

Pharma policy

Purpose

This policy document provides a framework by which the MS Trust will work with industry partners in a transparent manner, ensuring the integrity and independence of the MS Trust is maintained at all times.

The MS Trust exists to improve the lives of people with MS by providing accessible, evidence based information to people affected by the condition and by working with MS specialists to ensure people with MS get the best care possible. We do this by providing high quality, up-to-date education for MS health care professionals, supporting them to evaluate and improve their services and funding MS nurses in the areas of greatest need. In order to meet its objectives, the MS Trust believes it is important to maintain cooperative relationships with all industry partners and stakeholders in MS, including the pharmaceutical, medical equipment and biotechnology companies and contract research organisations.

The best interests of people with MS are the priority of the MS Trust and should note from the outset that the MS Trust will not:

- Endorse any specific product or service (and the MS Trust name/logo must not be used to imply such endorsement)
- Take part in any project designed to give one company competitive advantage over another
- Be influenced by commercial pressure to meet a particular marketing agenda or objective
- Accept any attempts to influence its policy in any way
- Allow any one company to dominate an activity through sponsorship
- Allow its independent voice or objectivity to be constrained.

This policy governs the relationship between all members of the MS Trust staff, including volunteers and trustees and representatives of industry partners, including consultants and agencies.

Funding

As a charity, the MS Trust must source income to fund its work. Industry partner funding will be considered so long as:

- The outcome of the project will benefit people affected by MS
- The project fits within the MS Trust's strategic objectives
- A contract or grant agreement is in place outlining the arrangement and agreed objectives between the parties
- The MS Trust's name and/or logo is not used to imply approval or endorsement of any of the donor's products or policies without prior explicit permission.

The MS Trust's professional development activities provide the most appropriate opportunity for industry partner funding; pooled funding from two or more companies being preferred. The MS Trust will not accept funding for specific publications to be delivered directly to people affected by MS. All funding will be acknowledged on our website.

Interaction with the Government, Medical Profession and other Stakeholders
 The MS Trust and industry partners share certain objectives, such as the allocation of increased appropriate resources to the management of MS. There are therefore occasions when the Trust wishes to work with the Industry to influence the Government, the medical profession, or other groups. Cooperation would rely on objectives being agreed at the outset, the independence of the Trust not being compromised in any way, and total transparency in the relationship.

Signed off / reviewed by:	Date:	Comments:
Board	19 March 2015	New policy
Board	28 September 2016	
CEO	July 2018	
Remuneration Committee	October 2018	
Next review:	October 2019	