



RANZCO

The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Ophthalmologists

CPD Standard to Ensure Independence of CPD Activities

Approved by: CEO

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94-98 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010
Phone: +61 2 9690 1001 Fax: +61 2 9690 1321
ACN 000 644 404
www.ranzco.edu

RANZCO  The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Ophthalmologists
THE MEDICAL EYE SPECIALISTS

1. Purpose and scope

Company funding of CPD activities gives rise to potential conflict of interest for ophthalmologists involved in organising, presenting and attending funded CPD activities. To avoid perception of corruption of the ophthalmologist-patient relationship all relationships with third party funders of CPD must be transparent and all CPD activities controlled by ophthalmologists.

2. RANZCO Activity Accreditation

2.1 General Principles

2.1.1 Scientific value of content

The material presented must promote good quality medical care based on accepted scientific principles.

The following are not acceptable

- Experimental treatments and methods that have not been fully evaluated by level 3, peer reviewed intervention research.
- Experimental treatments which do not have the support of the medical profession by reason of inconclusive evidence that such treatments deliver therapeutic benefits.
- Products or modes of treatment in areas of clinical practice where accepted management standards are lacking and a balanced rationale is not provided.
- Theories that are not supported by scientific evidence.
- Techniques which do not have the support of scientific evidence or the medical profession as preferred techniques or which are not supported by accepted medical theory.

Where there is uncertainty about the clinical, scientific or ethical standards of a proposed education activity, RANZCO reserves the right to seek clarification on the program design and evidence-based methodology and to reject the activity if in the sole discretion of RANZCO it fails to meet the clinical and ethical requirements in line with the objects of the RANZCO CPD program.

2.1.2 Based on Learning Needs

CPD activities must be based on the educational needs of Australian ophthalmologists. A formal needs assessment should be conducted and should describe gaps in knowledge, skills, clinical care and/or health outcomes. The learning objectives for the activity must be based on the identified needs.

2.1.3 Independence – Ophthalmologists make decisions

Educational activities should be arranged by ophthalmologists accountable to the profession. An organising committee should be formed and the relevant Special Interest Group, RANZCO branch or similar professional body should be involved if appropriate. Ideally the organising committee should include both content experts and representatives of the target audience.

While RANZCO recognises the right of industry to sponsor and engage speakers for meetings, an independent organising committee of doctors should have the ultimate decision for scientific and educational aspects of the meeting.

The organising committee should ensure that the following decisions are made free of the control of a commercial interest:

1. Identification of learning needs
2. Determination of educational objectives
3. Selection of content
4. Selection of educational methods
5. Evaluation of the activity

Educational meetings should address the educational needs of the targeted medical audience and not the marketing needs of the contributing company.

2.1.4 Full disclosure

Meeting organisers must not be in a position of conflict of interest by virtue of any direct or indirect affiliation with the sponsors of those activities.

Content planning committee members and all faculty must disclose all financial relationships, not just those relevant to the subject being discussed, over the previous two years.

Faculty should make a declaration of interest to meeting participants of relevant financial relationships including:

- He/she is a paid/unpaid consultant to a Company, either directly or indirectly via payment to institutions, in a leadership role including board positions and review activities such as data monitoring boards, statistical analysis, and end point committees.
- He/she has been engaged in clinical research that has been sponsored by a relevant Company.
- He/she has accepted support for travel to meetings in the last 2 years.
- He/she has accepted support for manuscript preparation related to the material presented.
- He/she has a commercial interest in any products related to the conditions discussed in the meeting.
- He/she has a significant financial interest in a company offering relevant healthcare services e.g. he/she owns more than 5% issued capital.

This is not an exhaustive list and the onus is on the individual to bring to the attention the Chairman of the organising committee any matter that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

For an individual with no relevant financial relationship meeting participants must be informed that no relevant financial relationship exists.

Individuals must disclose the information to meeting participants prior to the beginning of the educational activity.

2.1.5 Appropriate use of commercial support

Educational grants provided by companies should be controlled by the independent organising committee and should be in the form of an unrestricted educational grant.

The organising committee must develop a budget including all expenses such as travel, accommodation and honoraria.

Travel, accommodation and logistical expenses may be handled by companies, however honoraria will be distributed by RANZCO on behalf of companies. Companies will be recognised for their financial support of CPD activities in program materials.

Hospitality provided at CPD meetings cannot compete with or take precedence over the educational events. Entertainment provided with no educational activity is not appropriate.

2.1.6 Appropriate management of associated commercial promotion

Arrangements for commercial exhibits or advertisements cannot influence planning, interfere with the presentation, or be a condition of sponsorship of CPD activities.

Educational materials that are part of a CPD activity, such as slides, abstracts, test materials and handouts cannot contain any advertising, trade name or product-group message including company logos.

Trade displays may precede or follow the education activity but must not be integrated with the educational activity in any manner. Trade displays are restricted to designated areas separate from those within which the presentation is being made. It is inappropriate for RANZCO leaders to participate as presenters in company promotional events held in exhibit space.

Ophthalmologists should not engage in peer selling. This also applies to third party contracting on behalf of industry. Endorsement of a specific product is prohibited.

2.1.7 Content and format without commercial bias

The content or format of a CPD activity or its related materials must promote improvements or quality in healthcare and not a specific proprietary business interest of a commercial interest.

Education should be free of commercial bias for or against any company, device, product or service. If an activity contains reference to commercial products and/or services, objective information based on generally accepted scientific methods must be presented.

Presentations must give a balanced view of therapeutic options. Use of generic names is required to contribute to this impartiality.

RANZCO CPD will not grant accreditation of a product-specific meeting.

Product specific-clinical audits will generally not be considered as suitable unless there is CPD Committee review and/or involvement in the planning process.

2.1.8 Application for meeting CPD accreditation

Meeting organisers may seek RANZCO CPD accreditation of educational meetings. Meeting organisers may also seek RANZCO CPD accreditation of educational meetings that have been funded by industry. *RANZCO CPD Application for Accreditation of CPD Activities* is downloadable from the RANZCO website.

The RANZCO CPD Committee will not accredit education activities if there is input from a sponsoring organisation in the design, development, education content or the delivery of the activity that has not been overseen by an ophthalmologist.

Meetings may be accredited for RANZCO CPD to a maximum of one point per hour of education time. Presentations by the sponsoring organisation and associated meals will not be used in determining the duration of the meeting and determining the number of CPD points that will be allocated.

When meetings have been accredited by RANZCO CPD Committee as a CPD activity, potential meeting attendees may be informed that accreditation has been granted.

RANZCO CPD pending, RANZCO CPD applied for and similar phrases have no meaning and may not be used.

If there is no statement about RANZCO CPD accreditation, ophthalmologists are to assume that the meeting has not been accredited and is a Non-CPD Informational/Educational Program. RANZCO CPD Secretariat cannot be held responsible for unaccredited activities failing to meet acceptable standards.

Retrospective CPD approval is prohibited.

2.2 Attending Meetings

An ophthalmologist must not accept any financial support, direct or indirect, for attending educational meetings. Any such support from industry must be directed to the organisers of the meeting to defray or disseminate payments as deemed appropriate. The meeting must be directly related to the ophthalmologist's field of expertise.

2.3 Arranging Meetings

An ophthalmologist must not approach industry directly as an individual for educational support for meetings. Any approach should be clearly understood to be on behalf of the organising committee. An ophthalmologist acting on behalf of, or as a representative of RANZCO should have the expressed permission to do so.

Sponsorship of educational meetings and events should be appropriate, in accordance with professional and community standards and expectations. Venues and hospitality should be appropriate and not excessive or extravagant.

Sponsorship of meetings should also be in compliance with Company codes of conduct.

2.4 Monitoring Meeting Compliance with CPD Policy

As an accrediting body RANZCO CPD Secretariat has responsibility to ensure that the activity meets RANZCO CPD policy standards on ophthalmologists' interaction with industry.

The meeting provider must provide for attendees the opportunity to submit to the RANZCO CPD program feedback about the quality and conduct of the meeting.

Ophthalmologists attending the meeting have responsibility to assess compliance with RANZCO CPD standards to ensure the independence of CPD activities.

Ophthalmologists may report behaviour deemed to demonstrate commercial bias to RANZCO CPD Secretariat. The identity of the ophthalmologist reporting such behaviour will not be disclosed without their permission.

2.5 Skills Transfer Sessions

Learning new techniques or becoming familiar with new technology may require skills transfer training. Skills transfer is an accepted CPD activity.

Company may sponsor ophthalmologists to attend skills transfer training. An ophthalmologist must not accept from Company any financial support, direct or indirect, in excess of reasonable travel and accommodation expenses. Compensation for lost income is not appropriate.

An ophthalmologist undertaking to demonstrate a technique or the use of prosthesis to colleagues must be aware that they are endorsing the technique or prosthesis. Any direct or indirect payment indicates that the ophthalmologist is a paid consultant or an employee of the company involved. This must be disclosed prior to the training or demonstration and subsequently to patients prior to recommending that company's products.

2.6 Non-CPD Informational/Educational Programs

RANZCO requires Non-CPD Informational/Educational Programs to be clearly distinguished from RANZCO CPD.

Through the Company's use of appropriate disclaimers in advertising and informational materials, attendees of Non-CPD Informational/Educational Programs should be able to easily ascertain that the programs are not CPD accredited.

3. Definitions

Company: A company is a for-profit entity that develops, produces, markets, or distributes drugs, devices, services or therapies use to diagnose, treat, monitor, manage, and alleviate health conditions. This definition is not intended to include non-profit entities, entities outside the healthcare sector or entities through which ophthalmologists provide clinical services directly to patients. Companies include pharmaceutical companies and device and technology manufacturers.

Company funding: Company funding is the provision of financial and/or material support for educational activities by the Company. Company funding can be by either corporate sponsorship or educational grants.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD): CPD activities serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that an ophthalmologist uses to provide services for patients, the public or the profession. RANZCO CPD Secretariat may accredit educational activities. For the purposes of this policy, educational activities for ophthalmologists that are not CPD-accredited are considered Non-CPD Educational/Informational programs.

Corporate Sponsorship: A Corporate Sponsorship is an arrangement in which a company, typically through its marketing department, provides monetary or in-kind support for a particular RANZCO product, service or event, and is then acknowledged in connection with the product , service or event. Corporate Sponsorships are distinct from educational grants and do not constitute commercial support of CPD. An example is industry support of RANZCO Annual Scientific Congress in order to defray costs.

Educational Grant: An Educational Grant is a sum awarded by a company, typically through its grants office, for the specific purpose of supporting an educational or scientific activity offered by RANZCO. Educational grants awarded by a company to support a CPD activity are referred to as commercial support of CPD. An Educational Grant may also be 'in-kind.' Educational grants are 'unrestricted' meaning that the identification of learning needs, determination of educational objectives, selection of content, selection of speaker, selection of educational methods and evaluation of the activity are not dictated by the company awarding the grant. An example is provision of educational grant to fund development of ANZGIG audit programs through third party providers.

Entertainment: Entertainment is the provision by industry of tickets to cultural, sporting or artistic events i.e. with no associated professional education.

Hospitality: Hospitality is the provision of food and beverages by industry in association with a professional education meeting.

Meeting: A meeting or conference is defined as an activity which is a) dedicated to promoting objective scientific and educational activities and discourse, with one or more

educational presentations and b) the main incentive for bringing attendees together is to further their knowledge on the topics being presented.

Medical industry: Medical industry is composed of companies as defined above.

Non-CPD Informational/Educational Program: A Non-CPD Informational/Educational Program is a program offered by a company or other third party that provides educational or promotional information and does not offer CPD credit.

Organising committee: An event or meeting organising committee comprises ophthalmologists, either fully or majority for events with other medical practitioners or health practitioners in the audience, who have expertise in education, clinical ophthalmology and/or meeting planning, and who are representing and responsible to their fellow ophthalmologists.

Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO): For the purposes of this policy, RANZCO includes its organising committees for specific educational activities, Federal and State Branches, Special Interest Groups and affiliated bodies including Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia.

RANZCO Leaders: RANZCO leaders include the President, Vice-President(s), Chairs of State Branches, the Chief Executive officer, and the Editor(s)-in-Chief of Clinical and Experimental Ophthalmology.

4. References

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The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners QI&CPD. Sponsorship guidance for all activities; 2008. Available from <http://www.racgp.org.au/education/qicpd-program/>

5. Related Documents

RANZCO Application for Accreditation of Continuing Professional Development Activities
RANZCO Clinical audit provider guide
RANZCO Clinical audit application form

6. Record of amendments to this document

Page	Details of amendment	Date approved
		DD/MM/YY (GM/CEO/Board)