

NCCN CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES FIREWALL POLICY

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN®) clinical practice guidelines program is the foundation upon which the organization's core activities arise. NCCN imposes strict policies to shield the guidelines development processes from improper influences because of the importance of the guidelines, guidelines credibility and their impact. The "firewall" surrounding the NCCN guidelines processes includes: (1) financial support policies; (2) panel participation and communication policies; (3) guidelines disclosure policies; and (4) policies regarding relationships to NCCN's other business development activities.

Financial Support Policies

NCCN does not accept any form of industry or other external financial support for the guideline development program. Guideline development includes panel meetings and deliberations, evaluations of evidence, and development of content. The guidelines are supported exclusively by the Member Institution's dues. NCCN does accept financial support for distribution of the guidelines for which the intellectual integrity is safeguarded by use of copyright.

Panel Participation and Communication

NCCN has adopted a strong policy regarding disclosure of potential conflicts of interest, especially financial, and exclusion of individuals with substantial financial conflicts of interest from panel membership. Panel members are excluded from deliberations involving situations where they have a meaningful financial or other conflict of interest. These policies require ongoing public disclosure on individual conflicts of interest on the NCCN website and verbal disclosure during panel meetings. Panelists are recused from any and all panel deliberations when they have significant financial relationships or other significant conflicts relating to the subject matter under discussion. Panel chairs may not participate in any industry promotional activities such as speakers bureaus.

Guidelines panel meetings are confidential and are attended only by guidelines staff, panel members, and rarely invited individuals with special expertise of value to the panel. Panel members are prohibited from communicating with non-panel members about panel deliberations or changes in the guidelines prior to their formal release. Representatives from industry or payers are not allowed to participate in any panel meeting.

Guidelines Disclosure

Guidelines and updates of guidelines are embargoed from disclosure by any party until they are released publicly, first on the NCCN website and then in NCCN's Flash Updates, a subscription product which constitutes public distribution. NCCN may share Guidelines and updates with its licensees when such sharing will assure more timely integration and dissemination of the guidelines. In any such circumstances, the licensee agrees to abide by the embargo policy.

Relationship with Business Development

NCCN is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education and adheres strictly to their standards for industry influence-free CME. With the exception of recommending clinical faculty or participating as a faculty member in limited circumstances, NCCN guidelines staff does not participate in the planning or management of NCCN non-CME eligible activities including but not limited to non-physician Advisory Boards, NCCN Pharmaceutical and Biotech Academy, or Sponsorships.