

Commercial Support Dos and Don'ts

This fact sheet is brought to you by the Chicago Medical Society as a simple statement of *The Standards of Commercial Support for Continuing Medical Education*, written by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), which authorizes the Chicago Medical Society to grant CME. This may or may not be a complete list of the ACCME standards. For circumstances not covered in the Do's and Don'ts, you are encouraged to consult the ACCME's website at www.accme.org, *The Standards for Commercial Support* included in the application packet and/or call the Chicago Medical Society Education Department at (312) 329-7340.

The DO's

- ⇒ **Do** start discussions with your commercial underwriter at least ninety (90) days before the event.
- ⇒ **Do** create a balanced and fair program where the data regarding the company's products (or competing products) are objectively selected and presented, with favorable and unfavorable information presented.
- ⇒ **Do** disclose any interest your speaker has with the underwriting company or any other entity, in any written announcements, and at the beginning of the activity. Disclose the limits of the research data presented to the best extent possible.
- ⇒ **Do** disclose when a product is not approved/labeled for the use under discussion in the United States.
- ⇒ **Do** allow time for questions and meaningful debate.
- ⇒ **Do** get the company representative to sign and date the letter of agreement and submit it as part of your CME application.
- ⇒ **Do** submit an itemized budget in your application to account for the revenue and expenses for the activity.
- ⇒ **Do** acknowledge commercial support on your meeting notice by writing, "[The Organization] acknowledges an unrestricted grant from Company XYZ for their support of this continuing medical education activity."
- ⇒ **Do** take complete responsibility for the integrity, content and quality of your underwritten CME activity.

The DON'Ts

- ⇒ **Don't** let the company direct the content of the program. You may ask for suggestions for speakers and topics but do not agree to apply for CME for a “ready-made” program a for-profit company has already designed. Your organization and the Chicago Medical Society must be integral in the planning of the activity.
- ⇒ **Don't** let an underwriting company give you or your speaker a “script” to read.
- ⇒ **Don't** allow promotional activities, displays, brochures or samples in the same room at the time of the educational activity or allow promotions in the obligate path of attendees.
- ⇒ **Don't** accept any additional funds from the underwriting company after a letter of agreement has been signed and the complete application has been reviewed by the Chicago Medical Society.
- ⇒ **Don't** accept more money from a company than is reasonably expected to cover the cost of the activity.
- ⇒ **Don't** shy away from commercial support. Many organizations use commercial support as a way to bring top-notch educational opportunities to their physicians and stretch their organization's educational budget. With proper time for course planning and adhering to the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support, underwritten educational activities can be a mutually beneficial arrangement.

Please call the Chicago Medical Society Education Department at 312-329-7340
if you have questions.