



Disclosure of Financial Relationship Policy

The American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS) is an accredited provider of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). In 2009, the Society received the highest level of accreditation awarded by the ACCME, "Accreditation with Commendation," as a provider of continuing medical education for physicians. Accreditation with Commendation is awarded to providers that demonstrate exemplary compliance in all 22 criteria. ASTS CME certified activities and all educational initiatives will be developed in strict compliance with the guidelines, policies, and criteria of the ACCME.

In compliance with the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support & Standards to Ensure Independence in CME activities, it is the policy of ASTS that all individuals who are involved in the planning of the CME activity and have the opportunity to affect the content of the CME about the products or services of a commercial interest(s) disclose relevant financial relationships with any commercial interest(s) that have occurred within the past 12 months. A commercial interest is any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. Financial relationships are those relationships in which the individual and/or their spouse/partner benefits by receiving a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria for promotional speakers' bureau, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds), in-kind, or other financial benefit. Financial benefits are usually associated with roles such as employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research), consulting, speaking and teaching, membership on advisory committees or review panels, board membership, and other activities from which remuneration is received or expected. With respect to *personal financial relationships*, contracted research includes research funding where the institution gets the grant and manages the funds and the person is the principal or named investigator on the grant. Disclosure must never include the use of a trade name or a product-group message.

For an individual with no relevant financial relationship(s), the learners will be informed that no relevant financial relationship exists. ASTS will disclose to all learners the individual's relevant financial information, including sources of all support from commercial interests, prior to the beginning of the educational activity. If a conflict of interest is identified, the conflict of interest will be resolved prior to the activity through the ASTS Conflict of Interest Review & Resolution Process.

An individual who refuses to disclose relevant financial relationships will be disqualified from being a planning committee member, speaker, faculty, author, developer, staff, and/or planner, and cannot have control of, or responsibility for, the development, management, presentation, or evaluation of the CME activity.

The intent of this disclosure is not to prevent individuals with relevant financial relationships from planning or delivery of content, but rather to provide learners with information that allows them to make their own judgments. It remains for learners to determine whether financial interests or relationships may influence the activity.

Conflict of Interest Review & Resolution Process

Because the review, identification, management, and resolution process must take place prior to the educational activity, all disclosure information must be submitted by the stated due date in order to ensure CME participation. The ASTS Conflict of Interest Review & Resolution Process screens, reviews, identify, and separates the disclosure information of an individual who has both a financial relationship with a commercial interest and the opportunity to affect the content of CME about the products or services of that commercial interest, which is considered to create actual conflicts of interest (COI). As such, all COI are vetted through a rigorous system to ensure independence. The individual's content, presentation, or relevant materials are analyzed and reviewed in advance by an appropriate peer reviewer, such as a CME committee liaison or program chairs/co-chairs who do not have a conflict of interest. A document is provided as a resolution tool to resolved COI. The reviewer documents his/her findings and sends a letter to the individual with the recommended strategies for resolving conflicts of interest. The strategies may include guiding the individual and requiring using the best available evidence/information. In addition, the resolution tool contains specific questions that are designed to be in compliance with the ACCME's Content Validation Policy and ensure the development of content is free of control of a commercial interest(s) and that the activity will promote improvements in health care and NOT proprietary interests of a commercial interest.



ACCME Content Validation Policy

1. All the recommendations involving clinical medicine in a CME activity must be based on evidence that is accepted within the profession of medicine as adequate justification for their indications and contraindications in the care of patients.
2. All scientific research referred to, reported, or used in CME in support or justification of a patient care recommendation must conform to the generally accepted standards of experimental design, data collection, and analysis.
3. Providers are not eligible for ACCME accreditation or reaccreditation if they present activities that promote recommendations, treatment, or manners of practicing medicine that are not within the definition of CME, or known to have risks or dangers that outweigh the benefits or known to be ineffective in the treatment of patients. An organization whose program of CME is devoted to advocacy of unscientific modalities of diagnosis or therapy is not eligible to apply for ACCME accreditation.

Content

In alignment with the ASTS CME Mission Statement, the activity must be designed to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public, or the profession. The content of CME is that body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession as within the basic medical sciences, the discipline of clinical medicine, and the provision of health care to the public.

ASTS CME Mission Statement

Purpose: To advance the practice and science of life-sustaining organ transplantation by fostering professional competence, performance, patient survival, and quality of life.

Content Areas: Transplantation surgery, medicine, and scientific research practices at major medical centers.

Target Audience: Transplant surgeons, transplant physicians, scientists, and other allied health care professionals.

Types of Activities: Educational activities based on day-to-day practice in transplantation and related immunology. Formats include directly sponsored live courses, jointly sponsored courses, and internet-based enduring activities.

Expected Results: Improved competence, skills, and overall advancement in treatment modalities and improved patient outcomes that offer an increasing number of men, women, and children a new chance at an even longer and healthier life.

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