

Procedure for disclosure of potential commercial or professional conflicts of interest by MD Program teachers

Approval body: MD Program Curriculum Committee

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As clinicians and researchers, teachers in the MD Program may have a potential conflict of interest, financial or otherwise, in relation to content they may discuss in the context of teaching. As examples, teachers may have an interest related to a commercial product, a research finding, a company, or special interest group.

Procedure:

All teachers in the MD Program must disclose any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.

1. This includes:
 - those delivering content in large group lectures and small group learning activities, such as symposia, seminars, and tutorials.
 - those preparing or determining content such as course directors, planners, and members of curriculum committees.
2. Teachers of large group lectures are expected to declare any conflicts of interest during the annual teacher recruitment process. Course directors will take steps to ensure that declared conflicts are properly managed in compliance with the Faculty of Medicine *Relationships with Industry and the Educational Environment in Undergraduate and Postgraduate Medical Education*, the University of Toronto *Policy on Conflict of Interest – Academic Staff*, the University of Toronto *Statement on Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment*, and any other relevant documents.
3. For large group lectures, teachers must use the conflict of interest slide template developed by the MD Program, and must verbally present any disclosure at the beginning of each session.
4. Potential conflicts of interest pertinent to course directors or planners must be declared in the overall course description.
5. In less formal settings such as small group learning activities, clinical teaching at the bedside, in the operating room or procedure room, or in ambulatory settings, it is not practical to disclose potential conflicts at the outset of every encounter. However, teachers should be mindful of situations in which the impartiality of their statements could be questioned and disclose any potential conflict of interest in such cases to the students under their supervision.
6. For advice on how to approach these situations, teachers are encouraged to speak with the course director(s) of the courses in which they participate.

This procedure is consistent with the standards articulated in the Faculty of Medicine *Relationships with Industry and the Educational Environment in Undergraduate and Postgraduate Medical Education*, but also recognizes the potential for non-industry-related conflicts of interest.

It is the responsibility of course directors or other faculty members who coordinate teacher recruitment (e.g.

week managers or site directors) to make this procedure known to all teachers.

Education

The MD Program is committed to providing students with education regarding conflict of interest principles and procedures.

Reporting

1. Students who are concerned that an actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest has not been properly disclosed or managed in accordance with these procedures have the option to contact the relevant course director.
2. The course director is responsible for discussing these concerns with the relevant student(s) and teacher(s), and consulting with other individuals as needed to determine if any corrective steps are required. The outcome of these discussions and consultations will be communicated by the course director to the relevant student(s) and teacher(s). The course director will maintain a confidential record of these discussions and consultations, which will be reported in summary format to the Foundations Director or Clerkship Director, as appropriate, and Vice Dean, MD Program.
3. If for any reason the student does not feel comfortable contacting the course director, then the student has the option of contacting the Foundations Director or Clerkship Director, as appropriate, or Curriculum Director, who will be responsible for following the procedures described above.
4. Should the matter not be resolved to the satisfaction of any of the parties involved, the issue will be forwarded to the Vice Dean, MD Program, who will be responsible for discussing the concerns with the relevant student(s) and teacher(s), and consulting with other individuals as needed to determine if any corrective steps are required. The outcome of these discussions and consultations will be communicated by the Vice Dean, MD Program to the relevant student(s) and teacher(s). The Vice Dean, MD Program will maintain a confidential record of these discussions and consultations, which will be reported in summary format to the course director and Foundations Director or Clerkship Director, as appropriate.