

WPA POLICY ON WORKING WITH COMPANIES



**World
Patients
Alliance**

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Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear principles and guidance to WPA when collaborating with pharmaceutical industry and commercial companies.

Background

The World Patients Alliance (WPA) is the largest nonprofit umbrella organization of patients and patients organizations from around the globe working across all diseases. The WPA provides the platform to empower and raise the patients' voice for the provision and access to safe, quality and affordable healthcare. WPA works to ensure patients have an active role to play in all the stages of healthcare that include planning, provision, monitoring, research and evaluation of health services. Our vision is that all patients will have access to safe, high quality and affordable healthcare everywhere in the world. Our mission is to be the global voice of patients working toward patient empowerment & engagement, improved access to safe innovative treatment and patient centered healthcare throughout the world. WPA represents the voice of hundreds of millions of patients worldwide.

WPA recognizes that working with pharmaceutical companies that manufacture and market drugs, treatments and equipment along with other commercial companies (referred to here as companies) can play an important role in improving the lives of the patients globally. Many charities and companies collaborate to achieve common objectives such as improving patient information and/or access to healthcare and medicines. Collaboration brings both benefits and risks, and can be subject to critical scrutiny from third parties, guidance and direction.

Objective:

The objective of this policy is to facilitate the fulfillment of the WPA's goals and objectives while preserving its integrity, capacity to provide impartial and unbiased advice and support to patients and supporters, and ensuring that all its activities remain uninfluenced by the business interests of the companies.

This policy aims to enable the WPA to achieve the charity's aims and objectives, without compromising our integrity, our ability to offer independent and unbiased advice and support to our members, patients and supporters. Moreover, it also serves to ensure that our campaigning, policy, research and evaluation work is not in any way influenced by the commercial interests of pharmaceutical companies and other companies.

Policy:

Patient organizations can play a vital role in improving the lives of patients by working with companies. However, companies are not charitable organizations and may have different interests than a patient focused organization. Therefore, these collaborations need to be conducted with transparency and in the best interest of patients. The support we receive from charitable trusts or foundations associated with any company is exempt from this policy, as we are confident that these entities provide grants in alignment with their charitable goals, thus eliminating any potential conflict of interest.

This policy provides a framework to WPA to collaborate with companies in a responsible and ethical manner:

1. Independence: WPA shall maintain full independence in its decision-making, priorities, and communications. All relationships with companies must be guided by WPA's core governance documents, including the Arms and Tobacco Non-Engagement Policy. No company shall be allowed to influence WPA's operations or public positioning.
2. Conflict of interest: WPA will avoid conflicts of interest and ensure that any collaborations with companies do not compromise the interests of patients.
3. Ethics: WPA will abide by ethical principles and adhere to all applicable laws and regulations when working with companies.
4. Mission: The sponsorship and collaborative initiatives involving WPA and companies must align with WPA's mission and vision, as evaluated by the Board of Directors.
5. Objectivity: WPA will ensure that any information or materials it produces or distributes are objective, evidence-based, and not influenced by the interests of companies.

6. Access: WPA will strive to increase access to affordable and high-quality treatments and will work with companies to ensure that patients have access to necessary treatments.

7. Communication: WPA will communicate with companies in an open and respectful manner. It will provide constructive feedback to companies to improve their products and services to ensure the interests of patients are at the forefront
8. Recognition: WPA will be transparent and acknowledge company sponsorship appropriately, however, such recognition should not be construed as an endorsement of specific policies or products.
9. Oversight and Review: All proposed company relationships shall undergo internal screening and are subject to review by the Governance and Ethics Committee. Existing collaborations may be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with WPA policy.
10. Implementation: WPA will adopt this policy and ensure that it is communicated to all members, employees, and volunteers. This policy should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is up-to-date and relevant.
