**POLICY**

The use of employees of ACCME-defined commercial interest (or their spouse or partner) as planners, faculty, or other roles where they are in a position to control content of accredited CME **is prohibited**, except in the specific circumstances identified by the ACCME that maintain independence and serve the public interest. The ACCME defines a commercial interest as any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients.

This policy also applies to a spouse or partner who is an employee of an ACCME-defined commercial interest. Since spouses and partners must be considered as a single unit, if an individual discloses that their spouse or partner is an employee of an ACCME-defined commercial interest, then the individual must be considered an industry employee and appropriate measures as listed below must be taken to ensure independence. Wherever the words “employee” or “employee of an ACCME-defined commercial interest” are presented in this policy, the requirements also apply to a spouse or partner who is an employee of an ACCME-defined commercial interest.

There are ***three*** specific circumstances where employees of an ACCME-defined commercial interest may participate in a CME activity:

1. The content is not related to the business lines or products of their employer.
2. The content is limited to basic science research (e.g., pre-clinical research, drug discovery) or the processes/methodologies of research, unrelated to a specific disease or compound/drug.
3. The employee serves as a technician to teach the safe and proper use of a medical device. The employee may have no control over the content that is related to clinical recommendations concerning the business lines or products of their employer.

***Each circumstance must be reviewed and approved by Harvard Medical School’s Department of Continuing Education prior to the beginning of the activity.***

***An employee of a commercial interest may not present content that relates to the business lines or products of its employer in an accredited CME activity.***

***Process to Allow an Employee of a Commercial Interest to Participate in a CME Activity***

The following mechanisms are in place to ensure that an employee of a commercial interest cannot control or influence the content of continuing medical education and to ensure compliance with the ACCME Standards for Commercial SupportSM.

1. The Course Director should indicate in the Activity Proposal that an employee of a commercial interest may be recruited to participate in the activity. If this is not possible at the time of the proposal submission, it is required that the Course Director notifies the assigned HMS DCE Program Coordinator whenever he/she first becomes aware that an employee of a commercial interest may be participating in the course or at a minimum at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the course, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
2. The Course Director and HMS DCE must ensure that the following decisions were made free of the control of a commercial interest: (a) identification of CME needs; (b) determination of educational objectives; (c) selection and presentation of content; (d) selection of all persons and organizations that will be in a position to control the content of the CME; (e) selection of educational methods; (f) evaluation of the activity.
3. HMS DCE and the Course Director will ensure that the selection of content for presentation is based on its relevance and importance to the learners and that topic selection is overseen by individuals free of relevant financial relationships.
4. Once the course is approved, a meeting will be scheduled between the Course Director and/or Associate Dean of Global and Continuing Education and/or the Director of Educational Development & Accreditation to discuss whether or not it is appropriate to utilize an employee of a commercial interest to participate in the course based on the requirements outlined above.
5. Course Directors or other planners who have a spouse or partner who is an employee of an ACCME-defined commercial interest may not plan in any content area that is related to the business lines or products of their employer. This is considered a non-resolvable conflict by the ACCME.

1. The employee of a commercial interest will sign a written attestation that they will not plan or present any content in the area that is related to the business lines or products of their employer.
2. An employee of a commercial interest is required to submit his/her presentation to the Course Director at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the CME activity. A non-conflicted Course Director and/or another physician-appointed representative who does not have any relevant financial relationships will review the employee’s presentation and ensure that it meets the requirements outlined in this document.
3. As part of the HMS monitoring process, the employee’s presentation is also required to be submitted to the HMS DCE Program Coordinator at least 25 days prior to the CME activity for validation and review by HMS DCE to ensure that no discussion of the company’s products or services are included.
4. HMS DCE may require exclusion of certain content or changes based on the validation and review process. Changes must be made prior to the beginning of the employee’s presentation.
5. If the Course Director or employee of a commercial interest does not wish to make the required changes, HMS DCE reserves the right to rescind *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* for the employee’s presentation.
6. Disclosure of the employee’s relationship with the commercial interest will be provided to the learners prior to the beginning of the CME activity.
7. The Course Director is required to appoint a non-conflicted physician to monitor the presentation of the employee of a commercial interest to ensure all accreditation requirements are met. If the faculty member discusses products or services during his/her presentation, the monitor will immediately intercede and prevent further discussion. In addition, the Course Director will contact HMS DCE so that *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* is not awarded for the presentation.
8. If HMS DCE is not notified well in advance of the CME activity that an employee of a commercial interest is being recruited and/or if the Course Director is not able to meet the above requirements or those in the *HMS Content Validation Policy for CME Activities*, HMS DCE reserves the right to rescind *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* for the employee’s presentation and/or prohibit the employee from presenting at the CME activity.