

Factsheet I: Australian and Global Health Context for Collaboration Between Pharmaceutical Industry and Healthcare Consumer Organisations

Working Together

Australian Context

In recent years, many pharmaceutical companies have developed new ways to incorporate consumer insights and to collaborate with consumers and health care consumer organisations (HCOs) in a transparent and ethical way.

In Australia, the establishment of Medicines Australia (MA) as the peak body for research and evidenced based pharmaceutical companies has led to the development of the **MA Code of Conduct** which sets the standards for the ethical marketing and promotion of prescription pharmaceutical products in Australia. It complements the legislation requirements of the **Therapeutic Goods Regulations (TGR)** and the **Therapeutic Goods Act (TGA)**. Code provisions include standards for appropriate advertising, the behaviour of medical representatives and relationships with healthcare professionals and patient organisations. MA's Code of Conduct, which was established in 1960, has been revised on a regular basis.

There have also been significant developments in several areas impacting on the way pharmaceutical companies and HCOs work with each other. These include developments in increased accountability and transparency of the industry and strengthening of the consumer voice. These include:

- Strategic Agreement between MA and the Government 🖱️
- House of Representatives Inquiry into new drugs and novel medical technologies 🖱️
- Australian Ethical Health Alliance: Australian Consensus Framework of Shared Values and Ethical Principles for Collaboration and Interaction among organisations in the healthcare sector 🖱️

All these developments have led to greater commitment to and a growing maturity in transparency of relationships and funding arrangements.

In relation to strengthening the consumer voice, **The Patient Voice Initiative** has undertaken research to understand the needs and preferences of patient communities (including patient organisations, online patient communities and patient advocates), to ensure that the biopharmaceutical industry has a well-developed understanding and appreciation of these communities preferences by recognising: Patient communities priorities and areas of need, Patient communities preferences for methods of engagement with biopharma companies and what the future of patient communities engagement with biopharma companies looks like.


<https://www.patientvoiceinitiative.org/> 🖱️


Global Context


Significant developments are also occurring globally which are addressing consumer engagement issues such as ethical collaboration and remuneration. The Working Together Document has been shaped and informed by the work of these international colleagues. These include:


The **International Alliance of Patient Organisations (IAPO)** which is a unique global alliance representing patients of all nations across all disease areas has developed a **Consensus framework to guide ethical collaboration between patient organisations, healthcare professionals and the pharmaceutical industry in support of high quality patient care.**

Consensus Framework 🖱️

National Voices (the coalition of health and social care charities in England) and The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), which is the peak organisation for innovative research-based pharmaceutical companies in the UK, have developed a Guide to collaboration between charities and pharmaceutical companies in the UK: **Working together, delivering for patients** ABPI Sourcebook on Working with Patients and Patient Organisations. 

The European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) is the voice of the research based pharmaceutical companies in Europe. They have developed a code, similar to Medicines Australia, as well as a guide for remunerating consumers. EFPIA Principles for Working Together with Patients. 

International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) have also developed some guidance on working with consumer organisations. The IFPMA Note for Guidance on Patient and Patient Organization Interactions. 

Patient Engagement Management Suite (PEM Suite): Global Principles for remunerating the patient community for interactions with the pharmaceutical industry. This is a global project addressing the issue of fair remuneration. It has resulted from remuneration of the patient community being a tension point, reducing the ability of both parties to have meaningful and efficient interactions. This has led to the need for global consistency and transparency. Global Principles for remunerating the patient community for interactions with the pharmaceutical industry (available for download at pemsuite.org/fmv) 

All these advances suggest a maturing of the relationship between pharmaceutical companies and HCOs and a need for ongoing and future partnerships to reflect the changing context.

If partnerships between pharmaceutical companies and HCOs going forward are to be transformational they will need to demonstrate the following:

- Far greater attention to putting consumers first and better health outcomes at the heart of all they do
- Be highly transparent and open about the partnership, activities and funding
- Demonstrate co-design and co-creation of processes, products and /or resources to reflect a more equal relationship
- Articulate the benefits for consumers and how the partnership has helped achieve that.

Find out more

The Working Together Guide is a guide to relationships between health consumer organisations & pharmaceutical companies.

-  [Working Together Guide](#)
-  [Factsheet #2: The Pharmaceutical Industry's Code of Conduct; What Companies Can and Can't Do](#)
-  [Factsheet #3: Remuneration Framework of Healthcare Consumers](#)
-  [Factsheet #4: Principles in Action Across the Different Partnership Stages](#)
-  [Factsheet #5: Interacting with Patient Communities: Areas for Pharmaceutical Companies to Consider](#)
-  [MA Code of Conduct](#)

