

2008 Editorial Statement Relations With Industry

Note: *In recent months, increased attention has been paid to the relationship between the pharmaceutical industry and medicine in general, including the psychiatric profession—individual researchers and practitioners as well as the American Psychiatric Association (APA) itself. This has included a request for information by U.S. Senator Charles Grassley. The APA agrees that communication and transparency about relationships with industry are essential. Following is an overview on this matter.*

Patient care is the primary focus of the psychiatric profession, and the practice of psychiatry continues to save lives and alleviate suffering for millions of people through treatments that include psychotherapy and medications. The APA, the leading medical society representing the psychiatric profession, has been a leader in the medical community in requiring transparency in relationships with industry.

Information concerning APA's funding has long been available to its internal membership and the broader public. Among other measures, disclosure and divestiture requirements are the most stringent in the medical profession for participants in the development of the APA's updated *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States. In addition, disclosure standards are required for staff, board and committee members, authors and Continuing Medical Education faculty. Indeed, the APA has been recognized for the rigor with which it manages industry-supported training programs. However, we recognize that disclosure alone, while necessary, does not eliminate all possible conflicts of interest. It is for this reason that the APA is also working with other medical societies to develop broader standards for reporting and limiting relationships with industry.

The APA encourages psychiatrists to discuss their involvement with industry with patients and caregivers, and to respond openly to any questions or concerns. By doing so, members of the profession will further enhance patient trust and, therefore, patient care.