

Title: Best Practices for Pharmaceutical Industry Interactions

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Referred to: Reference Committee E

House Action: Referred to the Board for Study

Whereas, there have been improvements in the ethical marketing of pharmaceuticals, physicians may unknowingly be promoting unethical behavior within the sales industry, and

Whereas, attendance by non-health care professionals at sponsored events is a clear violation of the PhRMA code, yet some physicians still bring guests who are not health care professionals forcing sales representatives to ask the non-professional to leave or to lie about those in attendance (see <http://www.phrma.org/files/PhRMA%20Code.pdf>), and

Whereas, many pharmaceutical companies now require representatives to obtain witness signatures for samples and some offices deny this practice (or even promise a witness signature and then return the electronic device or sample form already signed) forcing representatives to choose between not promoting their business with samples or falsely reporting that the signing physician was witnessed (see <http://www.pharmrep.com/pharmrep/article/articleDetail.jsp?id=102098>), and

Whereas, providing meals for offices has become one of the only ways to procure quality time with a physician, a practice that is popular with some offices fill their lunch calendar for the entire year within the first week of January, and

Whereas, most pharmaceutical companies gladly sponsor these events if it does in fact guarantee time with a physician however, the purchase of a meal for an office without a physician present is discouraged or even prohibited (see <http://www.pharmexec.com/pharmexec/article/articleDetail.jsp?id=162159>), and

Whereas, ethical physicians should never encourage dishonest practices in another industry; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS adopt the following “best practices for pharmaceutical industry interactions:” (1) do not bring a non-health care professional guest to a pharmaceutical company sponsored event; (2) if samples are accepted, provide a witness signature for those representatives who request it (or simply don’t accept samples); and (3) if a meal is scheduled with the office, show up or if unable to attend, ask staff to cancel it.