

Policy

Working with Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Companies



Background

Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) is the peak national consumer organisation and leading independent voice for Australians affected by breast cancer. BCNA works to ensure that Australians affected by breast cancer receive the best support, information, treatment and care appropriate to their individual needs.

Pharmaceutical and biomedical companies are key stakeholders in breast cancer services as their products are a core component of most women's breast cancer treatment.

Pharmaceutical and biomedical companies can assist BCNA in providing information including results from clinical trials, product information and progress of drug development, approval and subsidy.

BCNA can assist pharmaceutical and biomedical companies in understanding the needs and experiences of Australians affected by breast cancer.

By working collaboratively with pharmaceutical and biomedical companies, BCNA can gather information to help inform our work, and can better advocate to these companies on behalf of Australians affected by breast cancer.

BCNA also works with other commercial interests in breast cancer, including developers and providers of screening and diagnostic technologies and non-drug treatments such as radiotherapy.

BCNA understands that pharmaceutical and biomedical companies and other commercial interests may have a vested commercial interest in building relationships with our organisation and that it is crucial as an advocacy organisation that we maintain our independence and are seen to be independent.

On this basis BCNA will develop and maintain a measured relationship with the range of companies who are developing and/or providing breast cancer treatment and care.

This policy lays out the principles and practice of BCNA's involvement with for-profit pharmaceutical and biomedical companies and recognises the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct, and the Consumers' Health Forum of Australia and Medicines Australia *Working Together* Guide.

BCNA may also work with not-for-profit pharmaceutical and biomedical companies. Any financial arrangements with such companies must be approved by the BCNA Board.

This policy refers to for-profit pharmaceutical and biomedical companies. However our activities with other commercial interests in the health sector will conform with this policy and will be guided by the Chief Executive Officer.

Principles

BCNA will:

- Establish working relationships with pharmaceutical and biomedical companies, subject to the provisions of this policy
- Work with a range of pharmaceutical and biomedical companies, and not align itself with or give preference to, any one particular company
- Ensure our relationships with pharmaceutical and biomedical companies are not subject to any conditions that are either unacceptable to us or not in the best interests of Australians with breast cancer
- Maintain a register of all involvement with pharmaceutical and biomedical companies, report on this involvement at quarterly Board meetings, and make the register available for public review on request.

BCNA will not:

- Enter into sponsorship arrangements with pharmaceutical or biomedical companies
- Accept direct funding from pharmaceutical or biomedical companies to undertake research or for travel and accommodation
- Accept gifts from pharmaceutical or biomedical companies.

Conditions

Provision of information from Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Companies to BCNA

BCNA encourages pharmaceutical and biomedical companies to provide information through documents and presentations about new or established drugs and products as part of our awareness of current research data and issues emerging in breast cancer treatments.

BCNA staff will consider invitations to attend pharmaceutical or biomedical company sponsored conferences, meetings and events on the basis that these meetings are a source of information relevant to BCNA's work for consumers. BCNA participation at meetings will be reviewed on merit. Our attendance will not be linked to any expectation that BCNA will promote the products being discussed.

Provision of Information from BCNA to Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Companies

BCNA provides information to pharmaceutical and biomedical companies only when it will directly benefit Australians affected by breast cancer. Any information provided will be de-identified.

BCNA staff will not:

- endorse a particular company or product
- accept payment for their services from a pharmaceutical or biomedical company
- enter into any confidentiality agreement with any pharmaceutical or biomedical company
- provide comment for a pharmaceutical or biomedical company media release
- work with any public relations company working on behalf of a pharmaceutical or biomedical company.

BCNA does not provide a consultancy service and no BCNA staff member can receive a personal payment for consultation services from a pharmaceutical or biomedical company.

Consumer Representatives

BCNA may provide the services of Consumer Representatives to pharmaceutical and biomedical companies through our *Seat at the Table Program*.

Consumer Representatives will not:

- endorse a particular company or product
- enter into any confidentiality agreement with any pharmaceutical or biomedical company
- accept payment for their services from a pharmaceutical or biomedical company, however they should be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses when undertaking a *Seat at the Table* activity.

BCNA does not charge any organisation for providing *Seat at the Table* services.

Branding and Acknowledgments

BCNA's logo cannot be used on any pharmaceutical or biomedical company product or product information.

BCNA's involvement in the development or review of information materials produced by pharmaceutical or biomedical companies may be acknowledged in writing. A statement advising that BCNA has not accepted financial payment for this activity must also be included.

Any pharmaceutical or biomedical company wishing to acknowledge BCNA's involvement in the development of material must first obtain written permission from BCNA. Any written permission provided by BCNA will be valid only for the particular activity for which it was requested.

Pharmaceutical and biomedical companies may direct women from their website to BCNA's website, as may any other company or organisation.

BCNA will not include links from our website to pharmaceutical or biomedical company websites and will not include any company logo on our website.

Approvals Process

BCNA's Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for directing BCNA's involvement with pharmaceutical and biomedical companies.

Exclusions to this process

- Attendance by pharmaceutical and biomedical company staff at BCNA events.

Approved March 2020