NHG RESEARCH EDUCATION

Qualité

Education to facilitate high standards of research conduct

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) – Conflicts of Interest and Commitment

Researchers are motivated to work hard for many reasons – to contribute to advancing knowledge, to make discoveries that will benefit individuals and society, to further their individual professions and to achieve personal satisfaction, among other reasons. While the advancement of knowledge is best served by the sharing of ideas with colleagues, legitimate research interests can create competing responsibilities and lead to what is commonly called a conflict of interest.

Case Study

Dr V has agreed to carry out a clinical trial for a new drug for acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. The drug is sponsored by XYZ Company which Dr V has stocks in. The company will fund 100% of the study. In addition, a $200 "finder's fee" (reference fee) will be paid out for each successful recruited subject. Dr V also sits on the ethics committee which will deliberate and review his study.

(1) Is there a conflict of interest?

a) No.

b) Yes.

(2) Should Dr V be allowed to vote for the approval of the trial?

a) Yes, as there may not be enough votes within the ethics committee to approve the trial.

b) No. Dr V should not participate in the ethics deliberation and voting for the study. Instead, he should be asked to leave the meeting room during the deliberation process. However, he may be asked to provide information upon request by other members of the ethics committee.

(3) Should Dr V be allowed to conduct the trial? (Please select the best answer.)

a) Yes. However, as the principal investigator of the trial, he must reveal any conflict of interest, or that for any of his study team members who are involved in the design, conduct or reporting of research, on the ethics committee application form. The declaration should give full disclosure of the facts giving rise to the financial interest and detail the steps proposed to eliminate the conflicts that arise from the financial interest.

b) No. Dr V should not be allowed to conduct the trial as his conflict of interest may adversely affect the protection of the trial participants. He should appoint another qualified study team member to be the principal investigator.

References

- ***Financial Conflicts of Interest Policy for Principal Investigators and Study Team Members*** https://www.research.nhg.com.sg/wps/wcm/connect/romp/nhgromp/hspp/financial+conflict+of+interest/fcoi+policy
- ***Shamoo, A.E. and Resnik, D.B (2009). Responsible Conduct of Research 2nd Edition. Oxford University Press.***
- ***NHG Investigator's Manual 2nd Edition & Addendum: Chapter 7.5 Conflicts of Interest, Chapter 8.0 Responsibilities and Qualifications of Principal Investigators***

To find out more about the RCR unit, please visit:
https://www.research.nhg.com.sg/wps/wcm/connect/romp/nhgromp/hspp/responsibleconductofresearch/responsibleconductofresearch

To find out more about the RCR components, please visit:
https://www.research.nhg.com.sg/wps/wcm/connect/romp/nhgromp/hspp/responsibleconductofresearch/corecomponentsofrcr

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Correct Answers for Case Studies

1. b, 2. b, 3.a