

# Gifts, Offers, and Company Branded Items

## KEY PRINCIPLES

- Companies do not offer brand name reminders or other gifts, which may inappropriately influence the prescribing of a product.
- Medical text books, medical literature, reprints and proceedings of educational events are considered appropriate
- Only pens and notepads are permitted to be provided to delegates at educational events, in order to take notes during the meeting.



Consistent with our ethical undertakings, nothing is offered or provided by a Company in a manner or with conditions that would have an inappropriate influence on the approval, recommendation, prescribing, and/or use of a product

CODE OF CONDUCT EDITION 19, OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE 5

The Pharmaceutical industry places great reliance on its professional relationship with healthcare professionals, and ensuring that Australian patients receive optimal care. The relationship between industry and healthcare professionals must withstand public scrutiny and should never appear to place undue influence over the independence of prescribing decisions.

Since the release of Edition 17 of the Code of Conduct in 2013, the Australian pharmaceutical industry agreed that the provision of items that had the sole purpose of increasing awareness of the brand name of a product were no longer allowable.

***Societal expectations of the pharmaceutical industry continue to evolve, and the Code of Conduct and associated tools keep pace with that change.***

This decision aligned Australia with other global codes, such as the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), where similar changes had been adopted.

# HOW TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE

It is appropriate for Companies to provide educational items and resources to healthcare professionals and/or for use with patients as listed below. Such items must only be branded with a Company logo, and not with a product brand name.



**Pen and notepad for the purpose of taking notes at an educational meeting**



**Medical educational materials, resources, reprints and meeting proceedings (may be physical or digital materials)**

It is not considered appropriate for Companies to provide items to healthcare professionals that would be considered promotional aids or brand name reminders. Regardless of their value, such items are prohibited. The examples below are not exhaustive:



**Lanyards, with or without company or product branding, at third-party educational meetings**



**Stationery supplies such as sticky notes, mouse pads, calendar and diaries**



**Clinic supplies (eg. hand wash, bed sheets, tongue depressors, machine cuffs)**

Any items provided to healthcare professionals must be consistent with Sections 3 and 5 of Edition 19 of the Code. Simply removing the product or company name from these items does not make it acceptable.

## International alignment

Medicines Australia is a contributor and signatory to the [IFPMA Code of Practice and Ethos](#), which prohibits providing healthcare professionals with promotional aids in relation to the promotion of prescription only medicines. The Medicines Australia Code of Conduct is aligned with this principle, though the list of items considered as promotional aids has previously differed. Edition 19 of the Medicines Australia Code now brings the interpretation of permitted items into alignment.

## Implementation and Grace Period

From 1 January 2022, Companies can no longer provide lanyards at third party educational events. This includes providing sponsorship to the event organiser in return for a logo on the event lanyard. It does not prohibit the use of visitor or company security lanyards on a company premises and are then returned on departure. Any lanyards that are already organised, sponsored, or produced as at 31 December 2021 will be permitted. Any new items after this date will be considered to be in breach of the Code.

# IF IN DOUBT, REACH OUT

- Download Edition 19 of the Code of Conduct from our [website](#)
- SCAN THE QR CODE to send an email to the [Code Help Desk](#)

