

Safeguarding patients' interests and care

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GSK is a science-led global healthcare company which researches and develops a broad range of innovative products in three primary areas of Pharmaceuticals, Vaccines and Consumer Healthcare. The company has a significant global presence with commercial operations in more than 150 countries, a network of 89 manufacturing sites, and large R&D centres in Europe, North America and Asia. We are proud of the fact that GSK is leading a reform of the industry's commercial operating model in the interests of patients, healthcare professionals (HCPs) and shareholders.

GSK is evolving a global operating model to:

- Increase patient trust by helping to remove any perceived conflict of interest between GSK and prescribers and meet the evolving expectations of society.
- Get the right patients the right medicines and vaccines at the right time by giving HCPs appropriate information they need when and how they need and want it.

Specifically, from 1 January 2016, our global approach includes the following key elements:

- We will continue to support medical education. We will provide grants to independent organizations that deliver medical education. This arms-

length approach will minimize any risk of perception of bias.

- We will use GSK internal medical experts to talk about our medicines and vaccines rather than pay external HCPs to speak on our behalf. This is not about saving money. We remain committed to supporting independent medical education.
- We will continue to provide appropriate fees to HCPs for conducting essential activities such as GSK sponsored clinical research, advisory activities and market research that help us develop medicines and vaccines to meet patients' needs. We will also continue to support the drive towards transparency in disclosing payments made for these services.

Why it matters for patients

When someone visits their doctor, they expect the advice and treatment recommendations they receive to be based on their medical needs and their doctor's understanding of their condition and the treatment options available. Any perception of conflict of interest between a doctor and the companies that develop treatments could undermine the trust patients have in those treatment decisions. HCPs are not the source of this problem but they can be part of the solution.

Doctors and other HCPs are valued partners for GSK, providing us with scientific and

medical expertise and insights into patient care. Equally, we have an important role to play in providing doctors with information about our medicines. This close relationship between healthcare professionals and GSK is fundamental to the progress of medical science and to help meet patient and public health needs. But it must be conducted clearly, transparently and in a way that creates confidence amongst stakeholders.

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We believe that healthcare professionals make independent decisions with the best interests of their patients at heart.



ANDREA KOČIŠOVÁ,
GM of GSK Slovakia

Paying HCPs to speak on our behalf and to attend medical conferences are established industry practices and have played an important role in supporting HCP education. However, paying HCPs for promotional activity when they



also prescribe – or influence prescribing – our medicines and vaccines can lead others to question whether a conflict of interest exists in our relationship. That is why GSK completely stopped this type of practice.

Increased transparency around payments to HCPs by companies is an important step in the right direction. But even when such payments are publically disclosed, a risk of perceived conflicts of interest still remains.

However, even a perception of conflict of interest can undermine the trust that patients have in their prescriptions and we must work to safeguard against that. This is in everyone's interests.

We will therefore continue to engage prescribers in appropriate dialogue around the benefits and risks of our medicines and vaccines, but will aim to do so in a way that brings greater clarity and confidence so that whenever we talk to a doctor, nurse or other prescriber, it is patients' interests that always come first. Our aim is for healthcare professionals to see GSK as a leader in scientific debate and discovery; as a company that consistently provides fair, balanced and objective information to support improved patient care.

