



Good Samaritan FAQs about Balance

Brand Names, Commercial Interests, and Independent Education

**The first step to ensuring balance is to review the disclosures of the person(s) responsible for the content. If there is a relevant commercial relationship, additional steps may be required to ensure the CME activity is compliant¹.*

Q. Is it ok for a speaker to include brand names or product images in the presentation?

A. Yes, according to the ACCME brand names may be included in a presentation, as long as other brand names are also referenced. *If the speaker is advocating for one brand only, this may raise red flags.* Referencing generic names is recommended.

Q. I am showing a video of a procedure and it includes a shot of a piece of branded equipment. Is this ok?

A. Yes, as long as the speaker is discussing technique or therapeutic applications, and is not advocating for one brand or device.

Q. Is it ok for a presenter to use slides, graphical images or videos created by a commercial interest?

A. No. All aspects of the presentation must be controlled by Good Samaritan faculty and therefore using slides, graphical images or videos from a commercial interest is not compliant. According to the ACCME, *"an accredited provider is prohibited (by SCS1) from using material developed by an ACCME-defined commercial interest, if the content is related to business lines of the commercial interest."*

Q. We need training on a device used in our hospital. We are only allowed to purchase X brand device. Is it ok to give CME for training on this device?

A. Maybe. It depends on who plans and implements the training. In some instances, it makes more sense for the company representative to provide technical training on the operation of the device. In this case, the training would not be eligible for CME credit. However, in some instances, a health professional who is also an expert in the use and application of the device in patients may provide the training. If the educational activity is developed independently of company X, within the framework of the ACCME guidelines, it can be compliant.

¹ http://www.accme.org/sites/default/files/null/SCS%20Toolkit%202020_344_Identifying_and_Resolving_COI_20120207.pdf



Good Samaritan Hospital

A Tradition of Caring

Q. We were talking with the company that produces X device and they said that if that we offer CME training to our staff, they would give us a grant. Is this compliant?

A. No. CME activities must be planned independently from all commercial interests. This includes the suggestions of topics and faculty members, as well as tying support to the production of certain activities.

Q. John Smith, MD, has relationships with Company Y and they will give us a grant if we invite him to speak. Is this compliant?

A. No. As above, CME activities must be planned independently from the solicitation of commercial grants. You may not select faculty or topics because of the possibility of support. The ACCME provides the following as an example of **non-compliance**: *"A potential speaker is identified as preferred for several attributes, including the fact that she may have a relationship with a commercial interest (the same company from which commercial support would be solicited)."*

Q. Jane Smith, MD, has a commercial relationship with Company Z and she has performed a scientific study on their device or drug. Can she present the results of her research?

A. Maybe. The planners of the activity would need to determine if her relationship presented a conflict of interest and if yes, appropriately manage this conflict. After that, if the planners of the activity believe Dr. Smith's research falls within the definition of CME and ACCME content validity rules **and** the presentation includes a discussion about other therapeutic options, it would most likely be compliant. The ACCME provides the following as an example of **non-compliance**: *"An enduring material CME activity focused on the clinical trials of a single drug made by the commercial supporter. The activity did not present a discussion of other therapeutic options."*

Q. May an employee of a commercial interest participate as a planner/presenter in a CME activity?

A. Maybe, if the employee is presenting on a topic totally unrelated to what their company manufactures or produces. This topic is discussed extensively on the ACCME website (see <http://accme.org/ask-accme/can-provider-allow-oral-or-written-reporting-scientific-research-employee-commercial>) but will require additional discussion and documentation by Good Samaritan CME staff. Please contact Andrea Harrow for more information.