



CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY¹

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- The CTS mission is to promote lung health by supporting the respiratory community through leadership, collaboration, research, education and advocacy, and promoting the best respiratory practices in Canada. It aims to carry out this mission in accordance with the highest ethical standards.
- The CTS supports the principles outlined in Canadian Medical Association's Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry (2007) and the CMA Code of Ethics (2004).¹
- The primary objective of professional interactions between physicians and industry and medical organizations and industry should be the advancement of the health of Canadians.² The CTS supports this principle and also recognizes the obligations of physicians to:
 - resist any influence or interference that could undermine professional integrity
 - recognize and disclose conflicts of interest that arise in the course of professional duties and activities, and resolve them in the best interest of patients³
- The CTS recognizes that conflicts of interest can arise from relationships with commercial organizations as well as other organizations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

The CTS is committed to the disclosure and management of real and potential conflicts of interests within its ranks to ensure that all of its activities are carried out in an ethical manner and are free of bias and the appearance of bias.

¹ In order to adhere to RCPSC standards for accredited providers we must “The organization has adopted and integrated the CMA guidelines governing the relationship between physicians and the pharmaceutical industry, including written policies and procedures that govern funding arrangements, educational planning and ethical aspects of CPD events.”

² CMA Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry

³ CMA Code of Ethics

All members of the CTS Board of Directors and members of committees/assemblies or projects must complete and submit a CTS Conflict of Interest Disclosure form as follows:

Position	Form Filling Frequency	Additional requirement
Member, Board of Directors Member, Executive Committee	- Upon appointment - Annual review	Changes in status causing a real or potential conflict of interest (pertaining in particular to the current affairs of the Board or Executive Committee) must be disclosed at the beginning of each meeting. Standing agenda item.
Member, CRGC Member, clinical assemblies or working groups that are developing guidelines, position statements or other guideline-related documents and tools	- Upon appointment - Annual review - Review prior to the publication of documents	Changes in status causing a real or potential conflict of interest (pertaining in particular to the current affairs of the committee) must be disclosed at the beginning of each meeting. Standing agenda item.
Canadian Respiratory Conference Scientific Program Committee members ⁴ CTS E-CME program committee members	- Annually or at the beginning of the planning process of each program, if no form on file for current period	Changes in status causing a real or potential conflict of interest (pertaining in particular to the current affairs of the program committee) must be disclosed at the beginning of each meeting. Standing agenda item.
Canadian Respiratory Conference Speakers and Moderators CTS E-CME program developers	Prior to each conference or at the beginning of the development of a CTS E-CME program	All faculty are required to start their presentation by disclosing any or no financial interest or other forms of relationships that could be considered a conflict of interest by participants. Such disclosure must be included in the opening slides of each presentation, followed by a verbal acknowledgement ⁵

⁴ “The physician organization(s) must disclose to participants all financial affiliations of faculty, moderators or members of the planning committee (within the past two years) with any commercial organization(s), regardless of its connection to the topics discussed or mentioned during this event.” RCPSC, Application for Approval of Accredited Group Learning Activities

⁵ In order to comply with RCPSC standards for accredited providers, we must have “approved and implemented written policies describing how conflicts of interest are shared with participants at CPD events, as well as implemented a process to evaluate potential bias.”

Position	Form Filling Frequency	Additional requirement
Research Committee or working groups reviewing funding applications	Annually or prior to the beginning of an application review process if no form on file for current period	Changes in status causing a real or potential conflict of interest (pertaining in particular to the current affairs of the committee) must be disclosed at the beginning of each meeting. Standing agenda item.
CTS Standing Committees or Ad Hoc Committees	Annually	Changes in status causing a real or potential conflict of interest (pertaining in particular to the current affairs of the committee) must be disclosed at the beginning of each meeting. Standing agenda item.

The chair, speakers and moderators of the CTS Scientific Program at CHEST must sign the conflict of interest form of the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP CHEST Faculty Agreement), which is considered equal to or more stringent than the CTS form. It is not necessary that they sign the CTS form, but copies of the ACCP forms will be requested and submitted to the chair of the CTS Scientific Program.

The CRC third party conference organizer may develop a dedicated form for the conference, provided the form includes all the pertinent information and sections included in the standard CTS COI form.

Occasionally, CTS members working on collaborative projects with other organizations may complete the COI forms developed by those organizations. If those forms are deemed to be equal or more stringent than the CTS form, it will not be necessary for members to fill in the CTS form.

DEFINITION – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The CTS defines a conflict of interest as follows:

A) Relationships with Commercial Organizations

Any financial relationship can be a potential conflict when the individual (or members of the individual's family) benefits by receiving a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria, ownership interest (eg, stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds), or other financial benefit. Financial benefits are usually associated with roles, such as employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research), consulting, speaking and teaching, membership on advisory committees or review panels, board membership, and other activities for which remuneration is received or expected. There is no set minimum dollar amount for financial relationships to be considered significant; therefore, any amount is considered an incentive to maintain or increase the value of a possible commercial entity.

B) Relationships with other organizations

Real or potential conflicts of interests may also arise when the individual is involved in other organizations such as governmental entities, foundations and other organizations or associations (provincially and nationally), whether or not that relationship involves a financial benefit for the individual. The individual's relationship with other organizations might cause, and/or appear to cause them to act in a manner at odds with the CTS or against the best interests of the CTS.

C) Other conflicts

Other unforeseen real or potential conflicts of interest may arise and would be dealt with as they occur.

ADMINISTRATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Forms will be submitted to members of the CTS Board of Directors and applicable committees/assemblies, and collected by a staff person appointed by the CTS Executive Director. The staff person will submit a summary of the COI forms to the relevant committee chair who determines whether or not any real or potential conflicts exist. The summary of COI forms completed by committee chairs and board members would be submitted to the CTS President for review.

The intent of the policy is not to prevent individuals from being involved in CTS activities. However, under certain circumstances, the chair of the committee or CTS President will ask individuals who have a real or perceived conflict of interest to recuse themselves from specific topic discussions, voting on a motion, delivering a lecture or participation in general.

If it appears that an identified conflict of interest would be of a nature that cannot be resolved by disclosure and/or the recusal from activities as described above, the matter will be referred to the CTS Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee will determine what action should be taken to ensure that CTS activities, decisions, publications and statements remain free of influence by commercial or other organizations and interests, and free of any perception of such influence. Refusal to sign a disclosure form would result in expulsion from the committee in question or Board of Directors.

This Conflict of Interest Policy and the disclosure forms will be reviewed at least every five years. Completed conflict of interest forms will be kept for the duration of the CTS accreditation period (three to five years).

¹ *Approved in principle by the CTS Board, October 26, 2008*
Formally approved by the CTS Executive, February 3, 2009
Revisions approved by the CTS Board of Directors, October 20, 2012

In order to comply with RCPSC standards for accredited providers, we must “conduct (a review) at least once in each accreditation period, or every 3-5 years for organizations that have not previously been accredited”