



# Policy for Financial and/or In-kind Support of CAR Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activities

Effective January 1, 2020 this policy applies to financial (unrestricted education grants) and in-kind support of accredited Continuing Professional Development activities from all sources, including for-profit, not-for-profit and public sector sponsors. It also applies to conflict of interest declarations relating to facilitator/speaker relationships with for-profit, not-for-profit and public sector organizations.

All CPD activities accredited by the Canadian Association of Radiologists (CAR) are subject to this policy. Additionally, all CPD activities associated with the CAR's learning management system, RAD Academy, are subject to this policy. CPD activities must also comply with the CMA *Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry*, as well as the *National Standards for Support of Accredited CPD Activities* of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and their associated standards for the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program. The intent of this policy, standards and guidelines is to preserve the integrity of accredited CPD activities from the influence of any commercial bias from sponsoring organizations.

When offering CPD activities, the CAR respects the following guiding principles and complies with the requirements outlined therein.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ❖ CPD activities must be free of commercial influence and based on best scientific evidence and focused on improving the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours of learners.
- ❖ CPD providers must ensure that individual physician presenters and speakers deliver current, objective, and scientifically rigorous content.
- ❖ CPD program organizers must avoid promoting, as a member of their profession (peer selling), any service or product for personal gain. This also applies to third party contracting on behalf of industry.
- ❖ The CAR and associated Scientific Planning Committee (SPC) will oversee the needs assessment, program development, compliance with disclosure regulations, and the oversight of the activity in general (content and delivery method). Industry representatives shall not be permitted as members of CPD planning committees.
- ❖ Specific interests of any sponsor must have no direct or indirect influence on any aspect of the development, delivery or evaluation of an accredited CPD activity.

## OVERVIEW

As part of its mandate, the CAR offers CPD activities to its members and target audiences. By accepting unrestricted educational grants from industry outlets, the CAR's membership and associated target audience can benefit from more activities and at lower registration fees; the CAR can reach more participants and offer enhanced resources and material.

This document outlines the CAR's policies and guidelines pertaining to the support of CPD activities or resources by commercial sponsors<sup>1</sup>. These activities or resources include but are not limited to courses, seminars, conferences, workshops, online courses, and the production of learning resources, designed for the participation or use by health professional learners.

## SPONSORSHIP

As an accredited CPD provider, the CAR must maintain professional autonomy and independence in relations with industry.

The primary purpose of CPD and accredited CPD activities is to address the educational needs of physicians and other healthcare professionals in order to improve the healthcare of patients. Accredited CPD activities must be fair, balanced and free of commercial bias.

Acceptable commercial support must be distinct from activities intended to promote the marketing of a particular product and cannot be scheduled to take place at times and locations that interfere or compete with accredited CPD activities.

All funds from a commercial source must be in the form of an unrestricted educational grant payable to the CAR, with no stipulations attached such as selecting faculty, authors, participants, or any matters related to the content. Ideally, events and/or activities should have sponsorship from multiple sources to avoid the perception of ownership that a single commercial source may imply.

### **Commercial interests shall not influence:**

- Identification of learning needs
- Development of educational objectives
- Selection and presentation of content, including speakers
- Selection of any participants that will control the content of and registration for the CPD activity
- Selection of education content methods and/or delivery
- Evaluation of CPD activity
- Participants

The CAR has an obligation to ensure that their interactions with sponsors meet professional and legal standards including the protection of [privacy](#), [confidentiality](#), copyright and contractual law regulations.

The terms, conditions and purposes by which sponsorship is provided shall be clearly indicated in the CAR [Sponsorship Prospectus](#) and/or the *In-Kind Contribution Agreement* and signed by the CAR and/or its associated SPC and the sponsor.

Travel and accommodation arrangements, social events and venues for industry sponsored CPD activities should be in keeping with the arrangements that would normally be made without industry sponsorship. For example, the industry sponsor should not pay for travel or lodging costs or for other personal expenses of physicians attending a CPD event. Furthermore, the travel, lodging or other out of pocket expenses of spouses, partners or other family members of the SPC, speakers, moderators, facilitators, authors or participants cannot be paid for or subsidized by the CAR, sponsor or any organization hired by a sponsor.

This policy applies to any CAR accredited CPD activity and pertains to food, exhibits, and social activities occurring at any such event. Social activities associated with CPD activities cannot occur at the same time or locations that interferes or competes with or takes precedence over accredited CPD activities.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, instrument and device manufacturers, pharmaceutical companies, and service providers.

This policy is in compliance with accreditation criteria of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

## EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Invitations to participate in planning for CPD activities must emanate from the CAR and/or CPD Standing Committee or the Scientific Planning Committee, not from commercial sponsors.

The CAR, in collaboration with speakers, authors and faculty, must ensure programs are fair and balanced. CPD organizers and individual physician presenters are responsible for ensuring the scientific validity, objectivity and completeness of CPD activities, with an emphasis on current knowledge, best practices and quality improvement.

As a condition of receiving financial or in-kind support, the CAR, CPD STANDING COMMITTEE or SPC must not be required to accept advice or services concerning the selection of speakers, authors, participants or other education matters including content, from a commercial sponsor. Specific interests of any sponsor must have no direct or indirect influence on any aspect of the development, delivery or evaluation of an accredited CPD activity or activity associated with RAD Academy.

The selection of topics, speakers and course materials are entirely the responsibility of the CAR and its associated CPD activity organizers. All speakers must be identified and invited by the CAR and/or its planning committee. Furthermore, the choice of speakers, presentation subjects, travel arrangements, registration, expenses and honoraria must all be arranged through the CAR, and not through commercial sponsors or their agents.

Presentation must give a balanced view of all relevant therapeutic options available. In those circumstances where there is only one product or drug, a fair assessment must be presented to the participants. The CAR recognizes that at scientific meetings the application of some devices, materials, or pharmaceuticals that are not Health Canada or FDA approved may be discussed. If specific products or services are mentioned, there is to be a balanced presentation of the prevailing body of scientific information on the product or service and of reasonable, alternative treatment options. If unapproved uses of a product or service are discussed, presenters must inform the audience of this fact. In keeping with the highest standards of professional integrity and ethics, speakers must fully disclose to their audience that there will be discussion of the unlabeled use of a medical device, product, or pharmaceutical that has not been approved for such purpose by Health Canada or the FDA. In accordance with the Royal College's [National Standard](#) requires that any description of therapeutic options utilize generic names (or both generic and trade names) and not reflect exclusivity and branding.

Physicians shall not engage in peer selling. Peer selling occurs when a pharmaceutical or medical device manufacturer or service provider engages a physician to conduct a seminar or similar event that focuses on its own products and is designed to enhance the sale of those products. This also applies to third party contracting on behalf of industry. This form of participation would reasonably be seen as being in contravention of the CMA's Code of Ethics, which prohibits endorsement of a specific product.

## DISCLOSURES AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All members of the SPC, speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors must disclose any commercial affiliations, sponsorships, honoraria, monetary support, contract research and any other potential conflict of interest to the participants in a CPD activity by the CAR.

The CAR and its associated SPC are responsible for reviewing all disclosed financial relationships of speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors in advance of the CPD activity to determine whether action is required to manage potential or real conflicts of interest. If there is a conflict of interest that has rendered the information or session biased, the CAR will undertake efforts, as outlined in the CAR's *CPD Conflict of Interest Policy*, with the assistance of the presenter and related competitors to provide a follow-up balanced presentation to the participants (via electronic or ground mail).

Those responsible for developing or delivering content must ensure that the content and/or materials presented provide (where applicable) a balanced view across all relevant options related to the content area.

All members of the Scientific Planning Committee (SPC), speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors associated with a CAR CPD activity are subject to the CAR's *CPD Conflict of Interest Policy* and must complete a *Disclosure of Conflict of Interest* form.

All members of the SPC, organizers, individual presenters and authors must disclose to the participants their relationships as described above. Disclosures should be made in the course syllabus or handouts and must be included as the second slide in the speaker's presentation. For CPD activities associated with RAD Academy, disclosures shall be included in the course content page and the beginning of the module.

Disclosures should cover relevant relationships over the previous two years, including but not necessarily limited to:

- i. Any direct financial payments including receipt of honoraria;
- ii. Membership on advisory boards or speakers' bureaus;
- iii. Funded grants or clinical trials;
- iv. Patents on a drug, product or device; and
- v. All other investments or relationships that could be seen by a reasonable, well-informed participant as having the potential to influence the content of the educational activity.

## RECOGNIZING SPONSORSHIP AND MANAGING COMMERCIAL PROMOTION

Recognition and acknowledgement of all financial and in-kind support received from sponsors of CPD activities will be disclosed to participants as part of the sponsorship acknowledgement and will be separate from any educational content. Beyond the standard acknowledgement statement of financial and in-kind support, the linking or alignment of a sponsor's name (or other branding strategies) to a specific educational session educational sessions or section of an educational program within an accredited CPD activity is prohibited.

## REFERENCES

The following documents have been employed in the presentation of these statements and form the basis for this policy.

1. Canadian Association of Radiologists Financial Support for CME/CPD Events Policy (2009)
2. Canadian Association of Radiologists CPD Conflict of Interest Policy
3. Canadian Medical Association CMA Policy – Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry (2007) <https://policybase.cma.ca/documents/policypdf/PD08-01.pdf>
4. CMA Policy Canadian Medical Association Code of Ethics (updated 2004) <https://policybase.cma.ca/documents/policypdf/PD04-06.pdf>
5. Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada – National Standard (2018) <http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/documents/continuing-professional-development/national-standard-accredited-activities-e.pdf>
6. Royal College – CPD Activity Standards for the Maintenance of Certification Program (2018, Section 1 and Section 3) <http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/documents/continuing-professional-development/section-1-standards-e.pdf> and <http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/documents/continuing-professional-development/section-3-sap-standards-e.pdf>

| DATE          | VERSION | DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE   |
|---------------|---------|---|
| May 2009      | 1.0     | Last revision date  |
| Nov. 20, 2019 | 2.0     | Language has been updated in accordance with the Royal College <i>National Standard</i> . Additional changes to reflect new CAR brand colours |