

University of Victoria School of Nursing

Position Statement: Pharmaceutical and Health Care Product Marketing

The University of Victoria (UVic) School of Nursing (SON), and all its programs, is committed to excellence in nursing education and practice and the advancement of societal health. To this aim, the SON supports the principle that health care decisions must be based on the best available scientific evidence and that efforts should be made to insulate as much as possible evidence production and clinical decisions from the influence of pharmaceutical and health care product industries (Brennan et al., 2006, Sismondo, 2009; Grundy et al 2016).

One challenge is that the health industry influence is multifaceted and industry-sponsored interventions are highly sophisticated. The SON relies on a broad definition of industry support that is any personal gain a member of the school obtains, directly or indirectly from its interaction with pharmaceutical and health care product industries. Gains can be financial, in-kind or in support for career enhancing research or teaching. It is the responsibility of SON members to be attentive and reflexive as to whether they benefit from industry support.

The SON believes that, as a general principle the industry will only pay for things that it has good reasons to believe has a positive cost/ benefit ratio for itself. Therefore, it is unlikely that any industry-based support is done without any control or intent. In the same way, the evidence suggests that, once there is a personal gain, there is likely a loss of impartiality even if one firmly believes the opposite. Industry support is thus likely to lead to health care decisions in ways that may conflict with the best interests of the being cared for (Katz, Caplan & Merz, 2003; Wazana, 2000).

The UVic SON, and all its programs, will not serve as vehicles for contacting faculty or students, and no aspect of the curriculum will serve as a forum for the promotion or marketing of pharmaceuticals or health care products. With acceptance of this position statement, faculty members strongly encourage students to be intellectually sophisticated in their understanding of pharmaceutical and health care product industries influence and not to engage in any relations with the industry likely to influence their judgement research or clinical practice.

References

- Brennan, T., Rothman, D., Blank, L., et al. (2006). Health industry practices that create conflicts of interest: A policy proposal for academic medical centers. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 295(4), 429-433.
- Grundy, Q., Bero, L. A., & Malone, R. E. (2016). Marketing and the Most Trusted Profession: The Invisible Interactions between Registered Nurses and Industry. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 164(11), 733-739.

Katz, D., Caplan, A., & Merz, J. (2003). All gifts large and small: Toward an understanding of the ethics of pharmaceutical industry gift-giving. *American Journal of Bioethics*, 3(3), 39-46.

Sismondo, S. (2009). Medical publishing and the drug industry: Is medical science for sale? *Academic Matters*, May, 8-12.

Wazana, A. (2000). Physicians and the pharmaceutical industry: Is a gift ever just a gift? *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 283, 373-380.

Approved Grad Ed Committee, January 18, 2013, revised and approved 7 November 2018.

