

14 September 2022

**Consultation – *Doctors and health-related commercial organisations***

Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa|Medical Council of New Zealand (the Council) is reviewing its statement on *Doctors and health-related commercial organisations* and is seeking your input:

* You will find the proposed draft statement on *Doctors and health-related commercial organisations* here.
* The existing statement (July 2012) is available [here](https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/standards/e77cce6f24/Doctors-and-health-related-organisations.pdf).

**Key points at the outset of the statement**

We have added a summary box at the beginning of the statement which contains the following key points:

* There is a potential for health-related commercial organisations to influence how doctors practise and the clinical decisions they make. It is important that you recognise this potential influence and take appropriate steps to manage any bias or conflicts of interest that may arise from your interactions with health-related commercial organisations.
* Health-related commercial organisations and doctors have different objectives and interests. Generating a profit is a principal goal for many commercial organisations. However, your primary concern as a doctor must always be the care of your patients.
* Integrity and transparency are vital. Ensure that, at all times, your conduct and decisions justify your patients’ trust in you, and the public’s trust in the profession.

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| 1. **Do these key points provide an accurate overview of the statement? What changes (if any) should we make to the key points?**
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**Terms we use in this statement**

At the outset of the statement, we define the following terms which are used in the statement:

* Bias
* Conflict(s) of interest
* Duality of interests
* Health-related commercial organisations
* Products
* Someone you have a close relationship with.

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| 1. **Are the terms clear and fit for purpose? What changes (if any) should we make?**

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**Principles to consider when you interact with health-related commercial organisations**

We discuss six principles that doctors should consider when navigating ethical issues that arise from interacting with health-related commercial organisations:

1. Integrity is a key aspect of your professionalism as a doctor.
2. Prioritise your patient’s interests ahead of your own.
3. Be open and transparent about your relationships and interactions with health-related commercial organisations.
4. Critically appraise information from health-related commercial organisations.
5. Any payment or benefit you receive from a health-related commercial organisation must be documented and disclosed.
6. Beware of the potential to overtreat.

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| 1. **Are there any changes we should make to ‘Principles to consider when you interact with health-related commercial organisations’?**
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**Areas where you may have to manage conflicts of interests**

This section applies the principles in the previous section of the statement. We have expanded the existing statement in the following areas:

* *When referring patients to a facility you own or have a financial interest in*
* *When selling products to patients*
* *Meetings and educational events supported or sponsored by health-related commercial organisations*
* *When working for, or providing consultancy services to, a health-related commercial organisation.*
* *When engaging in research*
* *When you are in a governance or leadership role with a health-related commercial organisation*

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| 1. **Is the guidance in ‘Areas where you may have to manage conflicts of interest’ clear, appropriate and practical? What changes (if any) should we make?**

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**Any other feedback**

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| 1. **Please provide any other comments you may have about *Doctors and health-related commercial organisations.***
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**Consultation process**

Your input and feedback are important to us. We invite you to review the draft statement and give us your views on our proposed changes. Please use the online form provided. Alternatively, you can email your submission to consultation@mcnz.org.nz.

The consultation closes on **17 October 2022**.