

Healthcare Professionals FAQs on Medical Technology Industry's Support to Medical Education

The MedTech Europe Code of Ethical Business Practice

What does MedTech Europe Code cover? Is it applicable to me as a Healthcare Professional?

The MedTech Europe Code covers the interactions of member companies of MedTech Europe active in the medical technology industry with healthcare professionals and healthcare organisations.

If you are a physician, nurse, technician, laboratory scientist, researcher, research co-ordinator, procurement professional or in any case someone who may recommend, use, procure, administer, purchase, supply, or who may prescribe medical technologies (or related services) in the course of your professional activities, then the Code may apply to the interactions you may have with the [Members of MedTech Europe](#)¹.

Is it true that the industry stopped supporting medical education, such as sponsorship of healthcare professionals' attendance to scientific conferences?

This is **not** true. One of the guiding principles of the Code provides for "safe and effective use of medical technology" ensuring that anyone who has to use, recommend, prescribe, etc. a medical device or in vitro diagnostic devices must have access to the most up-to-date information in the field. Industry remains committed to this principle and continues supporting independent medical education. However, the way such support is provided is now subjected to stricter, clearer and more transparent rules the industry has imposed on itself in order to respond to the changing environment of an increased scrutiny from all over the world, to unify and standardize the collaboration of the MedTech industry with the healthcare community, and to build a path for ethical innovation and the highest quality of treatment for patients.

So, what has changed with the new Code?

The Code abandons the practice referred to as "direct sponsorship" where a healthcare professional would be invited to attend a third party educational event such as a scientific congress, where all the costs associated with such attendance would be covered by a particular company.

As of January 1, 2018, the industry moved away from this direct sponsorship model and decided to continue to support medical education of healthcare professionals through "Educational Grants". These grants are used to support continued medical education, like for instance to cover the costs of healthcare professionals' attendance to scientific congresses. However, under the Educational Grant scheme, the allocation of funds is conducted by independent third parties, e.g., hospitals, professional congress organizers and medical societies, so that a direct relationship between a company providing an educational grant and a healthcare professional benefitting from the grant cannot be established.

How does the new system (educational grant scheme) work?

Companies provide educational grants to independent intermediaries for the funds to be allocated to the relevant healthcare professionals. The independent intermediaries can be hospitals, medical societies and companies organising educational events. The company can lay down objective criteria for the beneficiary such as, speciality, years of practice, educational needs, country, city/region of practice and/or academic criteria i.e.; number of publications, participation to clinical trials in a given pathology. All this is handled with an educational grant agreement concluded between the company and the independent intermediary.

For ex., a company may make an educational grant of 15.000 EUR to a hospital for 3 of their physicians working in the orthopaedics practice area to attend a reputable orthopaedics congress. Alternatively, the company could make such a grant to the medical society or the company organising this orthopaedics congress as well, requesting them to cover 3 physicians' attendance to their event.

Our members will have no part in the selection of the final beneficiaries of the support, nor in managing the logistical aspects of it.

¹ MedTech Europe Code applies as the minimum standard within the MedTech Europe Geographical Area consisting of :Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom as countries with National Associations. Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein Lithuania, Luxembourg and Malta as countries party to the European Economic Area agreement without a MedTech Europe National Association. The countries where Mecomed is active.

How can I benefit from an educational grant to attend an educational event?

If you identify an educational event or a scientific congress you think might be useful for your continued medical education, an option could be to contact your hospital, the medical society or the conference organiser organising the congress and express your interest to benefit from any available grants.

Please note that if you approach an industry representative, they may be able to tell you whether their company has provided Educational Grants to your hospital or to an event organiser, but they will never be able to influence the selection of the beneficiaries.

Please note that in some countries there may be specific local laws and regulations which may affect educational grants. The regulators may require prior approval for the healthcare professionals to benefit from the funds or oblige the companies to publicly disclose the exact beneficiaries of the funds in detail. For more information specific to your country, you can get in touch with the MedTech Europe member National Association representing the medical technology industry in your country. A list of those you may find on the MedTech Europe [webpage](#).

In summary:

- Take a look at the MedTech Europe Code of Ethical Business Practice particularly, the Introduction, Chapter IV and the accompanying Q&As for more information on Educational Grants
- Contact the MedTech Europe member National Association to see if there are rules specific to your country
- Reach out to your hospital administration to see if there are any grants available and what criteria is applicable
- Reach out to medical societies or companies organising the educational events or scientific congresses you wish to participate and express your interest.

Further resources (available at www.medtecheurope.org and www.ethicalmedtech.eu):

- MedTech Europe Code of Ethical Business Practice [one-pager](#)
- [MedTech Europe Code Info Package for HCOs and HCPs](#)
- [Leaflet for HCPs](#)
- [National Associations' Codes](#)
- The [Ethical MedTech Platform](#), the MedTech Europe Compliance portal (hosting the [Transparent MedTech Platform](#), the [Ethical Charter](#) and the [Conference Vetting System](#))

DISCLAIMER

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