

A New & Stronger Transparent Code of Conduct



The new Medicines Australia Code of Conduct will increase transparency about the vital role of healthcare professionals in the development and use of new, innovative medicines.

Healthcare professionals help to educate patients about medicines and their safe, ongoing use – a bond of trust that we, as a Medicines Australia member company, want to help make even stronger.

The 18th Code of Conduct was developed following extensive, broad consultation with consumer and doctor groups and other healthcare professional organisations. It is a strong Code that builds on trust and ensures we continue to put the interests of patients first.

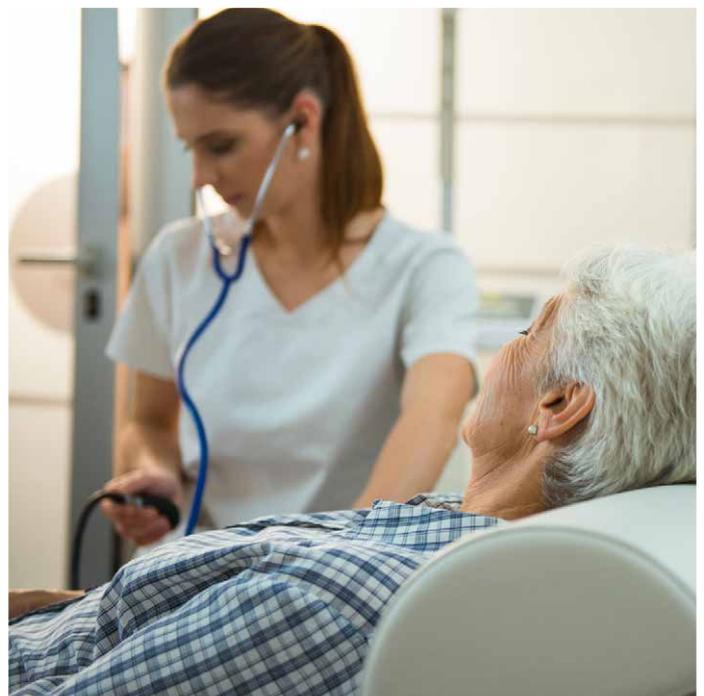
Exchanging knowledge and skills leads to better treatments and increases a healthcare professional's expertise, which means patients can be even more confident they're getting the best of care.

Moving to greater transparency

From 1 October 2015, all Medicines Australia member companies will be required to collect information about healthcare professionals who receive payments for consulting or speaker services and support to attend educational events through the payment or provision of airfares, accommodation or registration fees. Where companies have the agreement of the healthcare professional, this information will be published in a report on the individual company's website.

For the first year, this reporting will only happen with the agreement of the healthcare professional. This is to allow time for everyone to understand and appreciate the value of greater transparency.

From 1 October 2016, reporting these payments will be mandatory – details will be reported whenever a Reportable Payment is made to a healthcare professional.





Improving health outcomes and building confidence with patients

Companies support the education of healthcare professionals to develop knowledge and skills, which is important for patient care in a rapidly changing world. Companies also need advice from healthcare professionals, which leads to new and better medicines and treatments.

Greater transparency will increase confidence by patients that the working relationship between the industry and healthcare professionals is ethical and appropriate.

Research published in the Medical Journal of Australia found that four out of five patients surveyed “would have more confidence in their doctor’s decisions with full disclosure.”¹

¹Tattersall, M H N, Dimoska, A and Gan, K. (2009), ‘Patients expect transparency in doctors’ relationships with the pharmaceutical industry’, *Med J Aust* 2009; 190 (2): 65-68

Reporting of payments to healthcare professionals

If a payment needs to be reported, companies will provide healthcare professionals with the opportunity to review and submit corrections before publication.

Payments will be reported every six months, with two reports each year covering May to October and November to April. The first report will be published by 31 August 2016.

Reports will be available for three years following publication on individual company websites and linked from the Medicines Australia website.

Companies must comply with the Australian Privacy legislation (Privacy Act 1988 [Cth]) in regard to reporting individual healthcare professional data. From 1 October 2015, each company must establish a means to track whether consent has been given and maintain records which comply with Australia’s privacy legislation.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Reportable Payments under the new Code are:

Payments for the provision of services by a healthcare professional:

- Giving a lecture or presentation
- Chairing an educational meeting
- Providing advice as a member of an Advisory Board
- Providing advice to a company as a medical expert

Sponsorship to attend medical education meetings held within or outside of Australia, including:

- Airfares
- Accommodation
- Conference registration fees

The following information will be reported:

- Healthcare professional’s name
- Type of healthcare professional (i.e. medical practitioner, pharmacist, nurse)
- Principal practice address
- Relevant details about the purpose of the payment
- The amount or value of the payment or support

Where healthcare professionals request a reportable payment to be made to a third party, these reportable payments must still be disclosed for the individual healthcare professional noting that the payment was made to a third party. Disclosure will occur as outlined above.