



eMedEd



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Guidelines & Best Practices: Avoiding Commercial Bias in Educational Design

Maintaining the integrity and independence of CME/CE activities is essential for provider compliance and learner trust. Commercial bias occurs when the interests of ineligible companies, such as pharmaceutical or medical device manufacturers, influence content. Avoiding commercial bias ensures that education remains evidence-based, patient-focused, and compliant with ACCME, ANCC, and ACPE standards.

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Understanding Commercial Bias

- Commercial bias occurs when educational content or its delivery promotes the interests of an ineligible company.
- Examples include mentioning specific product trade names unnecessarily, using promotional slides, or presenting unbalanced clinical recommendations.
- Even perceived bias can impact the credibility of an activity and trigger compliance issues.

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Steps to Avoid Commercial Bias

- Ensure that all content is evidence-based and supported by peer-reviewed research.
- Use generic drug names where possible and limit the use of trade names to situations where it is essential.
- Require full disclosure of all financial relationships with ineligible companies from faculty and planners.
- Peer-review educational materials to identify and remove any perceived commercial bias.
- Prohibit ineligible companies from influencing content, speaker selection, or activity structure.

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Faculty and Planner Responsibilities

- Faculty must disclose all financial relationships with ineligible companies for the past 24 months.
- Planners and content reviewers must evaluate potential conflicts of interest and resolve them prior to the activity.
- Faculty should focus on evidence-based recommendations and avoid preferential product discussion.
- Avoid logos, slogans, or branding from commercial entities in educational materials.



Provider Compliance Actions

- Retain all disclosure forms and conflict resolution documentation for audit purposes.
- Establish internal content review processes to identify potential bias.
- Provide training to faculty and planners on recognizing and avoiding bias.
- Report any detected bias and take corrective actions to maintain compliance.



Sample Bias Prevention Statement

“All content for this CME/CE activity has been reviewed and approved to ensure that it is fair, balanced, and free of commercial bias. Faculty are required to use evidence-based recommendations and disclose all relevant financial relationships.”

