

Medical Ethics

Physician–medical manufacturing industry relationships: Perceptions of medical students

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Supplementary File

Appendix 1. Survey questionnaire for medical students/interns

Part I:

Please fill in the blanks or place an X or check mark next to the word or phrase that best matches your response.

Date: []

Age	Gender	Race
Years	Men Women	Malay Chinese Indian Others

Health status: 'How would you describe your overall state of health?'

Health status	Undergraduate year	Health insurance
Very good	Third year	Private
Good	Fourth year	Other
Fair	Final year	None
Bad	Intern	
Very bad		

Residence status Annual income in Ringitt

Local	0–50k
Foreigner	50–100k
	>100k

The medical manufacturing industry (MMI): The pharmaceutical industry and medical device industry are together referred to as the MMI.

Are you aware of the prevalence of physician and MMI gift relationships?

- Yes
 No

Are you aware of any guidelines regarding accepting gifts from the MMI?

- Yes
 No

If yes, what is the source of the guidelines?

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During your MBBS course, are you trained to make informed choices about participation in MMI marketing?

- Yes
 No

Part II:

Please choose your response to the following statements by putting a check mark at the respective columns.

The following statements are based on the relational dynamics of physicians and the medical manufacturing industry (MMI).

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
	1	2	3	4	5

1. It is okay for physicians to receive gifts for personal use, such as sporting or entertainment tickets, dinners, and electronic items.
2. It is okay for physicians to receive gifts for general utility, such as pens and stationery items.
3. It is okay for physicians to receive patient counselling or teaching aids.
4. It is okay for physicians to receive free medicine samples for patient use.
5. It is okay for physicians to receive free medicine samples for personal use.
6. It is okay for physicians to receive medical and educational material, e.g. journals, textbooks and anatomy models.
7. It is okay for physicians to receive cultural courtesy items such as cakes, cookies, dates, and mandarin oranges during festive occasions.
8. It is okay for the MMI to sponsor medical societies' social events such as annual dinners, meetings, etc.
9. It is okay for the MMI to fund educational programmes and fellowships for physicians.
10. It is okay for the MMI to reimburse physician travel expenses for educational conferences.
11. It is okay for the MMI to offer ownership/company stock to the physicians.
12. It is okay for the physicians to receive payments as speaking fees at MMI's promotional events.
13. It is okay for the physicians to receive payments from MMI in exchange for helping them develop new drugs.
14. It is okay for the physicians to be paid members of the MMI's advisory board.
15. The cost of these gifts from MMI to physicians is ultimately passed on to the patients.
16. Collaborations between physicians and MMI lead to drug and medical device innovation that eventually improves patient care and public health.
17. Interactions with MMI representatives enhance physicians' knowledge of new products or drugs.
18. The financial relationships affect physician's judgement and prescribing patterns.
19. Physicians should avoid or refuse visits from MMI representatives.
20. If a physician has financial ties with MMI, his patients are less likely to follow their treatment recommendations.
21. The MMI should self-report and disclose the financial relationships to the public.
22. The disclosure of financial relationships will act as a deterrent to inappropriate financial relationships.
23. The disclosure of financial relationships will negatively affect the public's trust.
24. The disclosure of financial relationships will help the public make better-informed decisions regarding choosing healthcare providers.
25. MMI should do research on their products without physician input or direction to avoid conflicts of interest.
26. The physician-researchers with ties to MMI are more likely to report results that are favourable to the products of those companies.

In your opinion, how many Ringgits' (RM) worth of free office use and personal gifts is acceptable for a physician to receive in 1 year?

- None
- <RM1000
- RM1000–RM5000
- >RM5000
-

Which of the following is/are your preferred types or methods of disclosure? You can choose more than one.

1. None, no need to disclose.
2. This information should be placed on the physician's website.
3. A sign should be posted in the physician's office.
4. The physician should tell me face-to-face about this relationship.
5. An online database should be available where you can look up this information for any physician.
6. Other

Appendix 2. Type of interaction between physicians and MMI

Type of interaction	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Gifts of personal use	14.9	38.6	24.2	18.6	3.7
Gifts of general utility	2.8	9.8	23.7	47.4	16.3
Gifts of patient use	1.9	10.2	32.1	41.9	14.0
Free medicine samples for patient use	3.7	19.1	29.3	38.1	9.8
Free medicine samples for personal use	8.8	25.6	37.7	26.0	1.9
Educational material	0.5	3.7	18.6	48.8	28.4
Cultural courtesy items	4.7	8.8	34.9	41.9	9.8
Sponsorship of medical society's events	3.7	5.1	30.7	44.2	16.3
Funding of educational programmes	2.8	3.7	15.3	54.0	24.2
Reimbursement of travel expenses	1.9	11.2	26.0	43.7	17.2
Ownership of company stocks.	12.6	23.7	36.3	19.5	7.9
Payments as speaking fees	5.6	14.9	33.0	40.9	5.6
Payments for developing new drugs	7.9	10.7	24.7	47.0	9.8
Paid members of the MMI's board	5.1	19.5	41.4	27.4	6.5

MMI medical manufacturing industry