



Pharmaceutical Industry Partnership Policy

World Headache Alliance (WHA), a charity registered in England and Wales, is committed to sound, ethical collaboration with commercial and corporate partners. In particular, WHA welcomes the opportunity to work with its partners in the pharmaceutical industry.

This Pharmaceutical Industry Partnership Policy statement exists and functions in conjunction with Commercial Partnership Policy. It will address concerns specific to the relationship between WHA and its pharmaceutical industry partners:

- Equal partnership
- Funding transparency
- Funding Consortiums
- Joint research initiatives
- Criteria for funding
- Product endorsement

Equal Partnership

WHA strives to form relationships with pharmaceutical companies that are based on equal partnership. WHA is not a passive recipient of money but rather works together with pharmaceutical industry on practical initiatives, in the interests of people with headache whom WHA represents. WHA will ensure that such initiatives do not compromise its independence.

WHA and the pharmaceutical industry must be aware that successful partnerships are those where both partners succeed in their objectives, and each should make efforts to understand the internal culture of and external pressures on the other. In particular, WHA recognizes that pharmaceutical companies have to be profitable, and have their own particular marketing agenda. However, WHA will not feel obliged to conform to this agenda nor be steered in its decisions by these pressures. Funding will be rejected if the result would compromise or be perceived to compromise WHA's independence.

Funding transparency

WHA encourages the use of available funding in a transparent manner. Contracts between the parties are encouraged to help in this respect. Recognition of the source of unrestricted educational grants and in-kind product or service donations will be acknowledged in an appropriate manner to ensure transparency to WHA stakeholders.

Funding Consortiums

WHA favors the use of funding consortiums, where possible, composed of two or more companies from the same industry to ensure the development of relationships which are designed not to give one company advantage over another.

Joint Research Initiatives

Joint research initiatives must ensure that the policies of the Association of Medical Research Charities are not contravened and that independence of WHA is not unwittingly eroded. Whenever possible, WHA seeks to be involved in research at the development stage to offer the benefits of the perspective and promote the rights of people with headache.

Criteria for funding

WHA will accept funding from pharmaceutical industry groupings or companies when:

- It believes it will result in benefit to WHA and at least some of our member organisations
- The chairman of Council is satisfied that accepting funding will not court adverse publicity; in case of doubt Council's advice is asked before accepting
- The funder does not try to coerce or influence WHA's policy or actions either explicitly or implicitly
- There is no risk to WHA's good name, its most valuable asset. Both charity law and agreed best practice preclude the exploitation of a charity's name for non-charitable purposes.

Product endorsement

WHA endorses no individual treatments, because people with headache disorders need the widest possible range of treatment options, to integrate them as they wish. These may include medicines, complementary therapies, lifestyle changes, and non-therapeutic products.

WHA encourages active partnership between patient and health professional and discussion of all available options, to promote informed choice by the patient.

Where a drug exists in more than one version, WHA encourages the use of either the scientific name or the several different brand names in WHA communications.

Publications should show impartiality.

WHA supports the proper licensing of medicines and believes that the marketing of non drug treatments to the public requires similar rules and standards.

Review of the policy statement

Trustees will keep the policy statement under review, and, where they decide that there is need to revise or replace the policy statement, they must do so. WHA's Pharmaceutical Industry Partnership Policy will be reviewed annually.

Compliance with the policy statement

WHA will ensure that all its pharmaceutical industry partnerships comply with this policy. In addition, WHA will circulate this policy statement to its members and expects member organizations to adopt practices in keeping with the policy outlined above.

Acknowledgement:

This policy was developed, in part, from Guidelines on working with the pharmaceutical industry outlined by Long Term Medical Conditions Alliance (LMCA), *BMJ* 2003 326(7400): 1208.

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