



# AMERICAN COLLEGE OF RHEUMATOLOGY

**EDUCATION • TREATMENT • RESEARCH**

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES FOR KEY COLLEGE LEADERS**

**Key College Leaders (ACR President, ACR President-Elect, Foundation President, ARHP President and ARHP President-Elect) may not have Direct Financial Relationships with commercial entities during his or her term in office.**

A Direct Financial Relationship is defined as a relationship held by an individual that results in wages, consulting fees, honoraria, or other compensation (in cash, in stock or stock options, or in kind), whether paid to the individual or to another entity at the direction of the individual, for the individual's services or expertise. Commercial Entity is defined as any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. If a Key College Leader directs a commercial entity honorarium or other fee to the College (which includes the ACR, ARHP, and Rheumatology Research Foundation), a charity, or another entity, this is considered a Direct Financial Relationship. The acceptance by a Key College leader of reasonable compensation for serving on an independent data safety monitoring board is not considered a direct financial relationship.

**With appropriate disclosure, a Key College Leader may:**

- 1) own stock or stock options in a commercial entity
- 2) accept research support as long as it is paid to the institution (e.g., academic medical center) or practice where the research is conducted, not to the individual
- 3) receive royalties or similar fees relating to patents or other intellectual property from a commercial entity.

**In addition, Key College Leaders shall not participate in the following:**

**A: SUPPORT (GIFTS AND GRANTS)** – This includes direct solicitation of funding by the officer from commercial entities for their colleagues, practice or department.

### **B: CONSULTING/SERVICE**

- 1) National leadership including serving as an officer and/or member of the board of directors in organizations that have competing interests with the College in fundraising, advocacy, or education, including, for example, nonprofits, medical or scientific organizations, except as representatives of the College
- 2) Members of or consultants to FDA Advisory Committee on medications or devices, except as a representative of the College
- 3) Participation in commercial entities speaker bureaus
- 4) Presentations at educational programs managed or directed by commercial entities
- 5) Participation as a consultant or as a member of a scientific advisory board for commercial entities, on steering committees for clinical trials or similar activities sponsored by commercial entities
- 6) Participation as an advisor or medical/scientific consultant for a financial organization

## **C: AUTHORSHIP/PRESENTATION**

- 1) Authorship of articles of opinion or reports or reviews of research regarding - studies sponsored by commercial entities in a journal that is non-peer reviewed or operated by a commercial entity (except as a College spokesperson).
- 2) Authorship of commentaries or editorials on trials sponsored by a commercial entity (except as a College spokesperson).
- 3) Speaker, panelist, chair or moderator for a presentation on behalf of a study sponsored by a commercial entity.
- 4) Use of College title or position for non-College sponsored advocacy without explicit permission from the ACR Board of Directors
- 5) Presenting author of commercial entity-sponsored research at ACR, ARHP and/or Foundation meetings
- 6) Authorship of written or electronically produced or distributed material for a commercial entity

## **D: AWARDS**

- 1) Receipt of a new ACR, ARHP or Foundation award or grant
- 2) Sponsorship including letters of endorsement of individuals for the ACR Awards of Distinction, ARHP Awards of Merit and Foundation awards and grants.

## **E: EXPERT WITNESS TESTIMONY**

- 1) Begin an engagement to provide expert witness testimony on malpractice, intellectual property, or product liability during their tenure in those positions (except as a spokesperson for the College). If the key society leaders are already engaged in providing expert witness testimony in an active case, they may consult the Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest who will make a recommendation to the ACR Board of Directors regarding whether to continue because there may be circumstances in which serving as an expert witness is not in the best interests of the College.

### **The ACR/Foundation Secretary and Treasurer and the Rheumatology Research Foundation Vice President shall not:**

- 1) hold a position of national leadership in organizations that have competing interests with the College in fundraising, advocacy, or education, including for example, nonprofits, medical or scientific organizations, except as a representative of the ACR and/or Foundation
- 2) participate in College discussions and/or vote on matters relating to their direct financial relationships (as defined above)

## **NOTE:**

These guidelines supplement the standard conflict of interest disclosure form required of all ACR volunteers.

It is impossible to cover every contingency regarding potential financial and non-financial conflict of interest in these guidelines. In particular, **non-personal financial interests** (involving payment or other benefit to a department or organization in which the individual is employed but which is not received personally) and **personal non-financial interests** (such as an opinion or viewpoint that precludes consideration of alternative views) warrant disclosure and consideration by the appropriate committee or board leadership with advice from legal counsel.

Because each officer's individual circumstances are unique, exceptions to these guidelines may be considered by the Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest who will make a recommendation to the ACR Board of Directors.

**Reviewed and Updated by the Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest July 2016**

**Approved by ACR Board of Directors August 2016**