



**APGO Continuing Series  
on Student Resources**

## *A Guide to Interactions with Industry*

Industrial development of pharmaceutical agents and medical devices is critical for continuous progress and advancement in health care. Industry has been providing large amounts of financial and instructional support for physicians in clinical, research, and education arenas for decades. Evidence has also shown that industry-physician interactions can create potential conflicts of interest and affect physician behavior, if not properly managed. While both industry and physicians share the goals of improving patient care, companies are accountable to their stakeholders, and physicians have a duty to their patients.

Unfortunately, in the late 1990's and early 2000's, some groups' passion for their goals mistakenly overshadowed the perception and practice of ethical and responsible relationships and conflicts of interest between physicians and industry. In response to several major legal judgements, many organizations published guidelines addressing the relationship of physicians with industry. In addition, many educational institutions developed their own internal guidelines, which may have included banning industry representatives from the educational environment all together. As future physicians, it is important to understand the role of industry in the advancement of health care and be prepared to interact with industry representatives appropriately when needed. You can ethically and responsibly operate within this environment. Avoidance is not the answer and will not properly prepare you for life as a practicing physician.

This module is evidence-based and free of commercial bias. It was prepared by APGO to help medical students navigate the labyrinth of information that is available today. The course consists of four (4) modules:

- 1) Role of Industry in Clinical Care, Research, and Education**
- 2) Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Development Process**
- 3) Conflict of Interest and Disclosure**
- 4) National Guidelines and Institutional Policies**

Each module includes learning objectives, power point presentation, references, and a quiz. It may also include additional educational resources such as video demonstrations, reading materials, or cases. You may complete these modules at any time during medical school. We hope that you will find this course useful and be able to apply its principles in your future career.

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