

**Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Policy and Procedure**

POLICY NUMBER 1.7

POLICY NAME Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Dissociation Policy

DATE OF ORIGIN November 2009

PURPOSE To further the educational, scientific and charitable purposes for which it was organized and to maintain the excellent reputation in which it is held by the public and the medical profession, it is important that Society decisions and actions not be influenced unduly by any special interests of its leaders or individual members.

Key principles applied in developing this policy include those that center upon when such conflicts should be restricted and/or limited and how best to maintain transparency about and manage any potential conflicts management strategies. This revised policy is intended to clarify definitions of conflicts of interest and commitments, restrictions on conflicts, disclosure of conflicts and management of disclosed conflicts.

POLICY 1.0 1.1 The Society depends upon its members to shape its policies and the actions of those members in shaping such policies must not be inappropriately affected by outside influences. Therefore, it has always been and continues to be important to identify actual or potential conflicts of interest and commitments which might improperly affect Society activities and decisions

STANDARDS/ CRITERIA 2.0 2.1. *Definition of a Conflict of Interest.*

A conflict of interest is defined as an interest held by a member or an immediate family member or a business associate that could influence the member or be perceived as influencing the member to act contrary to the interests of the Society and for the member's own personal benefit or for the benefit of an immediate family member or business associate.

For purposes of this policy, an immediate family member is defined as a member's spouse, children, parents, siblings and brothers/sisters-in-law. For the purposes of this policy, a business associate is defined as an individual who has a business relationship with the member outside of the confines of the member's medical practice that provides unspecified services or goods.

2.2 *Definition of a Conflict of Commitment*

A conflict of commitment occurs when the commitment to external activities of a member adversely impacts, or appears to impact, his or her capacity to meet their responsibilities to the Society. This form of conflict is typically recognizable through a perceptible reduction of the individual's time, focus, and/or energy devoted to Society activities to which the individual has committed.

2.3 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interests and Commitments

The President, all Executive Committee members, the Program Committee Chairs, other committee/task force volunteer members, the CEO and senior administrative staff will be required to complete, sign and submit to the Society on an annual basis a Disclosure of Conflict of Interests and Commitments form upon appointment to an elected office or upon appointment to a committee, task force, or other volunteer position.

Disclosures must be updated during a covered year when a member has a substantial change in conflicts of interests or commitments. The content of the form may be amended periodically by the Board. The CEO and his designees will develop a process to audit a prespecified percentage of submitted Conflict of Interests forms to assure disclosed conflicts do not exceed restriction limits.

2.4 Restrictions on Conflicts of Interests and Commitments

Restriction and/or limitation of conflicts of interests or commitments for Society leaders and volunteer members is intended to free said leaders and members of any potential criticism regarding decisions being made on behalf of the Society.

The following lists restrictions and limitations of conflicts as they apply the various leadership and volunteer member positions within the Society.

a) The President:

- May participate in scientific research, including service as an investigator on a grant, clinical trial, or clinical trial steering committee.
- May hold position(s) in other professional societies or relevant national organizations (e.g. ABOG, ACGME, etc.). Such commitments to external activities should not adversely impact, or appear to impact, his or her capacity to meet his/her responsibility to the Society, which should be their primary focus.
- May hold editorial positions.
- May participate in advisory boards sponsored by a health-related business during their term of office but shall not accept personal compensation. Reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses is allowed. Full disclosure of such activity is still required.
- May not during his/her term of office hold officer, director, managerial, employment, consultant, or any other position, whether or not compensated, with any health-related business defined as a for-profit entity that produces, markets, or distributes drugs, devices or services used by members of the Society in the treatment of patients. He/she would be allowed to take an unpaid leave of absence from such positions during their term of office.
- May not participate as spokespersons for any such health-related business concern through an industry speaker's bureau and may not present at educational programs sponsored, funded, managed or directed by such a health-related business during their term of office.

b) Executive Committee members (including the President-Elect I, President-Elect II, Immediate Past President, Secretary Treasurer, Secretary Treasurer elect, and FWC Chair) and Board of Director members:

- May participate in scientific research, including service as an investigator on a grant, clinical trial, or clinical trial steering committee.
- May hold position(s) in other professional societies or relevant organizations. Such commitments to external activities should not adversely impact, or appear to impact, his or her capacity to meet their responsibility to the Society, which should be their primary focus.
- May hold editorial positions.
- May during their term of office participate as a spokesperson for any such health-related business through an industry speaker's bureau and may receive salary, consulting fees, honorarium for advisory boards, royalties or any other form of compensation that **cumulatively does not exceed \$25,000 on an annual basis.**

c) The Program Committee Chairs:

- May participate in scientific research, including service as an investigator on a grant, clinical trial, or clinical trial steering committee.
- May hold position(s) in other professional societies or relevant organizations. Such commitments to external activities should not adversely impact, or appear to impact, his or her capacity to meet their responsibility to the Society, which should be their primary focus.
- May hold editorial positions.
- May participate in advisory boards sponsored by a health-related business during their term of office but shall not accept compensation. Reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses is allowed. Full disclosure of such activity is still required.
- May not during his/her term of office hold officer, director, managerial, employment, consultant, or any other position, whether or not compensated, with any health-related business defined as a for-profit entity that produces, markets, or distributes drugs, devices or services used by members of the Society in the treatment of patients. He/she would be allowed to take an unpaid leave of absence from such positions during their term of office.
- May not during their term of office participate as a spokesperson for any such health-related business through an industry speaker's bureau and may not present at educational programs sponsored, funded, managed or directed by such a health-related business.

d) Other Society committee and task force volunteer members and any others holding leadership or volunteer member positions in the Society:

- May participate in scientific research, including service as an investigator on a grant, clinical trial, or clinical trial steering committee.
- May hold position(s) in other professional societies or relevant organizations. Such commitments to external activities should not adversely impact, or appear to impact, his or her capacity to meet their responsibility to the Society, which should be their primary focus.
- May hold editorial positions.
- May individually receive salaries, consulting fees, honorarium for advisory boards, royalties or any other form of compensation that **cumulatively does not exceeds \$50,000** on an annual basis.

The Society's Chief Executive Officer and senior administrative staff:

- May hold position(s) in other professional societies or relevant organizations. Such commitments to external activities should not adversely impact, or appear to impact, his or her capacity to meet his/her responsibility to the Society, which should be their primary focus.
- May not hold officer, director, managerial, employment or any other position, whether or not compensated, with any health-related business.
- May not individually receive salaries, consulting fees, honorarium for advisory boards, royalties or any other form of compensation from a health-related business during their terms of office.
- May not participate as spokespersons for any such health-related business through an industry speaker's bureau, advisory board, or otherwise and may not present at educational programs sponsored, funded, managed or directed by such a health-related business concern.

**OPERATIONAL
PROCEDURE
3.0**

3.1 Recusal from Abstract Deliberations

a) The Program Committee chairs and members must recuse themselves from any deliberations regarding abstracts in which they are included as an author that are being considered for presentation in any format at any SGO sponsored meeting.

b) The Program Committee chairs must recuse themselves from any deliberations regarding abstracts being considered for presentation in any format at any SGO sponsored meeting in which the subject matter relates to a health-related business advisory board attended by the chair(s).

3.2 Management of Potential Conflicts of Interest and Commitments

a) The CEO and staff designees of the Society shall review the Disclosure of Conflict of Interests and Commitments forms or any verbally or other written reported perceived conflicts following the annual call for volunteers. This review will take place in December/January. This includes review of COIs for Annual Meeting Program Chairs.

- i. Ethics staff liaison will track and review COIs received during the annual committee and taskforce appointment process. Any necessary reminders for volunteers to accept their appointment and complete a COI shall be sent via Informz and come from the President Elect I.
- ii. Ethics staff liaison will identify those with potential conflicts and provide to CEO
- iii. CEO and Ethics staff liaison will advise the Conflict of Interest and Commitment Committee (COICC) of potential conflicts.

b) The COICC, consisting of the Immediate Past-President, the Secretary-Treasurer and the CEO, shall review all potential conflicts.

c) The COICC will alert any individual(s), the SGO President and appropriate committee/taskforce leadership and staff liaison(s) if potential conflicts are identified.

d) The COICC will provide a written recommendation to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors during the February Board meeting.

3.3 Management of involved member(s) during deliberations regarding potential conflicts of interests or commitments may include the following options:

- a) The member can remain in the room and participate fully in all discussions when a situation is deemed not a conflict or if the conflict is resolved prior to future meetings;
- b) The member can remain in the room and participate fully in the discussion involving a realized conflict but not vote;
- c) The member can remain in the room but not participate in the discussion or vote involving a realized conflict;
- d) The member can provide his or her opinion regarding a realized conflict but must leave the room while the matter involving the realized conflict is discussed and voted upon;
- e) The member must remain out of the room while a realized conflict is being discussed and voted upon.

3.4 Recommendations regarding conflicts of interests may include the following options:

- a) The member can participate fully in all Society activities when a situation is deemed not a conflict of interest or if the conflict is resolved prior to future meetings;
- b) The member must resign or divest from the realized conflict.

3.5 Recommendations regarding conflicts of commitments may include the following options:

- a) The member can participate fully in all Society activities when a situation is deemed not a conflict of commitment or if the conflict is resolved prior to future meetings;
- b) The member must reduce external activities to the extent that they do not interfere with the member's present commitments to the Society;
- c) The member will be asked to resign from present positions within the Society and a replacement should be appointed

Any member who disagrees with a Board approved recommendation or who has resolved said conflict should notify the CEO who will forward the information to the Conflict of Interest and Commitment Committee for further deliberation and possible reversal of recommendations.

Revisions:
April 2020
July 2020