 - Scientific and professional purpose only.
 - Hospitality must be reasonable and strictly limited to the purpose of the event.
 - All sources of funding for such events, and the relationships and commercial interests of lecturers, are publicly disclosed.



CPME Policy on Transparency

◆ CME / CPD:

- Contents and material of CME/CPD activities are designed by the organisers.
- All sources of funding are publicly disclosed.

◆ Faculties and Students:

- Medical faculties must ensure that medical students are not subject to any influence in the course of their medical training by commercial companies.



CPME Policy on Transparency

◆ Research and Publications:

- The content and material of CME/CPD activities and events are designed by the organisers and may not be influenced by sponsoring companies.
- All sources of funding of CME/CPD activities and events are publicly disclosed.

◆ Consultancy activities:

- Must not compromise the clinical autonomy and the ethical duty to take medical decisions independently in the best interest of patients.
- The amount of the fee reflects the services provided.
- Consultancy activities are publicly disclosed when publishing an article or a report, giving a lecture, etc.



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Thank you for your attention !

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